



In attendance: Commission Members: Tom Jewell, Simon Rucker, Meri Lowry, Colleen Tucker, Roger Berle and Steve Morgenstein. Portland Trails Representative: Kara Wooldrik. City Staff: Caitlin Cameron, Tuck O'Brien, Ethan Hipple, Michael Goldman, Doug Roncarati and Alli Carroll

Land Bank Commission Minutes

April 12, 2018

5:00 PM

Portland, Maine City Hall

389 Congress Street, Room 24

I. Citizen Comment Period

There aren't any citizens present to comment at this time.

Tom began the meeting by mentioning that Colleen and he terms out this year and that they are looking for new Commissioners. Meri asked about the co-chair opening. Tom stated that the Commission has run well with co-chairs and suggested that it continue.

II. Agenda Items

i. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: February 8, 2018

Colleen moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Meri Seconded. Simon abstained. Motion passed with four in favor.

ii. New Business

Roger entered the meeting.

a. Congress Square Redesign Review and Vote – Caitlin Cameron

Caitlin Cameron is the Urban Designer and Project Manager for the Congress Square Redesign. She gave the Commission an overview of the project about a year ago. She is back now because they are in design development. She referred to the site plan that was handed out to each Commissioner. They are now looking at lighting concepts, plantings, etc. As well as improving the intersections and accessibility to the park. They will be adding a three-piece sculpture by Sarah Sze Studio. They will also be removing the slip lane to increase the park/plaza areas for pedestrians. In order for the design to continue to move forward, the Land Bank Commission and City Council would need to give positive recommendations to remove the current trees in the space.

Meri shared that the Parks Commission's concerns were the timing of lights at intersections and the reflectivity of the sculpture at night. Also, the Friends of Congress Square Park shared their hefty and impressive event schedule with the Parks Commission, so the question of capacity came up. Caitlin made note of all concerns and assured the Commission that they want to keep the current capacity level, if not increase it. Commissioners loved how it's more of a space for pedestrians and less for cars. Caitlin added that it will also slow cars down to make it safer for pedestrians. The Commissioners were concerned about the tree removal and wanted to know if they'd be replaced. Caitlin has been working closely with the City Arborist, Jeff Tarling, and will see if it is possible to transplant the trees. Either way, new trees will be planted.

Meri moved to recommend that the trees be removed at Congress Square Park. Simon seconded. Tom stated that it is a tough decision to cut down trees but appreciate them being replaced. Passed unanimously with six votes.

b. Stroudwater Preserve/Camelot Farms – Tuck O’Brien

Tuck O’Brien is the Planning Director. During the Camelot Farms Development Project, easements sprung to life. Some will go to Portland Trails for trail access and some to the City for open space along the river. This has been a good public private partnership with the developers. The idea is for this to be transferred to the City at no cost and be put into the Land Bank as a traditional open space to become the Stroudwater Preserve. Parking will be up by the road. The space can be used as ice skating during the winter and as a fishing spot and kayak launch during the summer. A metal foot bridge has been donated to the City. This will be moved to this area to connect the open space and trails. Doug suggested more trees along the water line. They will help with water quality and protect it. The Commission appreciated the update and thanked Tuck for sharing.

iii. Old Business

a. Annual Land Bank Commission Report - Review and vote to approve the 2017 Annual Report to bring to City Council.

The Commission discussed and finalized edits. *Meri moved to approve the Land Bank 2017 Annual Report as amended. Roger seconded. Passed unanimously with six votes.*

The following Redlon Woods, Oat Nuts Park and Forest Ave. Parcels were presented in a memo to the Commissioners from staff.

b. Update on Redlon Woods/TAPC Parcels

Staff sent an agreement for the property donation. They are waiting to hear back.

c. Oat Nuts Park Parcel Update

Staff sent a purchase and sale agreement. They are waiting to hear back.

d. Forest Ave. Parcel abutting Riverton Elementary School.

An appraisal is underway and is expected in by mid-April.

The memo proceeded to very briefly discuss other spaces (Holbrook Street, 205 New Island Ave. and Plymouth Street) the Commission was unaware of. They requested that these be put on the next agenda so that the Commissioners can get more information.

iv. Communications/Updates

a. Parks Commission Report – Meri

The Parks Commission had an extended update from PAYSA on how they are expanding their programs. The Friends of Fort Gorges also gave an update and explained that Fort Gorges is a bit of wilderness in this city. They are trying to find the balance between making it more accessible and not taking away from its mystical wilderness. There was also a presentation of the design competition to improve Bramhall Square. Finally, an Ad Hoc Committee has been created to go over the Chapter 2 and 18 Ordinances to see what changes they need.

b. Monthly Parks Report – Ethan

Ethan took a minute to remind everyone of the Walk in the Park Series. First one is the Aril 28th Monuments and Statues of Portland, Maine Bus Tour. Also, Meri and he invited the Commission to the Green Space Gathering that the Parks Commission is putting on May 3rd, 2018.

Kara added that she will have more information about the CMP License at next month’s meeting.

Steve motioned to adjourn the meeting. Roger seconded. Passed unanimously.