

HIGHLAND REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

STUDY SESSION MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10TH, 2023

Members of the Highland Redevelopment Commission (RC Commission) met in person at Town Hall on Tuesday, October 10th, 2023.

The Study session was called to order at 6:31 pm by President Sean Conley.

Present: Commissioners Sean Conley, Alex Robertson, George Georgeff and Tom Black were present in person at Town Hall.

Additional Officials Present: Susan Hale, Assistant Redevelopment Director; Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director; Non-Voting Commissioner & School Town Representative Pat Krull; Scott Blise, Attorney

Attorney John Reed was excused.

Also Present: Jean Bernius, Cathy Perrin, and Mary Hackett of Highland Neighbors for Sustainability

General Substance and Discussion

1. Municipal Parking Lot Planting – Some members of Highland Neighbors for Sustainability spoke with the Commission about their plans for the parking lot planting, including what plants are there right now in the trial area. They explained that they cannot perform all of the work by themselves. The Commission asked Director Becerra to find out who designed the landscaping at the Library. Pat Krull mentioned he knew someone who does landscape design and might be able to help. President Conley commented that this project is not something they can turn to a neighborhood group for, in its entirety, and that this is something we will need to spend money on. The Commission expressed that they would like the planting to be done this Spring. The Commission asked Director Becerra to continue working with Clerk-Treasurer Herak on finding funding for this for next year's budget.
2. Community Garden Native Plant Pollinator Garden Strip – Highland Neighbors for Sustainability members explained that there have been numerous suggestions to add a native plant garden at the Community Garden to encourage pollinators to pollinate the garden beds. Some discussion ensued. The visiting members from HNS also explained that they have a proposed idea to work with the library, as well as apply for a grant to help with planting, and a requirement of the grant is an education aspect. President Conley clarified that the group is not asking for funding, just for permission. The Commission asked the visitors to provide additional information about the types of plants and trees and heights of trees they want to plant and details about where the new garden bed could fit in, and sizes/dimensions.
3. School Resource Officer Funding – The Commission discussed funding another SRO for the schools, and Pat Krull explained how the current SRO was interviewed by the school, as well as how training looks for SROs. Attorney Reed was supposed to look into legislation allowing a Redevelopment Commission to fund police officer salary. The Commission and Pat Krull also discussed that there might need to be a inter-local governmental agreement in place, as there is for the current \$100k that goes towards the school town. President Conley asked for a better

figure showing how much this would cost, and he asked that Director Becerra get together with Clerk-Treasurer Mark Herak to discuss where funding can come from and to include it in next year's budget.

4. December Meeting Schedule – The Commission discussed cancelling the plenary meeting in December and holding a plenary meeting the same day as the study session. The Commission agreed to do this.
5. Wayfinding Signs Update – The Commission was notified that once the weather improves, the installer will be out to finish installing the wayfinding signs.
6. During Commissioner Comments, the Commission discussed the TIF Allocation Area Consolidation which was not approved by the Town Council last night. The Commission asked Councilman Tom Black what happened and what the Council's thoughts were and he expressed that some Council members wanted to see a "definite plan of what the monies combined would go for." This will be on the Town Council's next Study Session agenda.

The meeting was adjourned by President Sean Conley at 7:17 pm.