



CITY COUNCIL MCINTYRE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2021 MEETING

The McIntyre Subcommittee held the January 4, 2021 meeting via Zoom.

Chair Peter Whelan opened the meeting at 3:02 with a roll call.

Panelists present via Zoom: Chair Peter Whelan and Councilors Deaglan McEachern, John Tabor and Paige Trace.

City representatives present via Zoom: City Manager Karen Conard, Principal Planner Nick Cracknell, Moderator Synthia Ravell and Legal Secretary Marian Steimke.

Also present via Zoom: William Lyons of Portsmouth Listens (PL), Mandy Reynolds of Principle Group (PG), Ron Ulrich, Russell Preston of PG., Andrew Bagley, Bill Downey, Gerald Duffy, Ian Lenahan, Jake Jachowicz, Councilor Petra Huda, Richard Gamester and Stephanie Seacord.

Public comment:

Ron Ulrich of 46 Baycliff Road referenced emails sent out by Revisit McIntyre, and a PL document he received which, he said, did not reflect the December 15th Subcommittee vote in any way. They contain misleading subsets of language. He indicated the PL document referenced the survey result regarding more public space. Perspective is informed by context, he said, and it is easy to get people to think that is the only thing people want. Over 75% want major changes to the original proposal, according to the survey, he said, and that was not specific to public space. The vote by the Subcommittee on the 15th is not being reflected in the documentation – we are still in a very narrow scope. There is a lot more than walkways. He said this was a narrow interpretation. The vote was a positive vote, but the ball has been dropped in making sure the public is aware that they are allowed to speak on the entire project, rather than what is represented in this document.

Andrew Bagley of 40 Chauncey Street thinks the Subcommittee has been very clear that everything is on the table for the public to address on this project. He said the survey was excellent, hopes the data will be published and thinks there should be more of those in the future. There was not anything about the Brick Market in there. He said it might be worthwhile to give people a heads up about what is going in there to consider the proximity. Bill Downey of 67 Bow Street referred to Ron's point. He's perplexed as to why the specific motion that Councilor McEachern made has not been executed in the messaging. It is not

any small point. He said we worked long and hard, said it is a pivotal point and expressed concern this has not been executed after three weeks. He would like to have an answer today as to why the communications we received from PL has not changed.

Chair Whelan closed public hearing at 3:12 p.m. He complimented all on the work that has been done.

Ms. Reynolds reported there were 22 groups which had about 252 participants total. They had seven removals, and five change groups. They were able to accommodate people with no more than 12 per group. She spoke about the survey and gave numbers by age and gender of the participants. She said the survey remains open and discussed survey results.

Chair Whelan asked about access hurdles. Ms. Reynolds answered that two participants have no email, and she was working with them to get access. The groups would start that night at 6 pm, and they have been trying to get responses to everyone quickly. Bill Lyons said we offered to help any participants with technology but have not heard back.

Mr. Preston said Ms. Reynolds and Logan Capone did a lot of work over the holiday. PG will rectify any issues as quickly as possible. He said the survey is a long one by design, and he suggested circulating another email to get the response rate up. He said they would process it that week to see where the responses were at. There will be a lot of manual processing after the survey closes, and it will be presented, he said.

Mr. Lyons appreciated the work done over the weekend by PG, and he also liked delaying the survey response deadline.

Mr. Preston said it will be busier now that people will hold their meetings.

Chair Whelan said the Subcommittee has been clear along with PL that the public has free reign. He encouraged folks to watch the meeting on YouTube, since it is discussed clearly.

Councilor Tabor read a paragraph from the Study Guide, which is also on the website, where the Subcommittee voted to "...affirm that the feedback we are looking to elicit from the public pertains to the entire McIntyre site and how it is to be developed." He underscored Chair Whelan's comment and said at the kickoff meeting on the 16th, the Chair said to everyone, "this is wide open" – that has been a clear message, he stated. Bill Lyons reiterated Councilor Tabor's comments and added it is a very inclusive concept. They are going to pains to make sure facilitators do not Interpret what is or isn't.

Councilor Trace said the Subcommittee has done all they can to allow PL to have free reign. While she can understand there might be mistrust in the community, she thinks the process is going forward but acknowledged this could be a huge leap of faith for some folks. She asked people to please trust the process of PL – we will get there. Thank you, she said.

Councilor McEachern, in referring to the email Mr. Ulrich commented on, does not think it is difficult to respond when organizations ask questions via email. In the future we should discuss emails as a subcommittee, issue a statement, vote on that statement and have it be sent back in a more formal way. Trust has to be earned, he said. To do that we have to go

about a process. He said that so far the PG has earned his trust by setting the wheels in motion. He hopes those watching will come to trust the process as it has been designed. He appreciates all the work the PG has done and the work that will start that night. It is one more stepping stone to building that trust.

Councilor Tabor said unlike any past process, the residents of the Study Circles will present directly to the City Council at the Wednesday, January 20th Council meeting. This will not be going through any layers, but delivered directly to the deciding body.

Councilor McEachern moved that Chair Whelan deliver a report under his own name about the progress made to date at the next City Council meeting. Councilor Trace seconded. On a roll call vote 4-0, the motion passed.

Councilor Trace asked City Manager Conard for an update on the City website, and she answered that all the McIntyre updates have been brought forward.

Councilor McEachern asked Mr. Lyons if someone did not follow any of the guidance and started a study circle that evening if they would be given a recap of what they are being asked to define and told everything was on the table. Mr. Lyons referenced the McIntyre 101 recording and expected facilitators would reference that information, as the facilitators have structured time and would not have the luxury of providing a recap, but it was a good point, he said. Councilor McEachern clarified his question and said if there is a question to the facilitator regarding scope, would that be answered, and Mr. Lyons said yes.

Mr. Preston said to eliminate confusion, Ms. Reynolds would send an email to facilitators and participants to remind them of the Subcommittee vote, and that the scope is to be the entire site. Mr. Lyons said that would be good from the PL perspective as well.

The City Manager shared an email from Jake Jachowicz who said the 101 and email content were very good, and he had not been involved until three weeks earlier.

Chair Whelan has received a lot of emails but has not responded in order to keep the process open and public. It is time for the Subcommittee to step back and let residents participate in the study circles. The Chair said the next meeting would be on Monday at 3:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Trace, seconded by Councilor McEachern. Roll call vote 4-0 passed at 3:41

Date Approved: _____

Peter Whelan, Chair
McIntyre Subcommittee

Minutes taken by
Marian Steimke, Legal Secretary