

City Council Workshop

Agenda Item #3

February 27, 2017

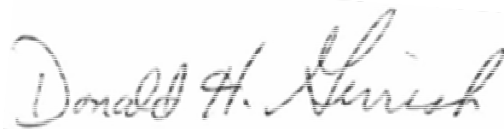
Review O'Neil Street Re-Use
Planning Process and Timeline

The City of South Portland is currently constructing a new Public Services Facility on Highland Avenue, and will be relocating all city operations currently located at the O'Neil Street facility from that site in late 2017. The O'Neil Street facility comprises approximately six acres of land in the heart of the Meetinghouse Hill neighborhood. Last year, the City retained Sebago Technics, Inc. to conduct a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). At that time, based on analytical results, MDEP indicated the site is a likely candidate for residential (unrestricted) development subject to a final determination by the Maine DEP.

In consideration of the construction schedule for the new facility, and the expectation the O'Neil Street facility will likely be vacated later this year, it would be prudent to immediately begin planning for its eventual reuse. Staff has done some preliminary work and envisions a planning process that provides both public engagement as well as the technical work that must be accomplished. The City has retained Laura Moorehead to design and lead the public process, and Sebago Technics will provide technical expertise. Staff is recommending the creation of a working group (ad hoc committee) tasked with carrying out this public process, providing objective feedback to staff and consultants, and ultimately recommending 1 to 3 reuse plan concepts (and perhaps one preferred option) to City Council at the conclusion of its work.

This planning process should be open and transparent, including several community forums at which the working group will provide updates and solicit feedback from city residents. Laura Moorehead has been asked to frame the various roles and responsibilities of all those involved, and she and Owens McCullough of Sebago Technics have created a proposed Work Plan with timeline for this project. This information is included in your workshop meeting packet.

At this time, we are seeking City Council feedback on this proposed work plan and support for the process going forward. Staff and our consultants will be present at the workshop to answer any questions you may have.



Interim City Manager

Public Process of O'Neil Street Re-use Planning
February, 2017

Planning Overview

The public process of the O'Neil Street Re-use Plan will accomplish several objectives:

- Identify a responsible re-use of the O'Neil Street Public Works property in a manner that includes a transparent process and is responsive to the environment, fiscal impacts to the City, and addresses both neighborhood and City objectives.
- Engage the public, especially from the surrounding neighborhoods, in envisioning how the property might be used and creating recommendations to the City.
- Demonstrate that a transparent process uncovers potentially unforeseen barriers and gives citizens a voice in what matters to them and what they want.
- Through creation of a working group, involve a small, carefully chosen diverse mix of community members in the planning of and communication about the process.
- Pride in the process taken to create positive, inclusive change.

Roles and Responsibilities

City Council: Consider recommendations and make the final decision about the re-use of the O'Neil Street Public Works property.

City Staff: Partner with the process consultant to design and lead a successful public process. Provide information to educate the Working Group and the public as they consider the possibilities for re-use of the property. Serve as a member of the Working Group and/or provide specific expertise as needed. Help to recalibrate the process, if necessary. City Staff also will provide administrative assistance that may include reserving meeting space and forum venues, making copies, managing the logistics of each public meeting, and working with the process consultant on alternative communications.

Sebago Technics (Owens McCullough): Participate in the public process by providing general expertise and specific technical understanding of this property. Serve as a member of the Working Group. Partner with Planning Staff to educate the Working Group and the Public Forum participants as they consider the possibilities for re-use of the property. Prepare reports to City Council, in partnership with City Staff and Laura Moorehead.

Moorehead Consulting Partners (Laura Moorehead): Partner with City Staff and Sebago Technics to design and lead the public process. Provide expertise in public process and facilitation. Create agendas and facilitate all Working Group and Public Forum meetings and capture information generated from these meetings. Partner with the City Staff and Sebago Technics in keeping City Council apprised of the

work of the Working Group. Contribute to the reports to City Council that allow them to make the final decision about the re-use of the O'Neil Street Public Works property.

The O'Neil Street Property Re-use Working Group: Carry out a public process that offers City Council the necessary input and information to make an informed, appropriate decision. The objectives of the Working Group include:

- Productive and outcome-oriented Working Group meetings, where new relationships are formed, citizens gain confidence in working with City staff, and results are achieved in the determined timeframe
- Working with the South Portland Planning Department and Sebago Technics to develop the forums
- Seeking maximum involvement of the public, appropriate to the situation
- Creating and participating in an interactive set of forums, culminating in tangible feedback and recommendations
- Educating citizens about the specific property and how reuse is carried out
- Considering additional ways to gather public comment from citizens and residents of the neighborhoods potentially impacted by strategies for reuse of the property.
- Communicating with the public across multiple media throughout the process.

Responsibilities of the group:

- Think through and understand the available assets and issues inherent in re-purposing the O'Neil Street Public Works property. In addition, understand any existing factors (the "givens") that the public will need to know during the forums, including what has already been decided and what won't change in this situation.
- The Council representative will communicate updates to City Council during the planning.
- Serve as a community ambassador to solicit neighbor's input and encourage them to attend the public forums.
- Participate in the success of the forums by assisting during the forums.
- Determine one to three options for City Council to consider as they make their decision.
- Endorse the report to City Council after the conclusion of the public process.
- Attend the City Council meeting where the options will be discussed, and in a later meeting where the outcome will be determined.

Pre-work Before the Public Process Begins

Timeframe: February to March

In preparation for the Working Group's task of planning the public forums, City Staff will accomplish the following steps:

- Identify the City of South Portland general vision.
- Assemble available data of the O'Neil Street site:
 - Surveys
 - VRAP
 - GIS Information
 - Utilities
 - Zoning – Space & Bulk, Allowed Uses, etc.
 - Aerials

- Determine expectations of the process and desired outcome (i.e. community and Council acceptance of a redevelopment plan).
- Identify stakeholders and the composition of the Working Group.
- Review potential approaches to the redevelopment of the O'Neil Street property (Staff level initially). Options include:
- Hold a Council Workshop to present the work plan, discuss it and obtain authorization to proceed (February 27, 2017).

Simultaneously, Laura Moorehead will work with City Staff to determine the participants of the Working Group. Ideally, the Working Group will be comprised of no more than 10 people, with:

- Representation from City Staff, including Josh Reny, Assistant City Manager and Economic Development Director, Tex Haueser and/or Steven Puleo from the Planning Department
- A Conservation Commission representative
- A City Councilor, ideally from the O'Neil Street district
- Owens McCullough, the Sebago Technics liaison to South Portland
- Resident and neighborhood representation.

A number of citizens have expressed interest in being involved in some way with the overall process. Considerations for an appropriate mix of residents in the working group will include:

- Overall age balance
- Overall gender balance
- Right ratio of neighbors to stakeholders from other parts of South Portland
- The individual's interest in being part of a constructive working group, with openness to learning and considering other views
- The individual's ability to be a neighborhood ambassador during this process.
- The individual's ability to commit to the responsibilities of the Working Group, including attending meetings and public forums

As decisions are made about who will be invited to participate on the Working Group, those who were not selected will be invited to participate in other significant ways, including inviting them to assist at public forums and encourage people to attend.

The Working Group will meet in approximately 6 meetings (1.5 hours each) to carry out all phases of the public planning process. Laura Moorehead will prepare the agenda for each meeting, facilitate the meetings and transcribe the minutes. If a survey or other data gathering process is used, she will work with City Staff to design the tool for the Working Group to consider.

Phase One: Planning with the Ad Hoc O'Neil Street Reuse Working Group

Timeframe: March to May

In Phase One, the initial planning before holding public forums, there will be three meetings, with planning among the City representatives, Owens McCullough and Laura Moorehead between meetings.

- The first meeting will be educational in nature, with Sebago Technics and the Planning Department sharing technical information about the site.
- The second meeting will include a walk-through of the property and initial discussion of the options.
- The third meeting will be about reviewing the detailed plan and agenda for public forums and other input gathering processes.

Phase Two: Initial Public Forums

Timeframe: May through July

Two identical public forums (2 hours each) will be convened. The forums will be scheduled on different days of the week, perhaps in different venues, for maximum public participation.

Laura Moorehead will facilitate the two sessions. Sebago Technics and City staff will be instrumental in offering a relatively brief presentation at the start of each forum and providing maps and other information so that participants are well informed as they discuss the possibilities for the property. Working Group members will play a role in the forums, too, ensuring participation, capturing comments and recommendations, and in other ways helping to assure success.

A Working Group meeting (1.5 hours) will be held between forums to debrief the public meeting, review the comments and recommendations, and to refine the next forum, if needed.

After the second forum, Laura Moorehead will draft a brief report about the public comments and recommendations from the forums and any other feedback mechanism that has been used. The report will be used in an update to City Council.

At this time, City Staff and Sebago Technics will prepare up to five alternative development plans for Working Group consideration and City Council discussions. The plans will include:

- High level cost estimates for the alternatives.
- Discuss potential approaches to implement the preferred vision: RFP, public-private partnership, city initiated and owned.
- Identify permitting requirements.
- Identify potential grant or funding opportunities: CDBG? TIF District to fund re-development?

An additional developer forum will be held to solicit input from the development community. The forum will be open to the public, and advertised as a highly technical discussion with developers about the property and its potential.

City Council will meet in a workshop that engages Councilors in a less formal, off-the-dais discussion of the public input and the alternatives, answers any questions Councilors may have, and airs any clear no-go options for re-use of the property.

Phase Three: Determining Recommendations

Timeframe: July to August

The Working Group will hold one to two meetings (1.5 hours each) to narrow alternatives and determine up to three recommended options for re-use of the property for City Council to consider.

City Council will receive an update at this time, including the alternatives. The Working Group will obtain permission to present the options to the public for further comment.

Phase Four: Third Public Forum**Timeframe: September**

An additional forum (2 hours) will be held to present to the public the results of the conceptual planning. City Staff and Sebago Technics will present the alternatives, including any specific considerations for each. Laura Moorehead will facilitate a process for public comment and recommendations and will collate the results. Members of the Working Group may play a role in the forum, ensuring participation, capturing comments and recommendations, and in other ways helping to assure success.

Given that this phase is often when the public is most interested, the City may choose to offer the presentation and other information over alternative media or in an additional forum.

The consultant, Sebago Technics and City Staff will write the final report, to be used with the Council as it considers and chooses the preferred alternative (Phase Five).

Phase Five: Decision Process**Timeframe: September or October**

The City Council will meet in workshop to discuss and decide on the future use of the O'Neil Street property. Members of the Working Group will attend and may contribute to the discussion, as needed.

Phase Six: Implementation**Timeframe: October and beyond**

The work will begin to implement the re-use plan. This will be highly dependent on the determined approach and financing. This phase will be refined as the previous steps are completed.

City of South Portland
O'Neil Street Re-use Plan
Public Process Working Group

The O'Neil Street Property Re-use Working Group will carry out a public process that offers City Council the necessary input and information to make an informed, appropriate decision about the re-purposing of the property. Laura Moorehead of Moorehead Consulting Partners will facilitate the process.

The objectives of the Working Group include:

- Productive and outcome-oriented Working Group meetings, where new relationships are formed, citizens gain confidence in working with City staff, and results are achieved in the determined timeframe
- Working with the South Portland Planning Department and Sebago Technics to develop the forums
- Seeking maximum involvement of the public, appropriate to the situation
- Creating and participating in an interactive set of forums, culminating in tangible feedback and recommendations
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Participation in the Working Group

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- The individual's ability to be a neighborhood ambassador during this process.
- The individual's ability to commit to the responsibilities of the Working Group, including attending meetings and public forums, as well as City Council meetings related to this process.

As decisions are made about who will be invited to participate on the Working Group, those who were not selected will be invited to participate in other significant ways, including inviting them to assist at public forums and encourage people to attend.

Working Group Process

The Working Group will meet in approximately 6 meetings (1.5 hours each) to carry out all phases of the public planning process. Laura Moorehead will prepare the agenda for each meeting, facilitate the meetings and transcribe the minutes. There will be additional meetings that Working Group members will attend related to this re-use planning process:

- Meeting 1: After introductions, the first meeting will be educational in nature, with Sebago Technics and the Planning Department sharing information about the O'Neil Street Public Works site.
- Meeting 2: This meeting will include a walk-through of the property and initial discussion of the options.
- Meeting 3: We will plan the public forums and discuss logistics, including getting the word out and encouraging people to attend.
- Public Forum #1
- Meeting 4: Between forums, the Working Group will debrief the first forum and make adjustments to assure the success of the second.
- Public Forum #2
- City Council Workshop: Working Group members may choose to attend the City Council workshop where Councilors will discuss the public input and alternatives.
- Meeting 5 (and possibly 6): The Working Group will narrow the alternatives to 1-3 options for City Council to consider during their decision making.
- City Council Workshop: Working Group members may choose to attend the City Council workshop where Councilors will discuss the options.
- Public Forum #3
- Meeting 6 or 7: The Working Group will close their formal participation in the public process with a debrief and celebration of success.
- City Council Workshop: Working Group members may choose to attend the City Council workshop where Councilors will make their decision about the future use of the O'Neil Street property.