

ASTORIA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

City Council Chambers

March 4, 2021

ADC JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

A joint meeting of the Astoria Development Commission and Port of Astoria Commission was held at the above place at the hour of 4:30 pm.

Development Commissioners Present: Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, Mayor Jones

Port Commissioners Present: Rohne, Stevens, Spence, Campbell, McClaine

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Parks and Recreation Director Dart-McLean, Community Development Director Leatherman, City Engineer Crater, Port Executive Director Isom, and Port Deputy Director McGrath. The meeting was live streamed and recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, LLC.

CHANGES TO AGENDA:

No changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar

4(a) Astoria Development Commission Meeting Minutes of August 3, 2020

Commission Action: Motion by Commissioner Rocka, seconded by Commissioner Herman, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Commissioners Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones. Nays: None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

Item 5(a): Port of Astoria Waterfront Master Plan Issuance of Request for Qualifications

Last year City Manager Brett Estes and Community Development Director Meg Leatherman began meeting with Port of Astoria staff to discuss a possible partnership with the Port on a masterplan focusing on the waterfront area between Bornstein Seafoods and the Maritime Memorial Park. These meetings, with Will Isom and Matt McGrath from the Port, began after the Port was looking to address structural issues associated with the Chinook Building and discussing redevelopment opportunities for the marina's interface with the rest of the Port property. In 2007, the Port of Astoria initiated a planning process for this area. There will be some concepts reviewed from that effort but there are other items and issues to consider at this point in time.

The area noted above is within the Astor West Urban Renewal District (AWURD). Development Commission staff have proposed that a masterplan be developed collaboratively between the Astoria Development Commission (ADC) and Port. The ADC would provide funding for the masterplan using urban renewal funds. John Southgate of John Southgate Consulting has been retained to develop a request for qualifications (RFQ) and to assist in managing a masterplan process. Over the past weeks a RFQ has been finalized working with Port and ADC staff and is attached to this memorandum.

The meeting scheduled for March 4th is a joint meeting with the Port Commission so there can be joint dialogue on a masterplan. The ADC is asked to consider issuing the RFQ and initiating the masterplan process. Once the consultant review and selection process has been completed a contract will be brought back to the Development Commission for approval.

It is recommended that the Development Commission direct staff to issue the request for qualifications.

Director Isom said the Port recently updated its Strategic Plan and Capital Facilities Plan. The next critical step to improving the waterfront within the Port's boundaries would be to develop a master plan with the City, Port tenants, and the community. When the pandemic resulted in less traffic at the Port, a lot of deferred

maintenance was completed. The central waterfront has some of the best views in Astoria, so the Port is motivated to redevelop and improve the area.

John Southgate, John Southgate Consulting, provided details of his professional and personal background. He hoped that in the next year and a half, Astoria would have a vision that attracted a lot of private sector interest. He was excited to hear the Commissioners' thoughts about where the master plan should go.

Port Commissioner Stevens recommended the vision state that it was a long-term vision. City Manager Estes confirmed that would be added. He believed more questions and recommendations would come up during the planning process and Staff wanted to make sure that all stakeholder voices were heard throughout the process. This RFQ was just the first step.

Port Commissioner Campbell believed the vision should also be flexible so that the Port could adapt to changes in the economy over the long term.

Commissioner Herman asked if the master plan would be completed by September.

Mr. Southgate stated once a team had been selected, the scope of work would be negotiated. However, the goal was to have the plan complete by September.

Commissioner Herman asked how much the master planning work would cost.

City Manager Estes said no cost estimates had been determined yet. He explained that the reason for an RFQ was to find the right firm for the project. And then, the City would further negotiate the scope and the cost. He asked the Commissioners to discuss goals and priorities so that Staff knows how to work through the master planning process.

Director Isom added that the area used to be a hub for industrial, commercial, and tourism businesses. He hoped that diversified hub would return to the area. However, there would be some challenges.

Port Commissioner Spence referred to the map of the study area (Page 17 of the Staff report) and asked why the study area had been restricted to Pier 1 and did not include the entire Port property to the west.

City Manager Estes explained that the focus of the master plan was the area where there could be redevelopment opportunities. There was no desire to redevelop the other piers for uses other than industrial.

Director Isom added that the timeline for this project was aggressive, so the scope of work would need to be completed quickly. The study area that has been defined would be the most impacted by zoning and have the most interaction with the community. Pier 1 contains office space and access to the marina. The area around Bornstein might be included as part of the overall plan, but the seafood cluster on Pier 2 and the industrial areas on Pier 3 would not have as much interaction with the central waterfront area.

Commissioner Rocka stated the Uniontown Reborn Plan was adjacent to this study area. All of the parties needed to be involved so that the two plans were not in conflict with each other.

Mayor Jones responded that the RFQ called for an advisory committee, which would include the Columbia Pacific Economic Development District (Col-Pac), Business Oregon, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Kevin Leahy, Executive Director, Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) and SBDC, said his organizations were ready to assist.

Commissioner Brownson asked how the Port planned to treat the buildings that it owned. He also wanted to know if the Port wanted tourist-oriented development.

Port Commissioner Rohne [37:14] responded that he just wanted everyone to agree to a framework for moving forward with the master planning process. However, he was most interested in the Port's maritime uses.

Director Isom added that with any development, both tourism and benefits to the community needed to be considered. Getting support from the community would be a big part of this project. Bornstein has plans for an interpretive center, but that could also include fresh seafood sales on the dock as it comes off the boat.

Commissioner Hilton asked if the focus would be on tourism or industry. He also wanted to know if there would be any growth for industrial or manufacturing jobs.

Commissioner Brownson stated he expected the entire Port property to be included. The study area did not seem to lend itself to commercial and industrial development, but everything west of it did. It was important to diversify the economy. However, it sounded like that was outside the scope of this project.

Mr. Southgate responded that the City and the Port would have choices. The RFQ lays out a possible process and the process that is negotiated with the consultant team would be a lot of front-end due diligence looking at the economics of different development types. The consultants would recommend a range of uses based on that due diligence and conversations with stakeholders. If they make recommendations that fall short of the vision, due diligence would be done on the steps necessary to do something the Commissioners aspire to have.

Director Isom said he wanted to help create a plan that would provide certainty around land use. That certainty would allow the Port to do marketing and help interested parties who wanted to become part of the Port.

Commissioner Herman stated that ideally, the area would be mixed use. She also wanted the area to bring in more of the public, both tourists and community members. Public access should be at the forefront of whatever is done.

Port Commissioner Spence [47:14] noted that logging, fishing, and tourism were the three industries the county had to survive on. He believed that about 80 percent of the properties between 16th to 22nd Streets were not paying taxes. So, the Port property needed to be used for some kind of income. The waterfront should be made attractive to the tourist industry, but the Port also needed to provide for logging and fishing industries as well.

Mayor Jones said he was open to anything. He was excited to hear from the public and see the recommendations. He agreed mixed uses would be best, but noted that certain types of tourist related businesses are good for the community too. He called for public comments. There were none.

Commission Action: Motion by Mayor Jones, seconded by Commissioner Brownson, to direct staff to issue the request for qualifications for the Port of Astoria Waterfront Master Plan, as discussed. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Commissioners Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones. Nays: None.

City Manager Estes noted that Staff was prepared to issue the RFQ quickly.

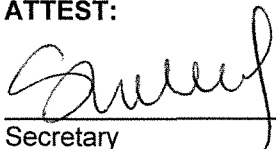
NEW BUSINESS, MISCELLANEOUS, AND PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No comments.

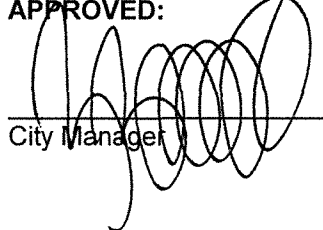
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


City Manager