



MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 16, 2009

A meeting of the Portland City Council's Community Development Committee (CDC) was held on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. in Room 24, basement conference room, at Portland City Hall. Present from the CDC was its Chair Councilor Cheryl Leeman and member Councilor Dory Richards-Waxman; member Councilor John Anton could not be present. Present from the City staff were Business Development Representative Nelle Hanig, Economic Development Director Greg Mitchell, and Senior Executive Assistant Lori Paulette.

Item #1: Welcome New CDC Members – Chair Leeman

Chair Leeman welcomed Councilor Waxman to the Committee, and then noted that Councilor Anton had advised her that he would not be able to make today's meeting.

Item #2: Review and accept Minutes of previous meeting held on November 18, 2009.

On motion made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to accept the Minutes as published.

Item #3: Review and recommendation to City Council on proposed CDBG Funded Business Assistance Grant Program – See Enclosed Memo and Attachment – Nelle Hanig.

Mr. Mitchell said that a new business assistance grant program is being proposed, with a funding application through the CDBG program. This is being brought to the Committee today as a point of information about the initiative. Should it get through the

allocation committee, the City Council will ultimately see it as part of the overall CDBG budget. The Board of Directors of the Downtown Portland Corporation would oversee the program. The guidelines were patterned after state level programs, with job creation as an element – one job created for every \$10,000 in grant money received - and a private dollar for dollar match. The maximum grant amount is \$20,000, and the DPC has applied for \$100,000 in grant funding from the CDBG program.

Councilor Leeman asked if the grants were limited to Portland residents.

Ms. Hanig said that the grants would be for eligible for new and expanding Portland businesses, with the job creation element to be made available to Portland residents, and at least 51% of them to low/moderate income (LMI) persons.

Councilor Waxman asked about when this program would start if funded.

Mr. Mitchell said that appropriations would be final sometime in March or April 2010, and, if funded, the program would begin July 2010.

The Committee discussed bringing the item forward to the City Council with a recommendation that the program be approved, conditional upon funding through the CDBG program. The Committee agreed to do this, with a motion passed to bring the program to the City Council for approval, pending funding through the CDBG program.

Item #4: Verbal Update of General Economic Development Activities – Greg Mitchell

- a. **LL Bean Space Vacancy**
- b. **Maine Biz Portland Online Edition – Enclosed**

Mr. Mitchell said that he has met with the property owners where LL Bean is currently located on Congress Street, occupying 20,000 sq. ft. on the ground level. He and Nelle Hanig have toured the space and are approaching businesses with this future

leasing opportunity coordinated with the property owners and Boulos as the listing broker. LL Bean has a lease on the space through September 2010, at which time it will not renew. The basement space is under separate ownership by the Maine College of Art.

Regarding Maine Biz Portland Online Edition, Mr. Mitchell said that he is collaborating with Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook on this column. Mr. Mitchell said that Portland has also been collaborating with these municipalities in other regional areas, including under the marketing umbrella of “Greater Portland Region” at the Biotech industry trade shows over the last three/four years.

The current column highlighted the fact that the “Pine Tree Zone” benefits now include business access in southern Maine, due in part to the collaborative efforts by the four municipalities to advocate for this program territory expansion to include southern Maine business access.

Chair Leeman suggested that future accomplishments be included on CDC Agendas to provide more information to the public on those accomplishment and how it can further economic development efforts.

Item #5: Community Development Committee meeting schedule for 2010 – see enclosed.

Chair Leeman noted that a portion of the agenda for a January meeting may include updates on the Development Review Process, as well as the permitting process.

Item #6: Executive Session Item: Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(C) and 5 M.R.S.A. 13119—A, the Committee will go into executive session to review and discuss sale negotiations related to City-owned property on Riverside Street. See enclosed confidential packet.

On motion made and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously at 5:30 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(C) and 5 M.R.S.A. 13119—A to review and discuss sale negotiations related to City-owned property on Riverside Street. At approximately 6:00 p.m. the Committee came out of executive session.

Item #7: Adjourn and next meeting January 13, 2010.

The meeting was then adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori J. Paulette