Minutes
Economic Development Committee
November 14, 2018

NOTE: These meetings are now live-streamed, which can be viewed at this link: http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1695/Economic-Development-Committee These Minutes provide a record of those in attendance, general discussion taking place, and motions made.

A meeting of the Economic Development Committee (EDC) of the Portland City Council was held on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chamber of Portland City Hall. Present from the Committee was its Chair Councilor Justin Costa and members Councilors Nicholas Mavodones and Spencer Thibodeau. Present from the City staff were Corporation Counsel Michael Goldman, Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Ethan Hipple, City Manager Jon Jennings, Planning and Urban Development Director Jeff Levine, Economic Development Director Greg Mitchell, Finance Director Brendan O'Connell, Parking Manager John Peverada, and Office of Economic Opportunity Director Julia Trujillo.

Item #1: Review and accept Minutes of previous meeting held on October 16, 2018.

On motion made by Councilor Mavodones, seconded by Councilor Thibodeau, the Committee voted unanimously to accept the Minutes as presented.

Item #10: Update on Broadband Access – Jon Jennings

Chair Costa requested this item be taken out of order due to a schedule change for Mr. Jennings; the Committee concurred.

Mr. Jennings said that he has been working on this for a few years, and there have been proposals in the past. In the last six months, a comprehensive public infrastructure inventory has been conducted, and public/private partnerships for funding is the goal to move ahead. He noted that this needs to be done right; if not, it could be a very expensive mistake. Mr. Jennings also noted that Cliff Island is a good example for broadband in partnership with Long Island, and would continue to provide updates to the Committee when warranted.

Item #2: Update on Outdoor Dining Regulations – Jeff Levine

Mr. Levine provided an overview and update on proposed regulations, which would be administratively approved under City Manager authority. There has been outreach with Portland Downtown (merchants and restaurants) for input. Highlights of the proposed regulations include a limited pilot program to start; parklets would be capped at 5; and, the fee proposed is $30 per day. The parklets would be located on certain roadway classifications for safety purposes.

Councilor Thibodeau thanked staff and supported starting slowly with a pilot program.

Councilor Mavodones expressed concern for the loss of parking, but supports the proposal overall. He then asked about the process for permits and if the permits would be done on a first-come, first-served basis and how advertised, noting a fair process is the goal.

Mr. Levine explained the process with Inspections issuing permits with input from other City Departments. The permits would be advertised with a Press Release.

Chair Costa thanked staff and asked about timing, and Mr. Levine indicated that the City Manager would sign final regulations in time for the 2019 Summer season.

Item #3: Public Hearing and vote to recommend to the City Council proposed Amended and Restated Lease with Casco Bay Island Transit District (CBITD).

Councilor Mavodones recused himself from participating in this discussion and vote as CBITD is his employer.

Mr. O'Connell provided an overview of the past CBITD Lease and the use of Casco Bay Garage revenue to support that Lease. The proposed Amended and Restated Lease would minimize City exposure for future Garage capital improvement expenditures. The Lease increases rent from up to $16,000/year to up to $20,000/year. The rental payments would go to a capital reserve account for repairs/maintenance. The premises are defined the same as the current lease.

Mr. Goldman clarified parking for islanders; the City can direct parking relocation with no obligation to pay.

Chair Costa thanked Mr. O'Connell and staff and noted that the EDC has provided direction to staff in executive session for negotiating the lease so is familiar with this item. He then opened the meeting for public comment; seeing none, the public comment session was closed.

Councilor Thibodeau made a motion to forward this item to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Chair Costa seconded the motion and it passed 2-0-1 (Councilor Mavodones abstained).

Item #4: Workforce Development Discussion – Chair Costa

Chair Costa said that the EDC and the Council has been discussing workforce development for the past year. Recent TIF amendments allow for TIF revenue to be used for workforce development programs, providing a sustainable source of funding. He suggested this start with services currently being provided through the Office of Economic Opportunity

(OEO) and Portland Adult Education (PAE), and would then ask OEO and PAE to provide recommendations, with stakeholder input, for programs which are scalable.

Councilor Mavodones applauded the idea of input from stakeholders for furthering the efforts.

Councilor Thibodeau looked forward to further discussing this.

Item #5: Update and request for direction from Office of Economic Opportunity's staffing and workforce training initiatives – Greg Mitchell and Julia Trujillo.

Ms. Trujillo updated the Committee on OEO's results and accomplishments over 2017 and 2018. Programs being worked on now include a City plan for inclusion/welcome plan, to be measureable with timelines.

Councilor Mavodones suggested a discussion at a Finance Committee meeting to discuss increasing staff and workforce development programs at OEO.

Councilor Thibodeau said that prioritization of TIF Revenue for OEO is a priority.

Chair Costa indicated that as this proceeds, estimates for TIF revenue for this would be helpful.

Item #6: Update on Amethyst Lot/Portland Landing Project – Ethan Hipple.

Mr. Hipple provided an overview of the planning process to date, together with estimated project cost of $17.2 Million in phases. Phase I would be for Moon Tide Park upgrades with a request to the Finance Committee and Council for $1 Million, while also noting a grant opportunity of $750,000 through the U.S. Park service.

Councilor Mavodones noted the need for partners for funding, and also suggested that staff should determine City Council support of the project.

Chair Costa agreed. Phase 1 are obligations due to VRAP.

Consensus was to hold a City Council workshop early 2019 and handle through next year's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and budget process.

Item #7: Update on Bayside Public Works Property Sales/Development – Greg Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell provided an update, noting that four of the six properties have closed.

Item #8: 2018 EDC Accomplishments – Greg Mitchell

Mr. Mitchell noted that the memorandum in the packet outlines the accomplishments in calendar year 2018.

Committee consensus was to send this to the City Council as a communication.

Item #9: Future Possible Topics – Chair Costa

Chair Costa suggested Committee members let him know of any future topics. He noted for one may be the Opportunity Zone Program.

Item #11: Executive Session: Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(C), the Committee will go into executive session to provide staff guidance related to the following:

a. Riverside Street sale negotiations; see enclosed confidential memo from Greg Mitchell

On motion made by Councilor Thibodeau, seconded by Councilor Mavodones, the Committee voted unanimously to go into executive session at approximately 7:35 p.m. pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(C) to provide staff guidance on negotiations for sale of City property on Riverside Street.

At approximately 7:45 p.m., the Committee came out of executive session and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully, Greg Mitchell