

City of St. Helens City Council

Public Forum Minutes

November 20, 2019

Members Present: Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Keith Locke
Councilor Ginny Carlson
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Rachael Barry, Government Affairs & Project Support Specialist
Tina Curry, Event Coordinator

Others: Jennifer Pugsley Christine Menges
Greg Pettit Shauna Harrison
Seth Otto, Maul Foster Alongi

1) **6:00 P.M. - Open Public Forum**

2) **Topic**

2.A EPA Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant Program Update

Seth Otto, Maul Foster Alongi updated the Council and attendees about the program. He reviewed a PowerPoint presentation. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Councilor Topaz pointed out a few locations to be investigated:

1. The fuel tanks on the County property by the County Courthouse. Seth responded that it would be included if it's part of the DEQ inventory. He will look into it.
2. The livery stable under the School District maintenance facility on St. Helens Street. Seth pointed out that animal waste is not part of this grant.
3. The property referred to as Dillard Lake, off of Old Portland Road, between S. 4th and S. 7th Street. Seth said it hasn't been flagged but could be eligible. He will follow-up with Associate Planner Dimsho about that property.

Seth reported that the grant will be wrapped up in 2020. There are still funds available for cleanup.

Mayor Scholl spoke of the Semling property. Does a DEQ permit need to be obtained to remove soil? Seth said yes, it could be removed to an approved site. Remedial actions could be part of a purchase and sale agreement.

Discussion of properties that need to be cleaned. They cannot force a property to clean up unless it's affecting adjacent properties or the occupants. You do have to disclose the contamination if you're away of it when you sell it.

Councilor Topaz asked if there is a master map of fuel tanks under sidewalks? Seth is not aware of one. Historic insurance maps are a great resource.

In response to questions from Dimsho, Council concurred that the grant funding was a useful resource for the community. They would like to further investigate the sites discussed. They were in agreement to re-apply for the next funding cycle.

City Administrator Walsh talked about how successful this has been. Other cities have struggled when there is no funding.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- ♦ Jennifer Pugsley, owner of 50 Plaza Square. She is thankful for this program. She's happy to see that it will be continued. What happens if you're in the middle of an assessment and the year runs out?

Seth said they will get the work done before then. Jennifer said she has spent over \$10,000 on testing and decommissioning the tank under the sidewalk in front of her building. Dimsho came to her and said there may be help. With the consolidation of all the buildings down here, how do you know what tank it came from? She was told that the molecules look different. Seth agreed that each one is unique and can be identified in labs.

Jennifer encouraged the Council to spread the word about the program. Councilor Carlson asked what the best way is to get the word out to real estate agents. Jennifer suggested that Dimsho speak at a Real Estate Board meeting.

Council President Morten talked about the fire of 1904. That contaminated soils as well. He agrees with continuing this assessment.

Jennifer talked about the importance of doing the right thing, even when it's expensive, to stop the contamination.

Councilor Topaz asked about tanks when properties are sold. Jennifer said they always have a tank locate done. You can usually see where the copper lines were as well.


3) **Close Public Forum** – 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:



Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder



Rick Scholl, Mayor