

## MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

October 10, 2005

The minutes of the proceedings of a work session meeting of the City Council of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held at 6:00 p.m. in the Manager's Conference Room at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

### **Those Attending**

Those present were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Roger Gould, Jeff McKeown, and John Muenchrath. Councilors Jon Eck, Cindi Miller, and Kevin Stufflebean were absent. City staff present were City Manager Scott McClure and Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen. Also attending were consultants Crystal Shoji and Hilary Baker.

### **Review of Empire Boat Ramp / Hollering Point Project**

Crystal Shoji briefly reviewed the boat ramp and Hollering Point concept plan developed in 2002. A community meeting to take input on the plan was held last month and was attended by approximately 80 citizens. The summary of public input was the plan needs to do several things: organize the concept, connect with Empire, clean up the area, address access issues, and identify phases for the project elements. Ms. Shoji submitted her recommendation to the Council which is attached hereto and made a part of the record. She commented there is enthusiasm for redevelopment of the area and recommended the City move forward with the idea of doing something in Empire. Ms. Shoji explained the process of doing a study and refinement plan, and including alternatives within the plan to allow flexibility in the development.

Mayor Benetti asked about the types of development being considered as there has been a lot of interest in the area and the City needs to be able to address the inquiries. Ms. Shoji commented having a plan will help staff answer development questions. Mr. McClure suggested there are things that can be put in the plan to guide development, and leave room for flexibility. There was further discussion on scheduling additional public meetings, interviewing property owners, doing a study, and keeping the project moving. Steve Skinner commented people are really interested in anything to do with water and there is strong support for doing the wayside project. The September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting was very positive, although most did not care for the round-about. John Pundt commented development of the waterfront will spread improvement in the Empire area. Ms. Shoji suggested doing a planning process, then public meetings and meetings with property owners. Councilor Gould commented on the importance of public sessions to gain and sustain support for the improvements. He recommended moving forward with appointing a group to work on the concept and plan.

Tom Greaves commented the parking area for the boat ramp is too small. The facility is heavily used and he recommended enlarging the parking area. Councilor McKeown commented the area needs more than parking lots to attract people. Hilary Baker commented the plan is good and there are more ideas for activities, business, and retail than there is area to accommodate them. This is only a part of Empire, and she recommended stepping back and looking at Empire as a whole. Ms. Shoji reported LCDC will have money for grants in February for funding refinement plans. Councilor Muenchrath suggested toning down the plan or idea before doing the study. Mayor Benetti suggested moving ahead with a smaller group, doing the study, and

looking at paving the Bay Club property to get thing started. Mr. Pundt reported consensus of the group was to start with that property. He also suggested that one City Councilor serve on the group. Mr. Skinner commented the wayside was called the heart of Empire and if done well, it would create a connection to the waterfront. Consensus of the Council was to focus on the plan and then do the study, and appoint a committee at the next Council meeting. Councilors McKeown and Muenchrath indicated interest in serving on the committee.

### **Design Standard Renderings**

Mr. McClure reported the design standards are difficult for many people to understand and staff felt examples would be helpful. The City contracted with Hilary Baker of Crow/Clay Associates to prepare concept drawings of some of the buildings in the Empire area. Ms. Baker presented renderings of five buildings, showing the current building and an example of the building using color and minor architectural changes. The buildings used were the barber shop, the Dollar Store, Luigi's, and the Star of Hope. The Council briefly discussed looking into an incentive program to help property owners with improvements. The Council and audience reviewed the drawings and approved the plan to have the drawings available at city hall.

### **Discussion of Downtown Improvement Plans**

Mr. McClure asked the Council for input on proceeding with improvements to the downtown area and suggested Council consider holding meetings to gather citizen input, or have the Council come up with a core plan and take the plan to the citizens. The Council discussed using urban renewal funds for building a new fire station, developing second story buildings, extending the boardwalk, beautification/fix up projects, providing free wireless internet access, providing sidewalks and lighting on Front Street, and placing utilities lines underground. Consensus of the Council to start with a focused meeting and review the plan, and then hold a public meeting. Councilor McKeown suggested talking with current property owners before holding a public meeting. Mayor Benetti recommended reviewing the ideas and coming up with an estimated cost for the project.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting to October 20, 2005 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

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Joe Benetti, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Joyce Jansen, Deputy Recorder