

# City of St. Helens City Council

Special Session Minutes

October 17, 2018

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**Members Present:** Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Doug Morten  
Councilor Ginny Carlson  
Councilor Susan Conn  
Councilor Keith Locke

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Matt Brown, Finance Director  
Jacob Graichen, City Planner  
Jennifer Dimsho, Associate Planner  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Brian Greenway, Police Chief

**Others:**

Agnes M. Petersen	Susie Wilson	Kaily Allen
Mary Anne Anderson	Joe Turner	Madison Mercier
K. Amserly	Alta Lynch	Terri White
Howard Blumenthal	Sally O'Dell	Steve Wethern
Jennifer Purcell	Frank Brandon	Carmin Dunn
Bonny Wagoner	Clair Catt	Rachael Barry
David Westerman	Chuck Daughtry	Mike Funderburg
Patrick Birkle	Mike Milward	Steve P.
Ardis Sussel	Patrick Trapp	Mike Howard
Courtney Vaughn	Janiae Narns	Jenn Farrington
Vonda Kaufman	Diana Robinson	Jason R.
Tia Sharp	Dwight Unti	Al Petersen
Phillip Stanton		

1) **Call Special Meeting to Order - 6:00 p.m.**

2) **Discussion Topics**

2.A Waterfront Redevelopment Project Update

City Administrator Walsh welcomed everyone and turned it over to Associate Planner Dimsho. Dimsho reviewed the history of the project. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

At 6:15 p.m., Dwight Unti of Tokola Properties and Eric Cugnart of Studio C were introduced and began their presentation outlining the vision for the future of the waterfront property. A copy is included in the archive meeting packet.

Walsh reviewed the Riverfront Connector Plan. He also talked about the \$15 million BUILD Federal Grant the City applied for. They should know by December if the City received the

grant. Wyden, Merkley, and Bonamici's office have all selected St. Helens as one of the top three for receiving the grant. The application is available on the City's website.

- ◆ Frank Brandon. He asked if the proposal will work within the height restrictions set in code.
- ◆ Martin. Some people want progress and some do not. The City has one of the best team's he has seen working on a project like this. They can control progress. If we're more worried about a view on the bluff than this type of development that will bring in millions of dollars... He lives in Tide Creek and pumps gas at the Deer Island store, drives for CC Rider, and does illustrations. You can't let this opportunity go.
- ◆ Philip Stanton. He has been invested in old town for a few years. He embraces them and has no complaints. He talked about the hotel façade matching the existing feel of the town.

Eric responded that they will analyze the existing architecture. However, their building will not look old. They will do their best to match the modern look with the historic. Dwight added that the building will honor the existing history but will also point to the future.

- ◆ Joe Turner. He served on a Board that restored and cleaned up downtown Portland. There was no cost to the City or property owners. He asked if they plan to do the same thing for existing buildings?

Mayor Scholl said that would be up to the building owners. City Planner Graichen added that there are grant projects in the Urban Renewal Plan to help with future project funding.

- ◆ Al Petersen. Asked how dependent the developer is on the \$15 million grant.

Dwight responded that there has to be infrastructure in order for them to build. The waterfront boardwalk component is especially important.

- ◆ Agnes Petersen. Asked if there is a plan to ask for a tax deferral or forgiveness.

Dwight said there is not a plan for a tax abatement program at this time. The State of Oregon has a vertical housing tax credit that he has encouraged staff to investigate. It allows mixed use with ground floor retail and housing above. The developer would be allowed to apply for a partial tax credit. They are not pursuing it at this point.

- ◆ Howard Blumenthal. They never stated how much of the property will be taken with a hotel. He wants to make sure there is adequate parking for the use.

Dwight responded that they do not intend to use the entire property. Mayor Scholl added that the planning proposal will be required to meet Code; which includes parking requirements.

- ◆ Jenn Farrington. She is really excited about this project. Her main concern is the sense of an "us" and "them" mentality. "Us" is the community and "them" is anyone not from St. Helens. She loves the appreciation for social infrastructure and asked that it continue to

be pushed. They desperately need that space to bring all socioeconomic backgrounds together into one place.

Council President Morten placed copies of the BUILD Grant application on the back table and encouraged everyone to take one.

3) **Adjourn** – 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Rick Scholl, Mayor