

# Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

## WORK SESSION

City Hall Council Chambers  
57 N. Liberty Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, February 11, 2020  
4:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** President Ray Morriss; Council Members: Seth Bernard, Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, and Laurie Marchini

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeffrey D. Rhodes, City Administrator; Michael S. Cohen, City Solicitor; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Bobby Smith, City Engineer; Morgan Alban, Engineering Consultant; Paul Kelly, Executive Director-CEDC; Matt Miller, Economic Development Specialist; Sandi Saville, DDC

Media Present: Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News

### I. CEDC REPORT ON 2020 PACE RECEPTION

Mr. Kelly advised on who he spoke with at the recent PACE Reception, including the Greater Cumberland Committee, and the SHA Deputy Administrator, about the north/south corridor. He said he sat in on roundtable discussions, met with the Chief Legislative Officer for Governor Hogan, and talked to Secretary of Commerce Schultz. Mr. Kelly advised that there is a House bill calling for abolition of commerce incentives across the board, with the impetus behind it being re-evaluation of what commerce incentives are and how they operate. Mr. Miller added that another possible intent is to search for funding to provide for the Kerwin Commission; cutting costs elsewhere to help supply funds. Mr. Kelly said he also met with Comptroller Franchot about the status of the CEDC projects, and thanked him for his support. He added that he felt PACE was a success.

### II. STATUS UPDATE – CEDC HOUSING ANALYSIS

Mr. Kelly advised that work was progressing on the housing analysis, and should be completed in April. He added that the citizen survey is completed and was published by the consultants and circulated locally, with the impetus behind it for CDBG information requirements. He advised that the consultant has also taken on a Needs Assessment report for the Consolidated Plan and provided demographic analysis for the CDBG five-year plan. Mr. Kelly said a meeting was held containing a diverse group of community members expressing housing needs in the area, and discussed how they provided input, saying the goal being to bring perceived issues to the forefront and provide solutions. Mr. Kelly stated that Dave Cotton was a participant on the committee, and said state-wide they want CDBG programming goals to dovetail into a master plan, with Cumberland being one of the first to try to tag together.

Mr. Kelly advised that a Blight Committee meeting was held on January 8<sup>th</sup> with City staff, and stated it was useful for the CEDC to hear the priority list of the City, with the goal being to dovetail that list with what the housing study is hearing.

Mr. Kelly discussed a meeting with Amy Baker and the FSU GIS staff, and advised that FSU is willing to be a resource for the City's GIS system. He stated there are ways to try to do some real-time mapping with GIS and said the goal of CEDC being to try to help the housing committee and fulfill the need for housing. He said they are hoping to connect the dots with mapping – finding areas for additional housing, office space, etc.

### **III. STATUS UPDATE – CUMBERLAND GATEWAY PROJECT**

Mr. Kelly stated that they are aware the developer is continuing to acquire additional properties, and that they are ready to do some demolition. He advised that Kevin Thacker set up a meeting for the following Thursday for status review.

### **IV. STATUS UPDATE – BALTIMORE STREET ACCESS PROJECT**

Mr. Kelly advised that lots of discussion and meetings had taken place with Widmyer, the delegation, City Engineering, etc., and stated that the Engineering Department is putting all the data together on a spreadsheet. He advised there is \$500K in the governor's capital grant, which is subject to approval as part of a larger budget, and will be final when the budget is finalized. He stated that the delegation has asked for \$2.5M for this project, and said the also discussed that if the funding is not in this year's budget, could it be in next year's. He advised that Secretary Peters is trying to make things happen.

Mr. Kelly stated that the project total price is at \$9.5M, which is comprised of the EADS cost and Cochran's contract. He advised that funding to date is \$7.2M total, with \$2.5M through ARC, \$4.7M through TAP, and \$500K from a government capital grant. The funding need for now stands at \$2.3M, and he advised that there are lots of people working on closing that gap. Mr. Kelly mentioned Community Legacy and CDBG money, Heritage funding, rural broadband, possibly a contribution from the County, and said in his perspective the project seems doable, but said the big question will be what the actual number is that comes back from the bid in summer.

Mayor Morriss stated that he's cautiously optimistic that the state will find more funding for the project, and said the final decision will be made when the bids come in. He said at this point the project seems to be on target.

Mr. Kelly discussed rural broadband monies, and provided background and explanations of how the City could possibly qualify.

### **V. STATUS UPDATE – CEDC & COUNTY ED INTEGRATION/MAIN STREET PROGRAM & DDC**

Mr. Kelly advised that he attended a meeting at the County yesterday to begin to understand the current project, to identify staffing as it stands now, and itemized budget. He mentioned logistical

issues as to moving people, computers, etc., and advised they have not settled on a location yet, but they have several options. Mayor Morriss added that the short-term goal is to keep all City and County projects moving on track towards completion, with the long-term goal being for City and County to work together. Mr. Kelly advised that they are looking to make things more efficient, with no redundant programs, and nobody losing their job.

Councilwoman Marchini acknowledged there is some anxiety out there about this consolidation, and said she hopes everyone is working together toward a common goal. She stated that we are all in this together, and we will all benefit.

~Main Street Program & DDC~

Mr. Kelly advised on what role the Main Street Program and the Executive Director of the DDC will play in regards to the new CEDC. He said that at some point there will need to be a discussion about the future of the DDC, and gave some background on the DDC. He said he has had some discussions with the DDC and Main Street, and advised that the Main Street Manager position has been commingled with the Executive Director of the DDC.

Mr. Kelly advised that they are building out their budget at the County and discussed the pros of hiring an Economic Development Specialist to be the Main Street Manager, and said from the County's perspective, if they have a liaison, the same person can easily fit into areas such as Frostburg for their Main Street Manager. He added that it makes sense to combine now, and they will need to know as they work out their budget. He added further that the person would have the duties of Main Street, be supervised by the CEDC, but would still be focused on City needs, and would be funded through CEDC resources. He said they would have other duties as well.

Sandi Saville stated that the entire board hasn't read the proposal yet, but realizes there needs to be a change. She said it's complicated because of special taxes and the mandate that the tax be used for maintenance and promotion of the downtown mall. She added that it will be difficult to take away the DDC's one employee and still be required to maintain the mall. She discussed next year's taxes and employee and maintenance costs. She said she's not necessarily opposed to the CEDC's idea, it's just complicated.

There was discussion on the requirements on being a Main Street Community, and Mr. Cohen advised on what was in the Charter. Ms. Saville said she's filling in for now, but they need a solution. Mayor Morriss agreed that we need to work quickly for that solution, as there needs to be someone in the position, especially going into the Baltimore Street Project, to talk with business owners. There was more discussion on how to pay for the new position if the mall tax disappears with the Baltimore Street renovations, and how to pay for the same level of service of the street itself. Mr. Kelly recommended that you deal with this issue now with budgets and money available, and with consolidation taking place.

Greg Larry inquired if the price for the Baltimore Street Project has come in high, and what if the gap continues. He asked would the project be delayed. Mayor Morriss replied that the goal is to start this fall, with continuing to look for funding. Mr. Kelly added that a lot of the funding is based on

percentages, with eligible costs for different items. He stated that with the TAP money, it can only cover certain work, 60%, for example, and if that number grows, the TAP money has capacity to grow. In response to a question about County match, he stated that the County supports the Baltimore Street Project, but they haven't been asked for a specific dollar amount. He said he views them as a last resort.

## **VI. PROPOSED FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Morgan Alban provided of summary of significant changes, and a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Floodplain Management Ordinance, and went over a summary of significant changes:

- New model written in regulatory language
- Consistent with State regulatory requirements
- Retains most of the long-standing recommendations from previous models
- Eliminates provision requiring fill quantity variances in excess of 600 cubic yards
- Combines 2 previously recommended forms into a single form – the Declaration of Land Restrictions (Non-conversion Agreement)
- Streamlines how enclosures below elevated buildings and accessory structures are handled
- Can be easily modified by replacing certain provisions with references to comparable revisions in the MD Building Performance Code

Ms. Alban advised that the first reading of the Ordinance is scheduled for the next Regular M&CC meeting, as maps become effective on April 3, 2020, so changes have to be in place before that date.

Mr. Cohen advised that with this national flood program, if the City has a flood event we will get assistance from the federal government as long as we are compliant with local standards. He added that the City currently has an Ordinance, and that this is just an update.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie A. Woodring  
City Clerk

Minutes approved on April 21, 2020