

A regular meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 6:05 pm.

Councilors Present: Brownson, Rocka, Herman, Hilton, and Mayor Jones.

Councilors Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Parks and Recreation Director Dart-McLean, Community Development Director Leatherman, Finance Director Brooks, Fire Chief Crutchfield, Police Chief Spalding, Public Works Director Harrington, Library Director Pearson, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting was live streamed and recorded, and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, LLC.

PRESENTATIONS

Item 3(a): Merina and Company LLC Financial Statement Audit

ORS 297.425 establishes requirement for audit of a municipal corporation's financial statements at least once every fiscal year by a qualified independent auditor.

Tonya Moffitt, Partner with Merina and Company, LLC will be providing an overview of the Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Astoria and Astoria Urban Renewal Districts.

Tonya Moffitt, Merina and Company, presented details of the City's financial audit for FYE June 30, 2022. The audit revealed no findings, Staff did not put any restrictions on requests for information, and no reporting changes were necessary. She announced that Merina and Company was pivoting away from municipal audits to focus on advisory services and would not be doing financial statement audits in the future.

Mayor Jones said getting a clean audit on such a complex budget reflects Director Brooks' leadership, attention to detail and hard work. He thanked Finance Department Staff for their abilities and competencies.

Councilor Brownson appreciated the hard work Staff did dealing with the budget. This has been a particularly challenging year with a lot of transition and changes. Staff had to navigate an interesting landscape.

REPORTS OF COUNCILORS

Item 4(a): Councilor Hilton reported that people emailed, called, and spoke to him in person him about Heritage Square. It was fantastic to see the amount of input people were giving. He thanked all the Staff and volunteers who help the community run and keep it safe.

Item 4(b): Councilor Brownson reported that he had been busy receiving input about Heritage Square. He took a vacation and came back invigorated and looking forward to the discussion.

Item 4(c): Councilor Herman reported that she participated in a virtual roundtable discussion with other elected officials and Congresswoman Bonamici. She appreciated the opportunity to express Astoria's most pressing concerns. She also attended the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA) membership meeting. She appreciated all that the association does for downtown and for the community. She reported that work continued on the Astoria Nordic Heritage Park. The concrete footings have been poured for the midsummer pole and for other features. The park is still on schedule to be dedicated on June 17th immediately preceding the start of the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Festival. The park would not be possible without Janet Bowler and Janet Niemi who were awarded the Chamber's George Award for their work spearheading the park. Kevin Leahy also received a George Award for his work as the Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR) director.

Item 4(d): Councilor Rocka reported that he also attended the meeting with Congresswoman Bonamici, where those who attended were updated on what she was working on and had the chance to tell her about local issues where a federal contribution would be helpful. Housing, homelessness and childcare were high on everyone's lists. He also attended a training with the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to brush up on the proper handling of land use issue. He served as Astoria's representative at the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST) meeting. He and Councilor Brownson attended a meeting with small cities in Clatsop, Tillamook and Columbia Counties, which was sponsored by the League of Oregon Cities. Housing was at the top of the list of issues that were discussed.

Item 4(e): Mayor Jones reported that he and City Manager Estes attended the Chamber's banquet, where he presented Judy Lampi and Janet Bowler with their awards and saw Senator Johnson present Kevin Leahy with his award. Another Astorian recognized by the Chamber was Chris Laman who led the County's vaccine taskforce for the last year.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

No changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 6(a) **City Council Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2022**
- 6(b) City Council Work Session Minutes of January 19, 2022
- 6(c) Minutes for Homelessness Solutions Task Force (HOST)
- 6(d) Consideration of Library Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funding (CSFRF) Grant Agreement

Councilor Hilton requested that minutes be amended to reflect that Councilor Brownson was absent, not excused.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herman, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to approve of the Consent Calendar as amended. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 7(a): Election of City Council President

The City Council will elect a President to serve for the 2022 calendar year. It is recommended that the Council discuss and vote to elect that position.

Mayor Jones explained that the president fills in for the Mayor when the Mayor is absent. Councilor Brownson was the president for 2021.

Councilor Herman suggested that Councilor Rocka be nominated and said that Councilor Brownson had done a fine job as president.

City Council Action: Nomination made by Mayor Jones, seconded by Councilor Herman, to elect Councilor Rocka at City Council President for 2022. Councilor Rocka was unanimously elected as City Council President for 2022. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(b): Request for Authorization to Purchase Communications Equipment from Day Wireless Systems

The Astoria Emergency Communications Center is seeking council approval to purchase and install radio network equipment to replace old equipment and add new equipment to the emergency communications network. Astoria Emergency Communications Center requested budgetary resources which were approved in the FY 21-22 Capital Outlay budget for communications equipment. Information about the specific items is included in the Council memorandum. It is recommended that City Council approve the purchase of two

microwave links, in the amount of \$77,649.46; one GTR and MLC combination in the amount of \$14,297.08; and one Four channel combiner in the amount of \$ 18,795.00 with the total purchase of the listed equipment includes all labor and supplies for a combined total of \$110,741.54.

Chief Spalding said none of the equipment was being purchase for temporary use. The temporary move to Seaside did expose some vulnerabilities in the system and all of the equipment purchases being requested were recommended by Day Wireless. Some of the equipment will replace old and outdated equipment. Some equipment will replace the microwave links between radios and antennas. Other pieces of the equipment will convert analogue signals to digital signals. And one piece of equipment will allow the radio frequency to be broadcast from the base radio through multiple antennas to users in the field. All of this will improve the issues the Fire Department is currently experiencing. When employees are moved back to Astoria and if there is ever consolidation in the future, the City will already have improved interoperability among different agencies, have better ability to communicate, and deal with weather related issues.

Councilors Hilton and Brownson said they were unable to access the quote. When trying to open the PDF, a message opened saying, "access denied."

Chief Spalding stated he was emailing the quote to Councilors.

Councilor Brownson said this was an opportunity to correct communication issues across the county and improve the systems. Acting on this is the right thing to do.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Rocka, to approve the purchase of two microwave links, in the amount of \$77,649.46; one GTR and MLC combination in the amount of \$14,297.08; and one Four channel combiner in the amount of \$ 18,795.00 with the total purchase of the listed equipment includes all labor and supplies for a combined total of \$110,741.54. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(c): Discussion of Riverwalk Wayfinding Signs Design and Public Feedback

In March 2021, the City was awarded \$428,408 in grant funds from the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD) to carry out improvements on the Riverwalk through the Uniontown and Downtown portions of the trail with a 40% (\$288,937) match provided by the City for a project total of \$717,345. A portion of those funds was allocated for installing new wayfinding signs and features along the Riverwalk, including trailhead maps, Trolley-stop maps and labels, and mile and quarter-mile markers. Final draft sign designs have been developed by SeaReach LTD, a subcontractor of the City's project management firm for this aspect of the project, Greenworks. The designs were drafted using input from an initial stakeholder group, the Parks Department, City Manager, and the City's Historian, John Goodenberger. The final draft designs were provided to the stakeholder group for feedback and a public survey was posted online for two weeks. The designs presented are the result of this coordinated effort to produce useful and clear wayfinding information for residents and visitors using the Riverwalk. City Council is asked to discuss and accept the final designs to be used for fabrication and installation this spring.

City Manager Estes said a separate grant was received to fund an improvement project that begins where this project would end going into Uppertown. This project would include trolley stop signs with QR codes that access updated information about various neighborhoods. The ADHDA has committed to managing the QR code project for Uppertown and Uniontown.

Councilor Rocka asked for details about the process for communicating with the east and west end in the future.

Director Dart-McLean stated that Staff would continue their outreach with the stakeholder group that participated in the development of the sign designs. Updates about this project would also be published on social media and the Parks website.

Mayor Jones said he was happy that each neighborhood would have signage. Most people use their phones when they travel and now tourists can use their phones to see where to buy food and shop.

Councilor Herman believed the signs were beautiful. She loved the concept and the signs looked durable. She asked how long the signs would last.

Director Dart-McLean said he did not know the exact lifespan but the signs would be made of powder coated steel, which is quite durable. With regular maintenance, the signs should last for decades.

John Goodenberger added that the existing interpretive signs were at least 20 years old.

Councilor Herman thanked the members of the stakeholders group and survey participants.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herman, seconded by Councilor Brownson to approve the Riverwalk wayfinding sign designs. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(d): Consideration to Award Contract to SeaReach LTD for final design development, fabrication and installation of Riverwalk signs using sole source procurement

In March 2021, the City was awarded \$428,408 in grant funds from the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD) to carry out improvements on the Riverwalk through the Uniontown and Downtown portions of the trail with a 40% (\$288,937) match provided by the City for a project total of \$717,345. \$94,000 of the project funds were used for project management services through a contract with planning firm, Greenworks, who is managing multiple facets of the grant items, including the development of the sign components of the project. Greenworks subcontracted SeaReach LTD, an Oregon-based sign development firm, to produce draft designs and cost estimates for fabrication and installation of the signs. There are additional funds allocated in the grant budget to cover the final design, fabrication, and installation of the new wayfinding, interpretive, and trolley stop cabinets and staff have determined that continuing to work directly with SeaReach to complete this aspect of the overall project is most advantageous and beneficial to the City. Per the City's code 1.967 for this type of procurement, public notice was posted on the City's website for ten days to notify of the decision to procure this work using the sole source method and there were no objections raised by members of the public. It is recommended that the City Council consider awarding the contract for final design development, fabrication and installation of Riverwalk signs to SeaReach LTD using the method of sole source procurement as described in the City Code section 1.967.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Rocka, seconded by Councilor Herman to award the contract for final design development, fabrication and installation of Riverwalk signs to SeaReach LTD using the method of sole source procurement as described in the City Code section 1.967. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(e): Consideration of Pacific Power Easement for 1152 Marine Drive – Astoria Food Hub

To accommodate development of the Astoria Food Hub at 1152 Marine Dr., a new, more robust electrical service is required. The preferred alignment for the new service requires encroachment into the rail-banked property, north of the building at 1152 Marine Dr. The attached exhibit map shows the proposed alignment and area needed for the power transformer and associated electrical lines. The additional items shown on the exhibit map (garbage enclosure, deck, etc.) are not to be considered at this time. City staff reviewed the request for the encroachment and recommend an easement with Pacific Power. Approval of an easement for these purposes was authorized by City Council at the December 6, 2021, City Council Meeting. That initial easement document was never fully executed or recorded due challenges BNSF Railroad had with the proposal and will be nullified. Revisions to the alignment/encroachment were made so that BNSF approval is no longer needed, and the new easement document is attached to this memo. City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard has reviewed the easement and approved as to form.

Staff are recommending approval with the condition that an updated legal description and exhibit map are provided by a licensed surveyor. The terms/conditions detailed in the easement document will also need to be

satisfied. The development team for the Food Hub is currently working on these conditions and will submit the additional documentation to the City once it's completed. It is recommended that City Council approve the easement and authorize the Mayor to sign upon staff review and approval of the conditions of approval, including an updated legal description and exhibit map.

Mayor Jones said Pacific Power worked very hard with the City to work around the issues and make this feasible.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to approve the easement and authorize the Mayor to sign upon staff review and approval of the conditions of approval, including an updated legal description and exhibit map. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

The Council addressed New Business, Miscellaneous and Public Comments at this time.

HERITAGE SQUARE AND OTHER CODE AMENDMENTS

These items were addressed immediately following New Business, Miscellaneous and Public Comments.

Item 8(a): Discussion and Consideration of Heritage Square Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (to be Continued at February 22, 2022 City Council Meeting for Vote)

In late 2021, the Astoria Development Commission discussed and subsequently issued a request for expressions of interest (RFEI) to develop workforce housing on the City of Astoria owned Heritage Square property. The RFEI was issued with a deadline to submit of December 20, 2021. Two responses were received with teams led by Related Northwest and Edlen & Company. Mayor Jones appointed a committee to review the submittals. Individuals appointed are Walt Postlewait, Jessamyn West, Monica Steele, David Reid, Meg Leatherman and Brett Estes. The committee met and developed a review document which was transmitted to the Astoria Development Commission for consideration at their January 18, 2022 meeting. At that meeting the Commission voted to recommend that the Astoria City Council approve an exclusive negotiating agreement (ENA) with Edlen & Company. It should be noted that the Astoria Development Commission and Astoria City Council are one in the same but represent two separate governmental entities. The Astoria Development Commission oversees urban renewal activities. The Astoria City Council is the entity who would be able to approve an ENA at Heritage Square in that the City owns that property. It is recommended that the Council review and discuss the materials as well as draft ENA and take public comment on the issue.

Mayor Jones explained that the ENA would not commit the City to any project. The agreement would allow the City to negotiate with one firm for one year. During that year, both parties would seek consensus on a project's terms and conditions like parking requirements, building design requirements, targeted income levels and other things. If an agreement is not reached, no project would happen. The negotiating process would include open houses and other public meetings. The development concept that Edlen submitted proposes making the development feasible by using a combination of financial strategies to include Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funding. The conditions of both programs require households' annual income to be below certain levels at the time of application in order to qualify for residency. The development's average overall affordability must be targeted at households with 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) with no units exceeding 80 percent of AMI. There were concerns that this type of project would disincentivize upward mobility. However, once a household qualifies for residency, the household can remain in the unit even if income increases. Edlen has proposed achieving the 60 percent average by including a mix of 80 percent AMI units with 30 percent AMI units that would be part of a separate CBH residential building with programming. The AMI is adjusted annually and the 2022 numbers are expected to be six to eight percent higher than the 2021 numbers. The 2022 numbers would be released on April 1st. Last year's numbers for 80 percent AMI units indicated that household income limits for initial qualification would range from \$40,880 for a one-person household to \$58,320 for a four-person household. Projected 2022 numbers could result in household income limits from \$44,000 to \$63,000. The starting pay for an Astoria School District teacher this year is \$42,875. Projected rents would range from \$738 to \$994 for a studio apartment, \$787 to \$1,061 for a

one-bedroom and \$1,091 to \$1,470 for a three-bedroom. It is not legal to have housing that targets or discriminates against people based on employment. Therefore, any type of income would be considered. The federal LIHTC program is required to be available to the general public and allows preferences to be given to veterans, people with special needs, women fleeing domestic violence, and people with disabilities.

Amy Baker, Executive Director, CBH, said the plan for the CBH building would be to have 33 units of permanent supportive housing. The housing is intended to be a long term option for people who have behavioral health concerns like substance abuse or mental health issues. The residents would remain in the program for as long as it fit their needs and they are willing to participate. The Open Door program would provide up to 10 employees, multiple case managers, supportive employment specialists, program managers and a nurse. All of those employees would be located on the first floor of the building. Ongoing support would be offered during business hours. A live-in resident manager would be on the property 24/7 and would be responsible for issues. A housing specialist would ensure that people were successful in the housing program. The building would be paid for, so rents and subsidies would pay for ongoing property management and building maintenance. Services and support would be paid for by CBH's current funding streams and additional funding from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Columbia Pacific CCO. The residents would be entering into housing because they want to participate in the housing program. There would be expectations around how they participate in community living. CBH would have a strong presence on that site. When people receive enough support within their living arrangements, things tend to go smoothly. When people have a place to go, they tend to do well and do not get into a lot of trouble.

Councilor Brownson said there was a funding mechanism in place now to establish and operate the housing program, which is a long-term investment. Funding for CBH is challenging and if funding goes away, the organization might not be able to find another source. He asked how the program would look 10 years from now. He also wanted to know where else the program could be located if it could not be located at Heritage Square. He noted that people were concerned about loitering and noise disturbances, but they are equating the current issues at the Garden of Surging Waves with this housing project. The same concerns existed when the yellow house in Uniontown was established. However, the program's rules prevented any issues.

Ms. Baker responded that CBH was established in 1963 and was funded as a community mental health program to take care of people with mental health issues. The nature and mission of the organization is very unlikely to change unless there is a cure for mental illness. CBH spends a lot of time playing chase with people, running from crisis to crisis because people are unhoused. The program would save lives and make CBH's work infinitely easier. CBH cannot work on anything with anybody unless the basic need of safety is met. There is very little safety in being homeless. The funding does ebb and flow. Programs increase and get cut back. However, CBH will never go away and this program will always be a high priority. The program is a high priority for CBH's funders as well because they know that when people are homeless they end up using other resources. The housing and building maintenance will be covered by the monthly rents that residents pay and by project vouchers. When programming and a sense of community is in place, the same types of problems do not exist. When individuals feel like they have been cast out, that is when the rules and social norms do not apply. She had been looking for a housing site for three years and several locations have been considered. Multiple times she has heard that the program is great but people do not want it located at any particular site. If this program is not located at Heritage Square, she did not know where it would be located but CBH would continue looking for a site.

Councilor Herman asked if all 10 employees would work around the clock at the facility.

Ms. Baker clarified that there would be 10 total employees, most of whom would be working during business hours. The on-site program manager would be present to deal with problems that occur after hours and the mobile crisis team would be on-call as backup for issues the manager could not handle.

Councilor Herman said parking would be lost on the site. She asked where the employees would park.

Ms. Baker responded that CBH is currently located at 12th and Exchange, where they have parking behind the building. That parking could still be used for the housing program employees.

Councilor Herman asked where the residents were living now.

Ms. Baker said some of them were homeless, some were inadequately housed, some were couch surfing, some were temporary residents, and some were currently at the North Coast Crisis Respite and Residential. This project is a couple of years from being complete. Therefore, CBH has not yet developed a waiting list.

Mayor Jones said a large apartment owner contacted him to ask about the long-term maintenance of the main building in the proposed development. He asked if Edlen was confident that there would be enough funding to properly maintain the building into the future.

Jill Sherman, Edlen, responded that just like market rate housing, when the funding is originally obtained for the project, the annual maintenance and repair costs are included. Funds are set aside in a capital replacement fund for major system improvements and repairs. The regular operating budget would include funds for regular ongoing maintenance.

Mayor Jones stated there was also a concern that the primary building would be for people with no or very low incomes, resulting in welfare housing. He asked what the eligibility requirements were for housing.

Ms. Sherman said the rents would be set at between 60 and 80 percent of AMI. Someone with zero to 30 percent of AMI would not be able to afford to live in one of the units and would not qualify. Similar to market rate housing, credit and background checks are done on applicants and their monthly gross income is used to confirm that people can afford the unit they want to rent.

Councilor Rocka said a lot of the people who submitted written testimony are concerned about the ceiling on income. He asked what types of financing are needed to make this project happen, why those types of financing were chosen, what the requirements are for those types of financing, and what were the difficulties of developing this site.

Ms. Sherman stated the proposed sources of funding included permanent debt. The amount of debt this project can support is based on the rents and the income that the project generates. Below market rate projects cannot support 60 to 70 percent of the project costs with debt financing. Therefore, other funding sources are necessary. The largest funding source for this project would be the four percent low-income housing tax credit, which is a federal tax credit. An investor would put money into the project for construction costs and their return on that investment would be tax credits over a 10-year period. The tax credits can go up to 80 percent as long as the average of all of the units is no more than 60 percent. Therefore, staying under 60 percent would attract investors. Edlen was also considering state funding from the LIFT program, which could go up to 80 percent. The last funding sources would be through a capital campaign led by CBH and City funds, like the land value, property tax abatements, or Urban Renewal funds.

Councilor Brownson said once the averaging establishes itself as a realistic and viable mechanism, he asked if the number of 80 percent units could be increased in the future to meet the standard that has been established.

Ms. Sherman stated she did not know but she would find out. She believed the income mix over time could be changed as long as the average stayed below 60 percent. When someone goes over the income limit, they would be allowed to stay in the unit. When a couple of households go over the income limit, the average could be over 60 percent and that would jeopardize the tax credits.

Councilor Brownson noted that the City had focused on the term workforce housing, which is income-based housing. He wanted a better term for the housing the City is offering.

Ms. Sherman responded that there is a distinction between affordable and workforce housing. However, many people who live in affordable housing are working. In the housing industry, the term Affordable Housing applies to housing that uses subsidies and tax credits. Housing between 80 and 120 percent AMI is middle income housing. Those terms do not imply whether someone is working or not and are just an indication of which households those units are affordable to.

Councilor Brownson advised that the City needed to be careful about putting names on housing types. A lot of the public comments have referred to this project as low income housing and people are fearful of who the residents will be. The residents will be people who have an income and this housing is just easier to get into.

Councilor Herman understood that it could be problematic for the developer if there were too many people with rising incomes remaining in the building.

Ms. Sherman said yes, if income averaging is used and the average goes above 60 percent. People making 140 percent of AMI might look for a different housing opportunity.

Councilor Herman asked if the rents would be prorated.

Ms. Sherman explained that the targeted maximum income levels for the units are set at the beginning of the project. The rents are then associated with those income levels.

Councilor Herman asked what would happen to the project if Edlen ceased doing business.

Ms. Sherman said during the tax credit compliance period, the limited partner would be engaged in the project to make sure their investment will produce the tax credits. If Edlen went out of business, the investor would have a right to take over or appoint another sponsor with comparable experience and financial wherewithal.

Mayor Jones stated the just before the meeting began, the Council received an email that was not included in the Agenda packet but was published online. The email was from the ADHDA about a survey of its members. A lot of the public comments expressed concerns about the project's impact on downtown businesses.

Jessamyn West, Director, ADHDA, said the ADHDA surveyed their members about how they felt about the proposals and the project. Seventy-five percent agreed with the Council's proposal to develop Heritage Square into housing. Sixty-one percent agreed with the Council's proposal to develop the block into subsidized housing for people with 80 percent AMI or less. Seventy-eight percent of respondents believed they were well informed on the issue. One hundred percent of the respondents felt the ADHDA could submit the survey results or the survey results and a statement of position. The survey had a 53 percent response rate from the membership.

Mayor Jones asked for information about the potential impact of the project on the Sunday Market.

Ms. West said she had spoken with the Sunday Market manager a few months ago about alternate locations. One alternate location is very promising. The Sunday Market is very important to the economy as it brings in over \$1 million a year. She and the manager are confident that a suitable location could be found if the market needs to move.

Councilor Herman stated she had heard that people were concerned about the potential impact to downtown businesses due to a perceived lack of parking.

Ms. West responded that the ADHDA has reiterated and referenced the 2019 Parking Study, which indicated that Astoria had plenty of parking. Losing the parking spaces at Heritage Square would result in parking at alternate locations. It appears that the relocation of Coast Guard parking to Tongue Point resulted in 50 or 60 parking spaces downtown. Additionally, there are privately owned lot that could provide parking spaces. The City owns the lot that the Coast Guard parks in and the timing of that move would be brilliant because that parking would open up as this project would be getting built. The ADHDA is committed to exploring alternate parking solutions. However, she personally believed housing was a more urgent issue than parking.

Mayor Jones added that there are two City-owned lots between 15th and 16th Streets, one of the river side and one on between the highway and the armory. Those lots are used exclusively by the Coast Guard as long as the two cutters are ported at the 17th Street pier. The cutters are being decommissioned and would go away, but there is no date set for that yet. When the cutters leave the pier, the replacement cutters will be ported at Tongue Point. At that point, the City will have two additional parking lots.

Councilor Brownson stated that existing parking would change because things are changing in the city. In the evenings, the City parking lot is available for parking. When the library is closed, that parking is available as well. These parking areas do not get mentioned in these discussions and he wanted people to be aware that more parking is available than people think.

Mayor Jones called for public comments.

Arline LaMear, Astoria, said when she was Mayor, she found it frustrating how slowly the government worked. One of the reasons things take so long in government is NIMBY-ism, not in my backyard. Everyone she had spoken to said the City needed to build housing for the workforce, but not at Heritage Square. People also agree that the City should house the mentally ill and provide them with services, but not in our backyard. She understood both sides of the argument. She would love to see a beautiful plaza like they have in many European cities, but they had czars and emperors and baskets of money that Astoria does not have. Astoria is a working class city. The Parks Department is stretched thin and has no funding to build a city plaza. The City Council has made workplace housing a goal for years. Astoria does not have surplus of buildable land, but it does have Heritage Square and Astoria's heritage is working class. Some of the downtown businesses feel the threshold for renting the proposed units should be 80 to 120 percent of AMI. The only way this project can succeed and provide upward of 75 units is if the median rental is 60 percent of AMI. That is what the federal and state government have stated is the standard for receiving government funding. Now, she wanted to address the issue of the building devoted to the clients of CBH. Amy Baker, the executive director of CBH has stated that in the last 10 years, CBH has serviced 10,000 unique clients. That is the population of Astoria. These folks are our neighbors, families, and friends. They are not some subspecies that we can shut out. They need shelter. They need services where they live, not half way across the county. The goal of CBH is to help these people become a part of the community again, to enter into the workforce again. CBH is going to provide services on site and provide supervision 24/7. What more can we ask. Become a part of the solution to homelessness and the need for affordable housing. She urged the Council to support the project at Heritage Square.

Wendy Hemsley, Astoria, said she supported the mission statement and what CBH is doing. She asked if the City had proposals from organizations other than CBH for the Heritage Square development.

Mayor Jones responded that two proposals were submitted in response to the Request for Expression of Interest (REFI) and the Development Commission chose to move forward with Edlen's proposal, which includes a small CBH facility and a larger apartment building.

Ms. Hemsley asked if the City was open to accepting other proposals.

Mayor Jones stated the deadline to submit an Expression of Interest had passed. If the City enters into this ENA being discussed, ideas could be sent to Edlen. If the City does not choose to enter into an ENA with Edlen, other proposals might be considered at a future date after sending out another RFEI.

David Reid, 4924 Cedar St., Astoria, Director of the Astoria Warrenton Chamber of Commerce, stated the Chamber has had concerns about this project from the beginning. Having these discussions has been very healthy for the City because any decision the Council makes will be a better decision. The Chamber had concerns about the true workforce housing, which is at 80 to 140 percent of AMI. The site is unique because it is in the urban renewal district and is owned by the City. If true workforce housing is not located at Heritage Square, where would it be located. Astoria has a crisis and a pinch on the ability to build living wage higher income jobs because of housing. This is a chance to address that. He believed Edlen was the right choice. However, he still did not want to close the door on true workforce housing. If the City decides to go with Edlen and if the proposed project comes to fruition, he hoped the Council and Staff would put the same amount of energy and urgency into any workforce housing project ever proposed. If the City does not turn and face opportunity, the community will always be facing need.

Councilor Brownson asked if Mr. Reid was speaking as an individual or as a representative of the Chamber.

Mr. Reid confirmed he was speaking as a representative of the Chamber of Commerce.

Councilor Brownson asked if the board had discussed these comments with Mr. Reid, agreed with the comments, and directed to speak on the record.

Mr. Reid stated that was correct.

Mayor Jones asked Mr. Reid to define true workforce housing.

Mr. Reid replied that the Chamber had defined it as housing for people with incomes at 80 to 140 percent AMI. The Chamber was housing for people working jobs in the Enterprise Zone and the jobs at Tongue Point. He has stated in the past that those employees do not have any place to live either and those are the jobs that will help build the AMI for everyone in the County. Higher wage jobs cannot be filled if the employees do not have a place to live.

Mayor Jones agreed that equal effort should be put into housing for people with incomes at 80 to 120 percent of AMI. However, he believed the term true workforce was problematic because it seemed to suggest that people working full time who make less than 80 percent of AMI are not part of the true workforce. He suggested the term complete workforce. This project certainly would not help the complete workforce, though.

Mr. Reid said he agreed the term complete workforce was more appropriate. He agreed that 60 to 80 percent captures a number of people who are working in Astoria now and this project would provide housing for members of the workforce. However, Astoria is still lacking housing for people making above 80 percent of AMI and those are the jobs that need to keep growing in the community. Heritage Square is a unique location, given the tools available to find a way to turn it into higher level housing.

Theo Rose Astoria, said she had lived in Astoria her whole life. She had worked mostly minimum wage jobs in the restaurant industry. According to Google, people working 40 hours a week for minimum wage in Oregon for 50 weeks a year make considerably less than \$44,000 a year. Most of the people she knows in Astoria work full time at minimum wage. It is insulting for people to imply that minimum wage workers do not need housing or that they are not part of the true workforce or that they should not live downtown. People who believed the housing should be called affordable housing instead of low income housing should question why they are uncomfortable with poor people being able to afford housing. People who are low income are also part of the workforce and they deserve to be housed. She wanted to know why people were so uncomfortable with this project being built at Heritage Square. Many people who are making a lower income may not be able to afford having a car and it would be easier for them to live downtown so they could bike or walk. It is important to remember that \$44,000 a year, which is 80 percent of the average income, is not as much as a lot of people make in Astoria. People who work in the service industry, which is the main industry in Astoria, are making considerably less.

Cindy Price, Astoria, said it was a shame that some of the discussion was pitting people against affordable housing or housing for the disadvantaged. The financing of the project is worth highlighting. This is not affordable housing, but it is Affordable Housing, as defined by the industry, referring to a project that requires land value, tax credits, urban renewal funds from the City, and a campaign program from CBH. Sixty-one percent of the 53 percent of their members who responded to a survey agreed with subsidized housing for people with 75 percent of AMI. She agreed with all of the elements of housing and services proposed for this project. Astoria needs all of those types of housing and services. She is usually the minority on the Planning Commission because she constantly denies conditional use permits and variances because the land or housing could be used for working residents instead of anything else. She believed that low AMI in downtown would add to the vitality of downtown because that is the history in every other town. However, the downtown business are not concerned.

Cathy Mathews Grand Ave., Astoria, said she was concerned about where the project would be located if not at Heritage Square. Also, she wholeheartedly disagreed with Ms. LaMere that NIMBY-ism was a reason people opposed the project. She would love to see this project happen because it would fulfill a need, but Astoria is not Portland or a big city. Astoria has a small historic downtown center and it probably will not grow much. When she came to Astoria 20 years ago, there were five or six hotels, most of them small. Since then, three or four more large hotels have been built. Still, every summer, there is no room available. Astoria has several areas with wonderful housing for people and there are lovely areas built for medical centers and care for people. And those areas are not in such a compact area like downtown where shopping is done. Like it or not, we have to admit that the way the forestry and fishing industries have gone, tourists are a big part of what will keep downtown Astoria alive. The tourists will not come to Astoria to look at apartments and they will not come if they have to worry about being accosted by the homeless. Her shop is on Commercial and the complaint she hears the most from customers is that there is not enough parking. She is no longer able to walk to work and in the summer, she has parked in the lot below Amy's building as a last resort. Handicapped and elderly people cannot walk from three blocks down and then walk through town. She also hears customers say they are afraid of the homeless. If the homeless affect Astoria adversely as they have so many other towns, Astoria will lose tourists because the town will be too dirty from the homeless. Then, the businesses will have to close down. Some of the

homeless people are ideal and wonderful, but some of them come to Astoria when they hear when resources are available for them to take advantage of. She was worried about the health of Astoria and there has to other places for this project that are close, but not the center core of the business district.

Eric Andersen 270 W. Irving Ave., Astoria, said he had been a homeowner in Astoria for 20 years. For the last five years, he had volunteered as a teacher for Clatsop Community College's Oncore Senior Community Education Program teaching a year-round weekly writing class at the Astoria Senior Center at the corner of 11th and Exchange. His comments are his own perspective and do not necessarily reflect the views of Clatsop Community College, it's Oncore program, or the Senior Center. He divided the redevelopment proposal into three geographical pieces, the old Safeway brownfield, the 12th Street parking lot, and the 11th Street parking area. The old Safeway brownfield is an aesthetic disaster. The proposal will build over it but would not provide additional public parking. He gave a letter grade for that portion of the development a C. He and his wife, who has arthritis, use the 12th Street parking lot to have lunch at the Supper Club and attend events at the Liberty Theatre. If nearby parking is removed from those businesses, it would be less convenient or prohibitive for customers to patronize them. His letter grade for the 12th Street parking lot redevelopment is D. Parking on 15th or 16th Street to walk over to 12th Street will not cut it. According to the *Daily Astorian*, redevelopment proposal for the 11th Street parking area envisions a four story building with no parking spaces because the government's clients do not typically drive. The current clients of the Senior Center do drive. However, this demographic also needs the assistance of canes and walkers. For some, every extra step comes with pain. His letter grade for the 11th Street parking area is F because of the way the redevelopment will severely impact the elderly patrons of the Senior Center located directly across the street.

Lisa DiChicco 1135 Grand Ave., Astoria, said she objected to the proposed amendments, A21-03, A21-04, and A21-05. She understood the reason for these amendments was to facilitate the redevelopment of Heritage Square to provide workforce housing. There is a rush for funding and a pressing need for housing of any kind. There are also growing problems with homelessness, mental health, addiction and poverty that warrants action. The east half of the Heritage Square block has a hole that can be transformed into anything. She suggested the new CBH center be connected to the existing one on 12th and Exchange and leave the lot west of the American Legion alone. Ideally, she would like to see the entire block as a town square with the lot on 11th and Exchange as open space. That would satisfy most of the reasons for opposition to this project. Parking for the Senior Center and American Legion would remain. The open space would adjoin the Garden of Surging Waves. Half a dozen historical buildings are visible from Heritage Square. The street is very busy and without parking, people would be using ride shares and there would be more foot traffic. She recommended that only the east side of the block be developed.

Nicholas Stevens Astoria, said the lack of housing in Astoria was obvious, but [inaudible 2:29:07] CBH program. A friend of his struggled with mental health last year and the type of program proposed for the project would have saved his friend's life. The combination of Section 8 housing and inaccessible therapies is not enough for some people. No matter where this project is located, it is important to put the project into place.

Jordan Kinesky said he was a teacher in Astoria. The people who are keeping the schools open right now are the people who would benefit from the proposed housing. Apparently, they are not part of the true workforce of Astoria, but the bus drivers, substitute teachers and first year teachers make less than \$45,000 a year. It is ridiculous that people believe creating more affordable workforce housing creates more homelessness problems. He lived downtown and knew how bad the problem with homeless people could be. The solution is not to take away resources. This project would give the homeless resources so they could lift themselves out of the situation. If people are not happy with the homeless situation, they should support the project. If people do not support the project, they should stop complaining about the homeless. He recently surveyed 69 people living in Astoria about their current situations and 73.1 percent said they made less than \$44,000 a year. Also, 69.1 percent said they have had difficulty finding housing in the area and 95.6 percent said they knew someone who had difficulty finding housing. This project targets working people. He read the following from people who had responded to his survey:

"This school year alone, we have hired educators who ended up resigning from their job before the school year started because they were unable to find housing. Others were renting hotel rooms for weeks at a time until they could find a place to live more permanently. The public education of the community depends on being able to hire and retain quality educators and if they cannot find housing, they will not stay. This harms the

community's education system. Of course, this is not part of the true workforce, but still, these are people who are keeping our schools open."

"Yes, our current house went up for sale and we were told that we would need to find housing in 90 days. As small business owners in Astoria with a huge network of folks to turn to, not a single person could help us find a place to live. We have [inaudible 2:33:36] and nothing, not because we didn't have the money to move, or the income, or credit. There was no inventory."

"I currently have housing, but [inaudible 2:33:47]. I have two kids. I support myself fully. I need a three bedroom for kids. I need to stay in the Astoria School District. I know that currently, if I were to lose this housing, I would be forced to be homeless or to move cross-country near family and uproot kids from current friends, lifestyles, etcetera. I've tried multiple times to move recently because I don't live in a very safe or kid-friendly neighborhood. There are needles on the ground, etcetera. But to no avail, everything is too expensive or off the market before it's even on. I've thought recently about getting out of the restaurant industry as I have outgrown the atmosphere to get into something more meaningful with my downtime as I wait [crosstalk 2:34:19]"

Zetty Nemlowill, 478 Kensington, Astoria, said everyone who has testified has an important perspective, so the Council has a difficult job. She was excited about housing at Heritage Square and the momentum that the Council created. However, she had some concerns about the current proposal. Taxes pay for city services that everyone relies on and another non-tax paying entity in the urban renewal district would make the City suffer in the long run as the cost of services surpass the annual budget. She was not sure how CBH got on the development ticket, but housing for mentally ill at Heritage Square was never a Council goal, nor was it ever part of a past planning effort that included the public. Many Astoria workers would not qualify to live at Heritage Square. For an individual, 60 percent of AMI is just under \$15 an hour. Economic development leaders have said this housing would not serve a large part of the Astoria workforce due to the ceiling on income. She questioned who this housing would support. She was concerned that the employers who would benefit would be big box retailers and fast-food chains that pay their workers as little as possible. She would like to see a plan for housing at Heritage Square that truly addresses a shortage of workforce housing for Astorians. It would be a good way for the City to implement the economic development plan, Advance Astoria. Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, CEDR, Craft3, Fort George, the Co-op, and Hyak have all said the current proposal would not serve many local workers. For long term city prosperity, this city would reap the benefits of being more proactive about economic development. The only way to continue providing the level of City services we all need and enjoy is by growing the tax base. The City can do that by supporting businesses. Workforce housing is one way to do that and that is why it is a strategy in Advance Astoria. When businesses prosper, the City prospers, and all residents prosper. Downtown vitality is a key factor to consider with housing at Heritage Square. She loved the idea of someone being able to live, work, and play all within walking distance or biking distance. She asked the Council to take more time to seek a developer to create housing at Heritage Square that better serves the workers of Astoria.

Cole Evans Astoria, said he was a new resident of Astoria. He had an undergraduate degree and master's degree from the University of Nebraska. He was an academic advisor for military and workforce training students at Clatsop Community College. He was also a farmer in Clatsop County. He fully supported this project. Coming to Clatsop Community College with a master's degree, he makes \$42,000 a year so he is also someone who is not part of the workforce. As a farmer, he makes less than that. When he was a tourist coming to Astoria, he did not come for the businesses. He came to Astoria because of the natural beauty. There is nothing beautiful about a parking lot, but it sounded like the Senior Center was located in the wrong spot. Most people commute to the Senior Center so it could be located anywhere. However, the proposed building should be located near where people work. If this resolution passes and people at the Senior Center need rides, he would donate 20 hours of his time every week to giving seniors rides to the Senior Center.

Kris Haefker, Astoria, said he was concerned about the location of housing. He wanted to see an inventory of City properties that could become housing in the future. He also wanted the City to consider private property for development. The City should look at its land inventory and strategize the best placement for housing. Income challenged people would be better located closer to schools, grocery stores and health facilities because they do not have as much transportation available to them. The costs associated with Heritage Square are \$400,000 a unit, so the City should take some time to look at other areas for development at cheaper costs even if that includes purchasing land. He was unclear about how urban renewal funds would be used and how they would get replenished through this project. He thanked the City for helping out with housing, which was a difficult task.

Eric Wheeler, 687 12th St., Astoria, said he recently moved to Astoria and was an architectural historian. He asked if any consideration was given to the space and place that the American Legion building currently takes. He also wanted to know if a Section 106 survey was done and explained that the survey identifies what might be a negative impact on historic buildings by a new development that partially federally funded. He was not sure if tax credits qualified as federal funding, so he would like to know if this project triggered a Section 106 review.

Mayor Jones responded that if the City enters into an ENA with Edlen, the developer could reach out to any other property owners. Without an ENA, it would not be appropriate for the developer to reach out for those kinds of negotiations.

Ms. Sherman added that the only federal funds that would potentially be used in this project would be project-based Section 8 vouchers for the CBH residents. She believed that would trigger a Section 106 review and noted that Section 106 would require the project to be compatible with a historic district.

Mike Rutso Grand Ave., Astoria, said he was concerned about the homeless facility and crisis center. A lot of homeless people have criminal records and mental illness. Building a facility would bring more homeless people to Astoria. He asked how the City would handle homeless people who commit crimes or get injured. Downtown has vibrant businesses and bringing this facility into the area would create a lot of issues. He did not believe low income housing would be a problem.

Laura said a lot of people were upset about the idea of a four-story building with no parking. However, right across the street is a four-story building with no parking, the Elks building. So, the proposed building would go with the vernacular of the style and fit with downtown. Prioritizing people over parking is the best approach and places the citizens' needs over the tourists' needs. Her husband is a school teacher and if they did not have help purchasing a home, they would qualify for housing at 60 to 80 percent of AMI. To the people who think they are lower or different or that they would bring crime into the neighborhood because they would be living downtown, they are living in the neighborhoods already.

Mayor Jones reminded that the concept development proposal called for about 55 parking spaces.

Chris Nemlowill, 1483 Duane St., Astoria, said \$44,000 has been mentioned several times and he wanted to clarify that was for a family of four. Not many of the proposed units would accommodate a family of four. The units would be primarily for one person.

Mayor Jones clarified that \$44,000 was the projected 2022 AMI for a one-person household. The actual number would not be released until April.

Oscar Demasi, said he was a local business owner who moved to Astoria five or six years ago. One of the biggest problems is parking. He thought the project was a great idea, but he heard that it was difficult to find another location. He also heard that the City was able to quickly relocate the existing parking on the site to where the Coast Guard parking is, which is less convenient for everyone to frequent the downtown area. If the parking lot could be moved so quickly, he asked why the City could not move the building to where the Coast Guard parking lot is or find a place closer to the hospital.

Noel Weber 514 12th St., Astoria, said he had been following the meetings on this project and he seen the numbers go from about \$300,000 per unit to about \$400,000 a unit. He asked if \$400,000 per unit was accurate.

Ms. Sherman explained that it was still very early in the process, but it would not be unusual for a project like this to have a cost per unit of \$400,000.

Mr. Webber asked if the cost per unit was related to the geotechnical issues on the site.

Ms. Sherman said there were some things about the site that were unique, but it is not unlike other sites in downtown Astoria. Other sites in the vicinity have similar issues in terms of where the original grade was and where the grade is now, which creates the need for a deep foundation to build on stable soil.

Mr. Webber said \$400,000 seemed like a crazy amount per unit for housing. If there was a place that was less difficult to build, maybe the City should consider that place since this is a six year contract with the federal government.

Ms. Sherman stated the costs were not out of line with other similar projects, but there are some unique aspect to financing this project that have some costs.

Mr. Webber asked how the cost per unit related to market rate housing.

Ms. Sherman said the cost of financing associated with affordable housing are higher than market rate housing. Affordable housing developments are also held over a very long period of time by the owners, so certain decisions are made up front to ensure durability. Market rate housing includes a lot of different developers offering a lot of different construction qualities.

Katherine Kavanagh asked the Council to consider the effect this project might have on the Garden of Surging Waves. The garden would be blocked in on the east and south sides. This project would also cut off all the light to the garden. Offering services in the current parking lot between 11th and Exchange would ignore the needs of the Senior Center, the American Legion, and the Garden of Surging Waves. She asked the Council to consider combining the apartments and the CBH building with the microunits and the services on the east side of the block, leaving the south side of the garden open to the sun and to the community. She also recommended allowing open access to what is now a parking lot. In the future, that parking lot could be turned into community space.

Dan Early 687 12th St., Astoria, displayed a document on the screen. He said he had lived in Astoria for 4.5 years and was a retired psychotherapist. Around Thanksgiving 2021, he heard from his landlord that the Planning Commission was considering two new housing complexes on Heritage Square. He heard that part of the housing would be workforce housing and another part would be housing for people struggling with behavioral health issues. By Christmas, the timeline seemed short before these projects would be greenlighted. He asked why now and why here. He had heard the City was thinking about doing something about the housing problem for about five years. Nearly half of that time has been pandemic time. Even with Covid, business must get done and decisions must be made, but this decision to erect specialized housing in the center of the city is a decision he did not take lightly. The City's approach reminded him of the old political gambit of giving constituents bad news late Friday afternoon so the whole issue would be forgotten by Monday morning. It was only a couple of weeks ago that a public notification was posted on the fence surrounding the collapsed Safeway site. Taking on issues as important as these between Thanksgiving and New Years at the end of the second year of a pandemic seems disingenuous. He thought there were plans for a piazza or a public space to extend the Garden of Surging Waves. Buildings will have a 40-to-60-year impact. He asked if the decision had been made to make Heritage Square the epicenter for supplying public assistance to needy people. He asked when the philosophy changed. He also asked if public discussion was held and if the City analyzed how well the Merwyn project had gone. He had reviewed documents on the history of the area that indicate the City was previously going in a much different direction. Now, the issue is being presented as resolved. He loved Astoria, especially the older architecture. He hoped the City would consider changing Heritage Square with plenty of time for deliberation. The current proposal would not add to the charm of the city. He asked if there was any other area of the city these apartments could be built. He was disappointed with the lack of long-term vision. The proposed project would only serve a tiny fraction of Clatsop County citizens, yet the impact on all of the county would be like a social bomb going off in the center of town.

Mayor Jones responded that during the City Council goal setting session in January 2017, developing Heritage Square with a housing component was first added as a Council goal at a public meeting. It was reported by the *Daily Astorian*, and the article stated that the two former Councilors who spoke tonight both advocated for housing at Heritage Square. In January 2018, at a Council goal setting session, housing at Heritage Square was rededicated as a Council goal. In January 2019, January 2020, January 2021, and January 2022, the City Council advocated for redeveloping Heritage Square with a housing component. The reason it took five years to get to this point was because the City had to finish the Code changes implementing the Riverfront Vision Plan, the Hollander hotel project and the pandemic. There were also other issues that did not give the Community Development Department enough time to manage this project. In the past year, the City finished some other projects and were able to bring this project to the top of the queue.

Mr. Early said he was shocked that after all that time, barely over half of the businesses approve of this project. He was surprised that more businesses were not onboard.

Andrea Mazzarella said she supported this project. She understood that the City could not house everyone who needed a home. She moved into the real estate industry from the service industry five years ago after realizing there was little potential for upward mobility. Housing continued to get more expensive, wages did not increase, and tips did not get better. Teachers, retail workers, medical assistants, baristas, kitchen staff, cooks, and hotel clerks typically make less than \$18.00 an hour and would qualify for this housing project. She was frustrated by the number of people who opposed the project and did not understand that without the tax credits to fund this expensive development, the project would not happen. The project has to stick to the specific percentages of pricing in order to get the tax credits. The City Council is not deciding just arbitrarily, it is part of what needs to happen for this housing project to get built. It was infuriating to hear commentary that people who make lower incomes are less deserving of assistance or housing or that they somehow would be increasing the homeless situation downtown.

Mayor Jones noted that so many of the public comments have mentioned parking and housing, which are part of Items 8(b) and 8(c). He asked if he could stipulate that all public comments already made be attached to the public record for Items 8(b) and 8(c).

City Attorney Henningsgaard confirmed that the Mayor could join the public records.

Christine Lowlitch 179 W. Duane St., Astoria, said she supported affordable housing, but she was concerned about parking downtown. Many times, she had come downtown and driven around to find no parking places. The visitors are wonderful because they help the economy, but she did not know what the history was with CBH. She spent many years with behavioral health issues and there is a need, but this is for Clatsop County. She was not sure why it needed to be downtown Astoria instead of Warrenton or Seaside.

Mayor Jones responded that the project is much cleaner on one block. The possibility of another location could be explored by the developer. He called for a recess at 9:10 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 9:20 pm.

Ms. Sherman responded to Ms. Lowlitch. She explained that a lot of different things needed to be balanced, parking, housing units, the height of the building, and who gets served. Edlen would consider having one larger building on the larger part of the site because it would be the most cost-effective way to build. If the ENA is approved, Edlen would consider the concept they already submitted as well as other concepts to figure out what best meets the overall objectives. There would be boundaries to what is possible. For example, Edlen considered a parking structure, but it would not be feasible.

Theresa Barnes 9th and Franklin, Astoria said this project seemed like a good idea to her. The community has acknowledged for many years now that something needed to be done. She hoped this project would be the something the community was looking for. However, since there is so much push back, she was confused by people not wanting to be called NIMBYs and saying this project should happen but just not in their backyard. It seemed like the definition of NIMBY-sim was that something should happen but just not where people live. She lived and worked in this neighborhood. She is the executive director of the Astoria Warming Center, which is caddy corner from Heritage Square. Most of her friends make less than \$44,000 a year. That has been her reality for the 20 years she had lived in Astoria and for most of her adult life. It feels out of touch for people to think that is not the experience of a lot of the people living in Astoria. At her job, she is proud to be involved in the Warming Center, but she was also deeply disappointed in the community for not coming up with something better than this by now. Doing her job is incredibly difficult. The Warming Center had to close for the last few days due to staffing shortages. Putting a bunch of adults who are dealing with severe mental illness in a room together is not a legitimate solution to homelessness. The Warming Center is in it's eight season and a lot of projects could have moved the Warming Center past where it is right now. She had been to many City Council meetings where this happens. She did not believe that parking was anywhere on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. She understood that parking was a concern, but we are talking about where people can live and taking care of citizens who cannot take care of themselves. That seems on a completely different scale than if someone has to walk a few more blocks. There is plenty of parking just a few short blocks from downtown.

Mayor Jones confirmed that there was consensus among the Council to continue this item to February 22, 2022, for Council deliberation and vote, and that all of the oral public testimony be concluded at this meeting. However, the public would be welcome to submit written testimony until February 22nd. He would not open up this item up to public comments at the next meeting.

Councilor Rocka said the Councilors read the written comments that are submitted.

Mayor Jones stated that Items 8(b) and (c) would be addressed simultaneously because the issues overlap quite a bit.

Item 8(b): Public Hearing and First Reading of the Amendment 21-03 Comprehensive Plan Changes to Promote Redevelopment of the Heritage Square Block

Amendment Request (A21-03) by the Community Development Director on behalf of the Astoria City Council to amend Astoria Comprehensive Plan Policies to promote redevelopment of the Heritage square block (11th Street to 12th Street and Duane to Exchange Streets) with workforce housing to contribute to the revitalization of downtown. Specific Comprehensive Plan proposed amendments include Chapters: Area Descriptions & Policies (CP.030-CP.105), Economic Element (CP.190-210), and Parks, Recreation, & Open Space (CP.260 - CP.275). It is recommended that the City Council hold a public hearing, review the proposed amendments, and if in agreement hold a first reading of the ordinance.

Item 8(c): Public Hearing and First Reading of Amendment A21-04 Development Code Changes to Promote Redevelopment of the Heritage Square Block

Development Code amendment request (A21- 04) by the Community Development Director on behalf of the Astoria City Council to amend the City of Astoria Development Code to allow multi-family housing as a permitted outright use in the C -4 zone. Specific Development Code sections include: Article 2, multi-family dwellings uses permitted outright (Sections 2.430 & 2.435). The Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed amendment and the City Council should review their recommendation and take action on the amendment. It is recommended that the City Council hold a public hearing and if in concurrence hold a first reading of the ordinance.

Mayor Jones asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the City Council to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. He explained the procedures governing the conduct of public hearings to the audience and advised that handouts of the substantive review criteria were available from Staff. He opened the public hearing at 9:31 pm and asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Director Leatherman and City Manager Estes presented the written Staff report via Power Point on Items 8(b) and (c). All public testimony received to date was included in the record and Staff recommended approval of both ordinances.

Councilor Herman confirmed with Staff that the design would have to be approved by the Historic Landmark Commission.

Councilor Rocka asked if there were any unseen negative outcomes from making multifamily housing a permitted use rather than a conditional use. He was concerned about someone building multifamily housing and then renting them out as vacation rentals.

Director Leather stated that would not happen. Staff has a good handle on short term rental. The Planning Commission discussed this as well and Staff was asked to look at the licensed rentals and approved hotels. There are not many currently in violation. However, this year, she had an additional Staff person who is managing the Code enforcement and being proactive with short term rental complaints and enforcement.

City Manager Estes added that since the City owns Heritage Square, as part of the ENA, the City could place a deed restriction on the property preventing short term rentals on the site.

Councilor Rocka responded that these amendments would apply to the entire C-4 zone and not just Heritage Square.

City Manager Estes reiterated that the City owns the property and could place deed restrictions on the property. Additionally, there are no such thing as short term rental permits in Astoria for multi-family developments in Commercial zones.

Councilor Brownson said even though residences would be allowed on the ground floor, retail would not be prohibited and could still be located on the ground floor.

Mayor Jones called for testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the ordinances. There were none. He reminded that all of the testimony provided for Item 8(a) also applies to Items 8(b) and (c) and asked if Staff had any closing comments.

Director Leatherman said there was a lot of good comments on all sides, which is exactly what Staff needed to make good policies and Codes. No changes were being proposed to the existing parking Codes because parking was discussed at length at the Planning Commission hearing.

City Manager Estes added that in areas of downtown outside of the Urban Core, parking is dealt with as part of a conditional use permit review. There is no specific parking space requirement but is a review criteria for a conditional use permit. The Planning Commission debated about whether parking requirements should be added to the C-4 zone if multifamily were to be permitted outright. Ultimately, the Planning Commission chose to make no changes to the existing parking requirements for the zone. However, the Council could choose to add their own requirements.

Mayor Jones stated that the public hearings would remain open until 12:00 pm on February 22, 2022. He called for Council deliberation.

Councilor Brownson said he was happy with what had been presented to the Council. Even if the project does not work out, the amendments help promote the opportunity for some sort of housing. The Planning Commission did a good job of fulfilling the Council's direction. Councilor Rocka said he agreed.

Councilor Herman said the Comprehensive Plan changes are not chiseled in stone and are meant to respond to the changing needs of the community. These changes are being proposed now because housing is in such dire shortage, particularly housing that workers can afford.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman, to hold a first reading of the ordinance approving Comprehensive Plan changes to promote the redevelopment of the Heritage Square Block. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Finance Director Brooks conducted the first reading of the ordinance.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman, to hold a first reading of the ordinance approving Development Code changes to promote the redevelopment of the Heritage Square Block. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Finance Director Brooks conducted the first reading of the ordinance.

Item 8(d): Public Hearing and First Reading of Amendment A21-05 Development Code Time Extensions for Land Use Approvals

Amendment request (A21-05) by the Community Development Director on behalf of the Astoria City Council to amend Astoria Development Code sections to modify permit duration criteria, add a definition of permit, and land use approval. Specific Development Code sections proposed for amendment include: Article 1, Basic Provisions, Definitions (Section 1.400), and Article 9, Time Limits on Permits (Section 9.100). It is recommended that the City Council hold a public hearing and if in concurrence hold a first reading of the ordinance.

Mayor Jones asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the City Council to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. He explained the procedures governing the conduct of public hearings to the audience and advised that handouts of the substantive review criteria were available from Staff. He opened the public hearing at 10:03 pm and asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Director Leatherman and City Attorney Henningsgaard presented the written Staff report via PowerPoint and recommended approval of the request.

Mayor Jones called for any testimony in favor of, impartial, or opposed to the request. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 10:09 pm and called for Council deliberations.

Councilor Brownson said he appreciated the need to make it easier for the City to make determinations. He asked for details about how Staff would determine that an Applicant could not make significant progress on a project for reasons that were out of their control.

City Attorney Henningsgaard explained that Applicants are not allowed to refuse or fail to proceed on a permitted project and then request an extension. However, if something happened that was beyond the Applicant's control which delayed the project, the Applicant could request an extension. The Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) has told the City that the Code language did not provide adequate standards for the Applicants.

City Council Action: Motion made by Mayor Jones, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to hold a first reading of the ordinance implementing Development Code time changes for land use approvals. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Finance Director Brooks conducted the first reading of the ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS & MISCELLANEOUS, PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA)

The Council address this item immediately following Regular Agenda Items.

Steve Kinney, owner of the Astoria Downtown Market, asked what was being done about the homeless issues next to his store on Commercial Street. He was still having problems every day. He had heard rumors that homeless people would be sleeping downstairs, but he was not sure if that was true. He wanted information about the permits and the building codes. There is a warming center at the church on 11th Street which was getting ready to close down for the spring and summer. He also wanted information if there would be parking at the new housing development. Parking areas are being turned into eating and drinking establishments downtown. If the Police Department has an officer available, he would like an officer to park next to his store or across the street. Or an officer could walk Commercial from one end to the other.

Mayor Jones responded that Mr. Kinney's partner had attended the HOST meetings in the past. He walks by Mr. Kinney's store four or five times a week and frequently sees officers or the Columbia Behavioral Health (CBH) representative present. He and Chief Spalding have had many conversations with Mr. Kinney's neighbor about the issues and they have made great efforts to enforce their codes of conduct and banned people who violated those codes. Several social service organizations and individuals were constantly working on homeless issues, which was a very complex issue. Loitering cannot be banned because it has been found to be unconstitutional. The City Council would be discussing an exclusion ordinance in a work session on February 16th. A small number of people cause the majority of calls to police and the majority of the homeless population do not cause problems.

City Manager Estes added that the State legislature recently passed laws preventing cities from prohibiting facilities like a shelter in the basement. However, building code requirements still must be met. At this point, the facility had not secured the necessary permits to have sleeping facilities in the basement.

Unidentified Speaker said the neighbor of Mr. Kinney's store calls the police on him because he is not supposed to be on the sidewalk. He was a passing through homeless person but has been in Astoria for two years. Astoria seems to spoil the homeless, but the stealing and sitting in front of Mr. Kinney's store is ridiculous. Welcoming all of the homeless people by feeding them two meals a day will turn Astoria into San Francisco. Astoria has

music, art, and history, which is what drew him to Astoria. He has been threatened in front of Mr. Kinney's store. Mr. Kinney is a good person and the City needs to control the homeless people.

Lindy Edwards, homeless, said many industries were not paying good wages or enough to afford a place to live. She worked at Bornstein for almost a year where she was being paid very little. The rental market has gone up over the past few years and it would be good to have some low-income housing for people who are working and being underpaid. She asked how well the decriminalization of drugs was working. Since she has been homeless, she has seen that many of the issues and disturbances are a result of the sale and use of drugs. A lot of homeless people do hard drugs, including methamphetamines and heroin. She wanted rehabilitation and continuing education to be mandatory. The resources in Astoria are great and she was thankful for those resources. She came from Los Angeles where being homeless is a death sentence. She thanked the community for allowing her to come to Astoria and use the resources. Not all homeless people were inclined to criminal behavior.

Mary Ing, P.O. Box 12, Astoria, stated she had emailed the Mayor a film she made with a man who accumulated \$93,000 in fines related to chronic homelessness. She called collections management and they said if she got authorization, she could advocate or negotiate for him. If the City had delinquent camping tickets that had been ruled unconstitutional, there might be some way to recall them from collections. If the man gets gainful employment, 20 percent of his wages will be garnished. His psychological trauma causes him to suffer. She also said that housing first was housing without the requirement for psychiatric services or drug treatment. Once people start taking showers, eating food and wearing clean clothes, their lives improve and people start to do better. She was struggling with the drug trafficking going through the Merwyn and then learned that housing first was Innovative Housing model. She believed the City should discuss the pros and cons of the housing first concept and get housing for people.

Mayor Jones called for a recess at 6:58 pm. The meeting reconvened at 7:01 pm and immediately proceeded to Item 8: Heritage Square and Other Code Amendments. After Council had concluded addressing Item 8, Mayor Jones asked if there was any more New Business.

Councilor Brownson stated Zoom made tonight's hearings quite different from the hearings on the Fairfield Inn. Zoom makes it easier for more people to attend in a civilized way. When 60 people arrive at Council Chambers, people are lined up out the door and it can be difficult to hear. Having both venues available is an asset.

Councilor Herman said she appreciated that the discussions were civil. She appreciated Zoom because it was the only way 100 people could participate.

Mayor Jones noted there was a work session scheduled for February 16, 2022 at 1:00 pm to discuss exclusion zones and the Parks Department budgets for Li'l Sprouts and youth sports.

ADJOURNMENT

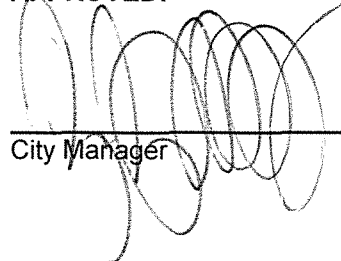
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:17 pm.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager