

## CAPITAL CENTER COMMISSION

### Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, September 14, 2011

A meeting of the Capital Center Commission (CCC) was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room of the Department of Planning and Development, 444 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903.

#### 1. Roll Call

Members Present: Deming Sherman, Wilfrid Gates, Glenn Kumekawa, Duncan Johnson, Greg Benik, Barry Fain, Seth Handy, Christopher Thomas, John Sinnott and Michael McCormick

Members Absent:, Guy Abelson, Chairman of the Committee on Finance, and Chairman of the Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning

Staff Present: Christopher Ise and Robert Azar

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM, Chairman Sherman presiding.

#### 2. Minutes

**2.1 Approval of Commission meeting minutes of June 15, 2011.** A motion was made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Handy, to approve the meeting minutes. All voted in favor.

#### 3. Presentation of Resolutions for Past Commissioners

Chairman Sherman asked for a motion to approve the Resolutions for past Commissioners Stanley Weiss, Merlin DeConti and Steve Durkee. Mr. Gates made a motion, seconded by Mr. Handy, to approve the resolutions. All voted in favor.

#### 4. Parcel 14: Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Proposal to install a new wall sign and banner signs on the building.

Presenter: Michael Abbott

Mr. Abbott made a presentation. The plan is to install banners and a permanent wall sign on the west elevation in the area the stage loading door. The banners are to be constructed of vinyl and will be changed over time according to the event schedule. The banners will have grommets that will be attached to permanent fasters on the building. On the north elevation, the existing single banner over the marquee is to remain but will be replaced with the new name. This main banner is illuminated by two existing spotlights. The wall sign is to be constructed of aluminum with a baked enamel finish and pin mounted to the mortar joints. The sign will relate more architecturally with the proposed new addition that is slated for construction next year. The sign will be backlit allowing the light to wash the face of the building. He added that the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has signed off on the signage plan.

Chairman Sherman inquired about the current renovations. Mr. Abbott explained that the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the renovation, which includes new dressing, green and rest rooms for the back of house, is underway. Construction of the new addition is to begin next summer. In response to a question regarding the time change for the banners, Mr. Abbott replied that the banners will announce current performances and will be changed accordingly, approximately every six months to one year.

On a motion made by Mr. Fain, seconded by Mr. Thomas, the Commission approved the signage plan for the Vets. All voted in favor.

#### 5. Parcel 1: Union Station

Proposal to replace existing signage and awnings with new signage and awnings, replace existing storefront windows with operable doors, install new tiled columns at the entryway, and install decorative fencing and planter boxes for a new restaurant in the former 'Ardeo' space.

Presenter: Maurice Molod and Don Diebler

Mr. Diebler stated that they are leasing the former 'Ardeo' restaurant space for the new restaurant 'Bar Louie.' He noted that they have considered the Design Review Committee's comments from the September 6<sup>th</sup> DRC meeting and made the changes. He noted that exterior modifications include new

fabric on existing awnings, removing some of the concrete planters and adding railings to the outdoor patio space, replacing existing signage, removing existing storefronts and installing new folding doors, and infilling an existing kitchen door in the tunnel. Mr. Benik asked about the new restaurant, Mr. Diebler explained that it is a tavern and grill with a full service menu and bar, and a late night kitchen. In response to a question by Mr. Fain, Mr. Diebler stated the Bar Louie started in Chicago and that there are currently 40 locations, including one in Patriot Place. Construction is to start at the end of October. Mr. Molod gave a brief overview of the Company's history.

Mr. Benik made a motion, seconded by Mr. McCormick, to approve the project. All voted in favor. Mr. Gates thanked the applicants for revising the plans and incorporating the DRC's comments.

#### **6. Letter to Edward F. Sanderson regarding the Enhancement Grant for Station Park**

Chairman Sherman announced that the Commission is working with the Providence Foundation and the State to determine if the enhancement funds for Station Park could be redesignated to the plaza in front of the train station for improvements. He explained that the grant was for \$3.5 million, with \$300k used for the park. The remaining \$1.2 million could be used for the plaza. Chairman Sherman noted that he is unsure where the funds are exactly, but that it is worth pursuing. He added that he has drafted a letter to Ted Sanderson and that he has already received approval from the Department of Planning and Development and the Rhode Island Department of Administration. Chairman Sherman stated that he will pursue this with vigor and is requesting ratification of the letter by the Commission. Mr. Gates remarked that he was pleased with the Commission being proactive. Mr. McCormick expressed concern with all the money being allocated to the plaza, while the park still needs improvement. Mr. Handy is supportive but is concerned with the bigger picture regarding infrastructure in the district. In response to a question by Mr. Sinnott regarding funding, Chairman Sherman replied that the Commission has only \$86k in the fund and that the Commission would work with the Providence Foundation to hire a consultant. Mr. Gates spoke in favor of the letter, adding that they have looked at the garage and plaza for a short-term fix but have come up with no solutions. He noted that the lack of maintenance has resulted in the problems today. He agreed with Mr. Handy's comments. He added that the Commission needs to go in the direction of advocating for normal maintenance of infrastructure. A brief discussion ensued regarding the pedestrian walkway, which is an extension of Exchange Street, adjacent to the train station for potential use as a vehicular connection to Gaspee Street.

Mr. Gates made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kumekawa, to approve the letter as drafted. All voted in favor.

#### **7. Design Review Consultant Designation**

Mr. Ise explained that there was a discrepancy in the hourly rate for the Design Review Consultant when it was discussed by the Commission at the June 15, 2011 meeting. At that meeting, the Commission agreed that if the difference in the amount was substantial, the matter would need to return to the Commission for further discussion. The previous rate was \$140 per hour and the new rate is \$250 per hour. Mr. Ise noted that the Commission paid this new hourly rate when the Commission reviewed the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Building. He explained that the new contract never received approval by the Commission probably because at the time, the Commission was in transition to the City. He noted that other fees have gone up.

Mt. Thomas made a motion to approve the consultant agreement for a two-year period beginning June 15, 2011. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

#### **8. Auditor Designation**

Mr. Ise explained that the yearly fee has increased in price from \$1000 to \$1200. On a motion made by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Fain, the auditor contract was approved for a two-year period. All voted in favor.

*Other Business*

- Mr. Gates referred to a newspaper article regarding the opening of 'Jacky's' restaurant and that the past and present members should be proud of the work of the Commission.
- An announcement was made regarding the PPS Symposium to take place this weekend.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM

---

Christopher Thomas  
Secretary/Treasurer