

City Council Workshop
July 13, 2015
6:30 P.M.
City Council Chambers

Councilors Present

Linda Cohen, Mayor
Brad Fox
Thomas Blake
Patricia Smith
Maxine Beecher
Melissa Linscott
Claude Morgan

Staff Present

Jim Gailey, City Manager

MINUTES

Mayor Cohen opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance. She reminded folks that members of the public are invited to comment on each item as it comes before the Council for a period of no more than two (2) minutes. All questions or concerns would be made through the Chair and if they wished to address the City Council they would be asked to please raise their hand and upon being recognized would state their name and address for the records.

- 1. Pesticide/Herbicide Prohibition**
- 2. Main Street/Westbrook Street Parcel – Conservation Easement**
- 3. Open Space Philosophy and Discussion of High Priority Parcels**
- 4. Review of Upcoming Workshops**
- 5. Proposed Amendment to the FY16 Appropriation Resolve**

1. Pesticide/Herbicide Prohibition: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that at the City Council's June 8th workshop, the Council heard a presentation put together by Protect South Portland around the use of pesticides. Protect South Portland was joined by Jay Feldman, from Beyond Pesticides in Washington DC; Chip Osborne, of Osborne Organics LLC in Marblehead, MA; and Mary Cerullo, Associate Director, of the Friends of Casco Bay. Each talked about the harmful effects of pesticide use and the negative impacts to the environment. Alternative methods were presented as a means of providing another way for lawn care/vegetation maintenance.

An outcome of the evening's meeting was the task given to staff for the exploration of a pesticide ordinance for the City. Since the June 8th workshop staff has been educating themselves on what other communities around the United States are doing in addressing pesticide use. The conclusion is that there is no silver bullet on addressing pesticide use. Many communities have gone through restricting/prohibiting pesticide use, but at varying degrees. The majority of the communities have implemented Integrated Pest Management Programs (IPM) or some other limited restrictions to

pesticide use within their communities. Tacoma Park, MD and Ogunquit, ME seem to have gone the furthest in restricting pesticides; however, incorporating exemptions into their ordinances.

The entire City Council has voiced support for pursuing a pesticide ordinance. The intent of the July 13th workshop will be to introduce different types of ordinances to the City Council and seek further input and guidance on how the Council would like to move towards a pesticide ordinance. Some ordinances are developed in the following ways:

- Outright citywide Prohibition with exceptions and emergency waiver
- Limited citywide Prohibition with exceptions and emergency waiver
- Prohibition citywide based on established list/class of pesticides to be prohibited.
- Development of an Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM)
- Prohibition on municipal owned property with exceptions and emergency waiver

Many communities who have gone in the direction of restricting/prohibiting pesticides have incorporated within their ordinances a period of time to allow for adjustment of both public and private property owners. The period can be a year to up to three years with certain benchmarks along the way. Through the process the overall intent of the ordinance is followed, resulting in a successful implementation. Included in the packet of information is a model public/private pesticides-free ordinance provided by Beyond Pesticides in Washington DC. The document is developed to promote management practices that emphasize non-chemical methods of pest prevention and management and least-toxic pesticide use as a last resort.

Much of staffs learning of the subject came from reading different ordinances from across the country. Some ordinances are very straight-forward as others are complex. I have attached a number of ordinances to the packet of information as I hope they provide the Council varying degrees of information on how communities are restricting/prohibiting pesticides.

- Ogunquit, ME
- Tacoma Park, MD
- Scarborough, ME
- Montgomery County, MD
- Ontario Province, Canada
- Marblehead, MA
- Burlington, VT

He referred to the enclosed attachment for full details which provided more information on issues that have come up during further research as well as finding several versions of ordinances from across the country. He further discussed IPM (Integrated Pest Management) which uses the philosophy of “least impact use”. He had enclosed and discussed the different examples to see how drastic or what they would like include to move forward with this. He further discussed the examples enclosed, a list of areas within South Portland that need to be looked at and current Ordinances country-wide and how different they are from one another. From the list he chose four different communities (Ogunquit, ME, Tacoma Park, MD, Burlington, VT, and Scarborough, ME) and what they have in place to look at and further discuss and compare.

Public Comment Opened: The following residents, non-residents and business owners commented on Item #1.

- **Joseph Kubets** Landscape Business owner
- **Eddie Woodins** 34 Clearwater Drive Scarborough, ME
- **Matthew Tenics** Sable Oaks Golf Course, Lawn Manager
- **Brian Jordan** South Portland
- **Scott Eldridge** Eldridge Lumber
- **John Bourock** York, ME
- **Jessie O'Brien** Portland, ME
- **Mary Cerullo** Friends of Casco Bay
- **Lisa Roberts** Whispering Pines Drive
- **Jonathon Owens** South Portland
- **Richard Lewis** Scarborough Golf Course Manager
- **Cindy Grub** Myrtle Street/Land Trust
- **Phil Roberts** Broadway Gardens
- **Joan Herson** 41 Edmund S Muskie Ave.
- **Donna Herzeg** Portland, ME
- **Paul Moirn** Topsham, ME
- **Sara Lakeman** Portland, ME
- **Andy Jones** Toxins Actions Group
- **Sally Trice** Portland ME
- **Roberta Sequen** Preble Street
- **Rachel Berger** Churchill Road
- **Even Bradstreet** Sable Oaks Golf Course
- **Russell Lunt** Brigham Street
- **Michael Peasley** Brigham Street
- **Cathy Chapman** 27 Beaufort Street
- **Dr. Prosurry** Natural-path
- **Phil Gaven** Thompson Street (Bee Keeper)
- **Brian Leonard** Broadway
- **Patricia White** 7 Orchard Street
- **Linden Thigpen** Hillside Street (Bee Keeper)
- **Ted Lindsey** Scarborough Bartlett Tree
- **Nancy R.** 11 Glendale
- **Bill Moody** Topsham
- **Jason Thompson**
- **Reece Melovich** South Portland
- **Mike Hews** Arborist Yarmouth
- **John Hanscombe** Cape Elizabeth/Lucas Tree
- **Resident** Grandview Ave.
- **Robert Golden** Preble Street
- **Jennifer Claster** Fort Road
- **David Rooker** 27 Grove Ave.
- **Bob Mann** Lawn Care Company

- **Dave Domingis** Turf Management Company

Public Comment Closed:

Jim Gailey discussed golf courses and how other communities handle these as far as not banning all pesticides for just those purposes.

Councilor Morgan felt that having a ban on all pesticides would be the way to move with this and to phase in with exceptions. He thanked all folks for coming to speak on this item and further discussed the need for a philosophy on this and related issues. He asked for concrete meanings of “IPM” and discussed imposing a ban for personal use, phasing in others over the course of a year. He understood that there may be exceptions and felt that nitrogen would be a conversation for another day.

Councilor Fox was in support of a strict ordinance with this item and felt the need to protect ourselves and others when we are outside walking, hiking, etc., protecting health, safety and the well being of people.

Councilor Blake thanked all of the people for coming to the Workshop and speaking about this issue. He was in support of using all organics and out-rights banning pesticides along with a phase-out process. He added that his daughter has enlightened him on pesticides and provided him with education. He felt that this is a problem and that it needs to be fixed. He did not feel that there should be exemptions and did feel the need for help and support with the process. He would like to work on the ordinance, tweak the language and understood that change is hard. He further discussed exemptions being made, an appeal process and would like to include nitrogen in this process. He added that there needs to be in place an outreach/education process in place and further discussed having a committee to help with the appeal process. He felt that this should not be rushed, and needed to be done correctly as the opposition has grown.

Councilor Beecher was not ok with a flat out band right now but did have concern as a bee keeper herself. She discussed phasing in, having exceptions and creating an education process as well as an appeal process. She added that she was willing to sit on a committee and that this was not something that would be rushed as it would require looking into and moving forward. She also discussed Casco Bay and how this area is suffering as well.

Councilor Linscott thanked all who came to speak on this item and had kept a tally of what folks commented on. She felt that folks held passion in regards to their work and have already moved in this direction as the City looks to taking this a step further. She liked the idea of having a committee grouped with citizens, staff and business owners and that education is key here as well. She would agree to move forward with a ban but look closely on how they can best do this.

Councilor Smith felt that this is meaningful work being done here and it showed through the many people speaking on this item. She was in support with a ban on pesticides and fertilizers as well. She added that with the work of the City Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator they could create a panel/committee to work on these issues. She further discussed Healthy Living Systems experts, and not exempting the golf course. She felt that this would need to be worked on through the fall and winter taking positive steps and phasing this in as well with the help of experts that we have right here within the City. She did feel that they would need more meetings to get this going in the best forward direction.

Councilor Fox discussed IPM and how it may not depend upon best or least used of pesticides and the way to go about this. He added that there are different levels and different ways of using them and also agreed with a phase in plan (3-year) as well as an education plan for the general public.

He agreed on having more teeth put into the language and further discussed the homeowner vs. the apartment dweller and how that would work.

Councilor Morgan discussed the Ogunquit language and agreed on the idea of having teeth in the language. He did not agree with no penalties and using a “volunteer” method.

Councilor Blake agreed the need for teeth in the language and the need for enforcement as well as working with staff, professionals and committees in creating a draft ordinance work on the penalty part later and increase the education.

Councilor Smith added that with exemptions there may be cost involved here.

Mayor Cohen discussed the use of spraying and how this was not a healthy method with no control of toxins in the wind, and agreed that education is vital in this process. She was happy to have the many business owners speaking on this item and becoming involved in this process. She understood that it can be hard to take care of things like bed bugs, etc. without the use of strong solvents. She liked the Ogunquit Ordinance and agreed about having more teeth but needed more discussion on the fees, enforcement process on homeowners and letting the public know if these are used by a business.

She further discussed a phase in start on public property and then following through with private property; she liked the idea of committees and using this process for appeals and thanked all folks for attending to speak on this item.

Councilor Beecher asked what the committee might look like?

Councilor Morgan felt that they could work on some good text here and start with this language from Ogunquit then working from that adding or subtracting.

Councilor Linscott agreed and felt that this would be a good starting point to use and work on from there with City staff.

Councilor Smith agreed with having City staff work on the language, etc. and added that we have the professionals in this field to help and work on this as well as the educational process. She also felt that this item is not something that should be rushed.

Councilor Blake agreed with the thought of working on this with City staff and experts in the field.

Mayor Cohen suggested that the City Councilors send thoughts, ideas, suggestions to the City Manager regarding feedback on the ordinance language, he will then work with staff and others on the language and report back for further discussion possibly the second workshop in September (14th) at the earliest if not the start of October.

2. Main Street/Westbrook Street Parcel – Conservation Easement: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that The South Portland Land Trust in collaboration with the Congregation Bet Ha’am, have approached the City Council requesting an opportunity to permanently protect the City-owned parcel located at 25 Westbrook Street. The parcel, Map 63, Lot 164B, is a 2.33 acre site located at the intersection of Westbrook Street and Main Street. The parcel was once the playing fields associated with the former Sawyer Elementary School. The Land Trust and Congregation have requested the City Council to permanently protect this green space through the use of a Conservation Easement. As with any Conservation Easement, a Grantor is established to hold the easement. The proposal brought forward is for the South Portland Land Trust to be the Grantor. The Conservation Easement recognizes the current use of the parcel as the City’s lay down yard for the sewer/stormwater work in the Thornton Heights neighborhood. The Conservation Easement also recognizes the two existing easements that encumber the property benefitting the Congregation Bet Ha’am. At a previous workshop, the Congregation Bet Ha’am supported the preservation of the property and committed financially for the development of a park on this piece of property. Sally has reviewed the submitted Conservation Easement and provided the following comments:

- * Section 2 (Subdivision) – needs to be tweaked to deal with any “division” related to community garden plots.
- Section 4 (Surface Alterations) – needs to be tweaked to deal more specifically with community garden plots.
- Section 5 (Access) – may need to be tweaked to deal with community garden plots. Does the City charge people for plots? Is there any application fee?
- Section 6 (Enforcement) – We never recommend that municipalities, as public entities, voluntarily agree to pay someone else’s attorney’s fees.

The Land Trust reviewed the comments from Corporation Counsel and changes have been made in the document reflecting these comments.

Public Comment Opened:

Carter Scott 75 Vincent Street/South Portland Land Trust felt that this was great work being done here and was happy to be living here and part of this.

Rachel Berger 17 Churchill loved this idea for people to use.

Lisa Munderback Coach Road thanked all who have worked on this item and added that Bet Ham was in support of an easement and felt that this was all good work being done. She also discussed assistance with funding to maintain this parcel as well.

Joan Caldwell Osborn Ave. thanked all for working on this and felt that this is the best use for this land and was very happy about it.

Cathy Chapman Beaufort Street was pleased to see this happen.

Steve Jocher Highland Ave./Conservation Commission was very happy to have this become part of the process.

Sharon Newman Fort Road was in support of the easement and was also happy about this area.

Public Comment Closed:

Councilor Blake thanked all for working on this and coming in to speak as well. He asked about a ‘Sunset Clause’ and if this would be needed here? He felt the need for a park here, some nice open space and that it was not too busy to have this and that there was good work being done here.

Councilor Smith was in support of this item and felt that it blended our city with built and non-built and that this would be a nice, quiet people’s place.

Councilor Beecher was in support of the community gardens but asked about watering and how this would be done from that parcel?

Jim Gailey explained that they have started looking into this and need to look at placing a meter pit to see if this will work or not.

Councilor Morgan was in support and had no objections to this plan. He felt that they had done great work on the language and did not feel the need for further legal fees regarding this item.

Councilor Fox was in support of this item as well.

Councilor Linscott was also in support of this item and agreed that the language sounded good.

Mayor Cohen agreed that it was all good and felt that moving forward was the next step.

5. Proposed Amendments to RESOLVE #16-14/15, RESOLVE 318-14/15 And

RESOLVE #23-14/15: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that after the City Council approved the Appropriation Resolve on June 15, 2015, the City became aware of additional State

revenues that the City will be receiving for the coming fiscal year. To better reflect these revenues into the FY16 budget and to provide property tax relief to the taxpayers of South Portland, staff of both the School Department and the City Administration feel it is important to adjust the estimated revenues of the City prior to committing the FY16 property taxes. This will reduce the amount of property taxes needed to be raised and effectively lower the tax rate for the coming fiscal year.

At present, the City anticipates receiving additional State Education Subsidy, State BETE revenue, State Homestead reimbursement and State General Assistance reimbursement than it anticipated as of the June 15 City Council meeting. With an additional \$20,000,000 being allocated to education subsidy statewide for the coming year, the South Portland School Department anticipates receiving an additional \$884,204 for FY16. The School Board will be meeting Monday night with a proposed plan to lower the taxes raised for education.

Another development related to the State Budget is that the City anticipates receiving 70% of eligible general assistance expenditures. This will generate approximately \$50,000 of additional revenues. State BETE and Homestead revenues are subject to variation based on the number of applications submitted and dependent on the actual tax rate and valuation sheltered under each of the programs. These figures adjust the tax rate automatically, but City staff would like to incorporate better estimates in the amended FY16 Appropriation Resolve.

Since Finance Director Greg L'Heureux and he were recommending amending the Appropriation Resolve, we think it is also prudent to review the general assistance budget at this same time. The FY15 GA budget is coming in over expended, and when we developed the FY16 budget we had hoped things in the spring would slow down. That did not occur, and at present, we anticipate a shortfall potential for this coming year. Because of that, we recommend adding \$20,000 to the Social Services budget (\$5,000 to Administration and \$15,000 to General Assistance).

Greg L'Heureux, attended the School Board's meeting on Monday and then will provide an overview of the recommended proposed changes to the School Budget Resolves as well as the Appropriation Resolve. He will also comment on how that impacts the calculation of the tax rate, BETE and Homestead revised estimated revenues.

Following the City Council workshop on Monday night, City staff anticipates providing a supplemental packet of information on Tuesday, July 14, 2015 regarding the two proposed Orders amending the FY16 Education EPS Budget Resolves and the proposed Order amending the FY16 Appropriation Resolve for the Special meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday, July 15, 2015.

Greg L'Heureux Finance Director discussed the state funding that would be giving back this year to all communities including South Portland. He would like to meet with the School Board on Wednesday July 15 regarding this item, the Bette reimbursement, valuations, added revenue, state budget, GA funding and overages as well. He further discussed the Superintendent's proposal being a decrease tax rate with changes.

Public Comment Opened: No comments

Councilor Smith asked if they meant this next Weds. night?

Councilor Morgan asked about drafting a resolve and a date due for this.

Councilor Linscott asked about a notice to the public on this.

Councilor Blake asked if the resolve could wait until Monday July 20th (yes but delays tax bill)

The combined City Council and School Board Workshop was held on Wednesday July 15, 2015.

3.City Owned Open Space Preservation: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that the City Council has expressed interest in beginning the conversation on what the City's philosophy should be relative to preservation of City-owned parcels. Over the course of two workshops, staff will work with the City Council on the following areas:

1. Philosophy of Open Space;
2. Review of City-Owned and Tax-Acquired Parcels;
3. Determination of High Priority Parcels for Preservation;
4. Preservation of 25 Westbrook Street (under a separate agenda item);
5. Understanding of the City's Ordinance pertaining to Sale of City Property; and
6. Methods of Preservation

In 2001, a committee established the Open Space Strategic Plan. At that time the City Council opted not to adopt the Open Space Plan. The Open Space Strategic Plan was a recommendation of the Project Plan of 1999. Not only did the Open Space Plan outline a number of key parcels throughout the community based on a scoring system, the Plan also provided recommendations on what methods should be undertaken to achieve preservation. The Open Space Strategic Plan listed both "private" and "public" properties with a Parcel Index, but much of the Plan's focus were properties under "private" control.

To aid in the review of the City-owned parcels, I have established a working spreadsheet listing out the parcels owned by the City of South Portland. Through reviewing each parcel, I have placed parcels under categories for ease of review. I should note that this is only a starting point and there may be disagreements on how some parcels are categorized – staff is looking for Council guidance. Three parcels are coded with a light yellow designation. These three parcels I would recommend the Council take no action on as they have been parcels the City has expressed interest in selling/trading in years past.

42 O'Neil Street – The current Public Works/Parks/Transit Facility – Proposal to sell the land to off-set costs associated with the new facility. Ideas for the redevelopment will be for a pocket park to be created as well as lots that would blend the property back into the neighborhood.

35 Southeast Road – Undeveloped 2.22 acre site that has buildable lots. In the past I have expressed a desire to subdivide this lot in hopes of having lots to "trade" if a development elsewhere in the City threatens land that the Council feels needs to be protected (similar concept than the Sawyer Marsh work). I would recommend not just selling lots to raise money. Little more strategy needs to apply.

682 Broadway – Armory Property – Under a Purchase & Sale Agreement on the property. Final sale will happen sometime in September/October of 2015.

A number of parcels exist that at first glance appear to be buildable lots. In many instances, not all, there are obstacles for development. Some are wet, encumbered by utilities, ledge, shoreland zone issues or are on a paper street (street that has not been built). A closer look may need to be done. Having a title search for each property is one of the biggest gaps I have in understanding the full story of a parcel. I have done a quick review of the deeds associated with some of the more

threatened parcels, with very little understanding as to whether they have been protected by deed reference or not. A more thorough review is needed or an alternative legal document needs to be created to assure protection if desired by the Council.

Significant discussion around 25 Westbrook Street has happened over the last 12-18 months. There is a movement for preservation that is a little further along than this Open Space discussion. Under a separate agenda item the City Council will be addressing this property.

Below I have included the City Council process for selling City-owned and tax-acquired property. Staff does not have the ability to sell property. All requests need formal review by the Planning Board and City Council.

Sec. 2-171. Sale of real property.

(1) *General policy.* The sale of all real property owned by the city, including any interests therein, shall be governed by this ordinance. As a general rule, the city shall charge fair market value for the conveyance of any interest in real property, except as specifically provided below, and convey its interest by quit claim deed.

(2) *Classification of property interest.* For the purpose of this division, real property interests owned by the city shall be classified and the disposition of those interests shall be as follows:

(a) Tax acquired.

1. The director of finance shall maintain a list of all tax acquired property and shall send a list of the most recent tax acquired property to the planning board each year for its recommendation as to the disposition thereof.

2. The planning board shall review said annual list and forward its written recommendation to the city council indicating whether said properties should be retained by the city. The city council shall then review the planning board's recommendation and determine which properties, if any, to offer for public sale. Residential properties which are occupied by the prior owner and for which regularly scheduled payments are being made shall not be offered for sale.

3. If a property to be offered for sale is prior owner occupied single-family property, it shall first be offered to the previous owner for a price to be determined by the city council; provided, however, that in no event shall such price be less than the total of all back taxes, interest, costs, and any and all other charges properly assessed thereon by the city.

4. Thereafter for those properties to be offered for sale, the city council shall determine the method of sale. Methods may include, but are not limited to, brokerage sale, negotiated sale or public bid process. The city reserves the right to establish such conditions or restrictions on the subsequent use of the property as it deems in the best interest of the city. If the property is put out to public bid for sale to the highest bidder, the city shall reserve the right to establish a minimum bid, to reject any bid less than the stated minimum bid, and to establish such other conditions or restrictions on the bid it deems in the best interest of the city.

5. Following approval of the method of sale by the city council, the city manager is authorized to complete the sale, including execution and delivery of the deed and such other paperwork reasonably incident to the sale. The proceeds of the sale shall be distributed in the following manner to the extent that funds are received from the sale: first, all taxes, interest and cost under the tax lien foreclosure process shall be paid to the city, including all costs incident to the sale of the property; and second, all outstanding assessments or other lawful charges incurred by the city in providing services to the property. Any such distributions shall not be considered part of the "net proceeds" of the sale for purposes of Section 18-76(4) of the Code of Ordinances.

(b) City owned.

1. The sale of all real property interests not classified as "Tax Acquired" or "Streets and Rights-of-Way" shall be governed by this paragraph.
2. Any proposed sale of "city-owned" property shall first be referred to the planning board for its recommendation as to the disposition thereof.
3. After review of the planning board's written report, the city council shall decide whether to sell such property. If the city council decides to offer the property for sale, the city council shall determine the method of sale. Methods may include, but are not limited to, sealed bid, sealed request for proposals, auction, brokerage sale or negotiated sale.
4. In evaluating the proposals to purchase such property, depending on the method of sale, the city council may consider factors such as price, annual property tax generation, proposed land use, economic benefit, job creation, environmental benefit or detriment, historical or architectural significance of any existing improvements on the property, community need or neighborhood benefits when awarding the sale. Consistent with the above, the city council shall indicate the factors it will consider for each property at the time the method of sale is determined.
5. The city council may set reasonable conditions on the future use of the property through deed restrictions to ensure that the property will be used in the best interests of the City.

(c) Streets and rights-of-way.

1. The sale or discontinuation/vacation of property interests in streets and rights-of-way shall be governed by this paragraph and the requirements of state law.
2. The city's property interest in streets and rights-of-way shall not be sold or discontinued/vacated until the planning board has reviewed the matter and issued a written recommendation thereon to the city council.
3. The city council shall then decide whether to sell or discontinue/vacate such interests. The assessment of damages shall be left to the discretion of the city council.

(3) *Miscellaneous considerations.* The city council may waive any of the above requirements where the public interest so requires and where i) An abutting property owner has a unique interest in the property; ii) in the case of a street or right-of-way, a replacement of equal quality is given; or iii) a charitable, nonprofit, or other governmental agency offers to purchase property to be used for a charitable, nonprofit, or governmental purpose. The city council may authorize such a waiver only upon full public disclosure and an affirmative vote of not less than five (5) councilors.

(4) That portion of the net proceeds (sales price less any past due taxes, interest and costs) of all real property sold pursuant to this Section, as determined in the accordance with Section 18-76(4) of the Code of Ordinances, shall be deposited into the South Portland Land Bank account.

He further discussed some of the properties that he has outlined in the enclosed material.

- Pine Street – Ball field (protect)
- Public Works Facility (current/sell)
- Millcreek Park – (protect)
- Bagley Ave. – Shoreland Water Access (protect)
- Hinckley Park – 3 parcels (protect)
- Elizabeth Taylor Lane – (protect)
- Hamlin School
- Mountain View Park (protect)
- Southeast Road (swap)
- Redbank Community Center – Green space (protect)
- Bug Light Park

Councilor Morgan had a question regarding the language “protected” and wondered if it is not protected does that mean there is no easement or legal wording and if there was it would not allow this to be developed and built on?

Public Comment Opened:

Russell Lunt Brigham Street thanked Mr. Gailey for all of the great information and added that there is a wonderful amount to look over.

Carter Scott 75 Vincent Street agreed that this was a lot of great information and was in support of the preservation projects. She felt the need for a larger, more open process with a larger scale committee or group to work on sorting this all out and creating a Green/Open Plan for the city.

Rachel Berger 17 Churchill felt that the larger parcels should be separate issues.

Steve Jocher Highland Ave. and Land Trust member recognized that there are great properties here and that they would not all be preserved but looking at the best process and take part in this with great support and great properties as well.

Cindy Crome Myrtle Ave. and Land Trust discussed connectivity within the City.

Peter Turner 126 Boothby Ave. discussed the Meetinghouse Hill group as well as the Hamlin School area and creating language to deal with our Open Spaces in the City and coming up with the language for this to follow through and act upon.

Public Comment Closed:

Councilor Smith felt the need to take action on the larger threat parcels, higher priority and creating Open Space Zones and what use they can have there. She further discussed Urban Agriculture.

Councilor Linscott discussed threatened property, parks and Open Space Zone and liked that idea. She agreed with the idea of having language in place.

Councilor Morgan felt that “unprotected” is strong language use and felt that creating different language as these are City properties that they are dealing with.

Councilor Smith further discussed playground, areas that come and go and the need to protect.

Councilor Blake thanked all for the work done on this item and felt the need to have an Open Space Committee, to look at this list and to work on how we can protect these parcels. He added that they should not look at selling anything until the committee does work on it and further discussed methods of preservation as well.

Councilor Fox agreed with Councilor Blake and added that this is a big job which would be good to create a group to work on this, stakeholders, etc.

Councilor Smith agreed with having a committee as well as not having sales until the group is done with a plan.

Councilor Beecher questioned the next steps, the who what and where to go from here.

Mayor Cohen felt that the City has committees that could be accessed to create a sub-committee to work on plan and did agree that this is greatly important.

4.Review of Upcoming Workshops: Jim Gailey, City Manager explained that this item was brought forward to discuss upcoming City Council Workshops and added that this discussion was done on a monthly basis.

Mayor Cohen suggested having the following items come to Workshop in the near future, Streams; Waterways Field Trip, Thornton Heights Project tour (having the press see the work being done) and Spring point Mariana.

Councilor Blake added that the waterways are dry this time of the year so it may not be the best time for this visit.

Further discussion on Clear Sky funds, Charter Amendment issues, 2A Gerry Ave. and a possible buyer which this home had been full of mold, etc. and has back taxes owed as well as “To Be Determined” items and “Needs to Happen”.

July 27, 2015 –

- Open Space
- Proposed Charter Amendments

August 10, 2015 –

- Single Use Plastic Bags Prohibition
- Tax Acquired Property – 757 Main Unit 29, 40 Maine Turnpike Spur, 2A Gerry Avenue
- Ban on Polystyrene

August 24, 2015 –

- Goal Setting

The City Council Workshop Adjourned at 10:45 a.m.