

Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

WORK SESSION

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

Tuesday, January 26, 2021
4:30 p.m. (*due to technical difficulties, the meeting actually began at 4:56 p.m.*)

This meeting was held via Video-Conference

PRESENT: Raymond M. Morriss, President; Council Members: Richard Cioni (via audio), Eugene Frazier, and Laurie Marchini. Council Member Seth Bernard was absent.

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey D. Rhodes, City Administrator; Margie Woodring, City Clerk

I. PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA REVIEW – FEBRUARY 2, 2021

Mr. Rhodes reviewed the Reports and Minutes up for approval, and also advised that a Public Hearing by Lee Borrer to receive needs and project requests for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding will be on the finalized agenda, and said this is the annual hearing done each year to take input on how organizations might use funding.

Mr. Rhodes reviewed Unfinished Business **Ordinance 3884**, up for its second and third readings, which will accept bids for 17 and 19 Waverly Terrace, and 417 Walnut Street, and authorize conveyance to successful bidders. He advised that these are three former blighted properties, and are a part of the City's blight program to get properties back on the tax rolls. He added that these properties have already been declared surplus, and have already been bid once.

Mr. Rhodes reviewed the Consent Agenda items, and advised that although the draft agenda shows two, there will actually be three on the finalized agenda.

Order 26,754 - approving the execution of a Deed of Gift to the MD Historical Trust authorizing transfer of 178 artifacts catalogued in the Candoc Lane Site during the NEPA archeological evaluation of the 78" Parallel Pipeline Project to the MD State Repository.

Mr. Rhodes advised that this Order authorizes conveyance of artifacts that were dug up and catalogued during the 78" Pipeline Project, and said these artifacts are just pieces of glass, coal, nails, bricks, shingles and jars.

Order 26,755 - granting a one-time Historic District Property Tax Credit to 15 Prospect Square (Wunderlick) in the amount of \$1,608.50 to be applied over the course of five (5) years; property tax assessment freeze not applicable.

Mr. Rhodes advised said this tax credit represents 10% of the project cost which was \$6,086, for window replacement and roofing changes.

Order 26,756 - authorizing execution of a Right-of-Way Agreement with The Potomac Edison Company regarding the installation of an electric vehicle charging station, to be installed and maintained by Potomac Edison, at the Liberty Street surface parking lot.

Mayor Morriss advised that the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the electric car charging station will be next Friday, February 5th, and Mr. Rhodes explained that two charging units are attached to one post in-between two parking spaces. He added that they chose the Liberty Street lot over the George Street Garage due to the garage's electrical configuration, which would have cost more for Potomac Edison to install it there. Mr. Rhodes advised that this is a "no-cost" project to the City, so they are kind of bound to where Potomac Edison is comfortable installing them.

In answer to a question from Council, Mr. Rhodes stated that there is no signage at the charging station, and said he believes most people get this kind of information from apps on their phones. Mayor Morriss stated that it wouldn't hurt to have a sign, due to the area being a little confusing to people from out of town.

DISCUSSION

Councilwoman Marchini stated that the Baltimore Street Redesign Committee has been very busy, and advised that the renderings should be available soon. She added that there will be an Opening/Launching coming up as well, and said they found some additional funding not too long ago.

Mayor Morriss described the "opening" as letting people know what the design looks like and what it will be conceptually. He said hopefully it will be getting out to bid after the SHA reviews the drawings, and construction should begin late summer or early fall of this year.

Councilwoman Marchini also advised that they received a grant through the Arts Council for the renderings, and added that the work group is working on a website for the downtown redesign, and said there will be a link for it on the www.cumberlandmd.gov website so people can get information all in one place.

Councilman Cioni (via audio) advised that he met with Downtown Manager Melinda Kelliher last week and thought it might be a good time to see if there was any way to resurrect the FSU project that the president of the university initiated, which had to do with refurbishing the whole landscape underneath I-68 around Canal Place. He said students submitted renderings for that area through a contest, and somehow the project went away. He added that Ms. Kelliher is looking into it and will contact Julie Westendorff at the Arts Council. The Mayor stated that it would be important for that area to get some good lighting to make it more inviting, and stated that he would also look into it.

Mayor Morriss advised that he had talked with Citizens Services Representative Allison Layton about getting a form link on the City's website for people to fill out to suggest things to be done in the City, as a way of feeding projects to the Let's Beautify Cumberland Committee. He added that it will be a good way to get young people involved and get that program energized.

Councilman Cioni advised that the Salvation Army Board wants to start a boys and girls club in the area, and said Ms. Kelliher stated that she would be willing to help in the initial stages, as she had experience in that area. Mayor Morriss stated that the key going forward is having activities for our youth, and said the Salvation Army is a good community partner. He added that David Smith with City Reach is looking to do more in some of the parks this year as well.

Councilwoman Marchini wanted to mention that Mike Fiscus with the robotics club will be purchasing the St. Peter and Paul's hall, and asked if the City could help them in any way. Council discussed putting the robotics club in touch with Alan Zapf's project to collaborate and possibly share a building.

Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News, about the drawings for the Baltimore Street Redesign Project, to which Mayor Morriss replied they were 99% complete.

Mr. Larry also had questions about the electric vehicle charging area and asked to confirm the time of the ribbon cutting, which Mayor Morriss advised was 1:00 p.m. on February 5th. Mr. Rhodes stated that City staff had reached out to Potomac Edison thinking it would be a good idea in the downtown. He said it turned out that Potomac Edison already had a project looking to place a couple of units cost-free, and added that Raquel Ketterman, Environmental Specialist, led the effort.

II. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie A. Woodring, City Clerk

Minutes approved February 16, 2021