

CAPITAL CENTER COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, June 13, 2018

A meeting of the Capital Center Commission (CCC) was held on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 in the 1st Floor Conference Room of the Doorley Municipal Building, 444 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903.

1. Roll Call

CCC Members Present: Deming Sherman, Barry Fain, Martha Werenfels, John Sinnott, Collette Creppell, Ethan Colaiace, and Lisa Carnevale

CCC Members Absent: William Kite, Sam Bradner, Luis Torrado, Anjali Joshi, Tracy Barac, Dorene Conlon, Councilman John Iglizzi, and Chairman of the Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal & Planning

Staff Present: Christopher Ise, Robert Azar, and Bonnie Nickerson

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:06 PM, Chairman Sherman presiding.

2. Minutes

Approval of Commission Minutes of March 28, 2018

Ms. Werenfels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sinnott, to approve the meeting minutes. All voted in favor.

At this time, Chairman Sherman changed the agenda order.

3. Downtown Transit Connector (DTC)

Presentation on the DTC project. For Informational purposes only.

Chairman Sherman stated that he's not sure if the CCC has jurisdiction over this project, but has asked that it be presented to the Commission. He added that there have been meetings with Bonnie Nickerson, Amy Pettine, and Waterplace Condominium residents regarding this project. Amy Pettine, representing the Rhode Island Transportation Authority (RIPTA), and Bonnie Nickerson, Director of Planning, presented the project. Ms. Pettine explained that the project is a result of a 2014 Tiger Grant award for Downtown transit improvements, which was originally a streetcar system. She went on to say that RIPTA and the City have worked closely together on the project. Ms. Pettine explained that this is a 2 phase project, with construction on phase 1 to start at the end of summer. She explained that the 1.5 mile route starts at the train station, runs through Downtown, and terminates at the hospital. Ms. Pettine explained that DTC bus service will have an exclusive right of way system (dedicated lanes) and a smart signal system. She noted other improvements associated with the project, which includes bike lanes, curb work, sidewalk improvements, and shelters. Ms. Pettine stated that it is a \$10 million investment in Downtown.

Ms. Nickerson explained the new vision plan for Kennedy Plaza, noting that the City has signed a design contract for the Plaza. She noted that construction will launch at the same time as the DTC project. Ms. Nickerson explained that the bike share is set to launch August 2018, with 40 stations along the corridor and 400 bikes in the initial launch. She explained that the DTC is part of a multi-modal system, with Amtrak, MBTA line and real-time information at shelters. Ms. Pettine presented boards. In response to a question by Chairman Sherman regarding bus layover time in the Capital Center area, Ms. Pettine responded that it will be between 2 and 10 minutes. A brief discussion followed regarding future bus service changes.

Mr. Colaiace expressed concern regarding the corner of Finance Way and Exchange Street, particularly the removal of on-street parking and deliveries to the Blue Cross Building. Ms. Pettine explained that Blue cross has a high bus ridership. Chairman Sherman was concerned with bus noise and the bus turning warning alert. Ms. Pettine stated that the warning system has improved safety, and it's critical for warning pedestrians, especially in Kennedy Plaza. In responses to a question by

Ms. Werenfels, Ms. Pettine replied that the bus route follows the previously proposed streetcar route, but with some alterations. Ms. Nickerson stated that the alignment is based on employment hubs. At this time public comment was heard. Connie Donnelly, representing Waterplace Condominiums, expressed concern regarding potential safety, traffic congestion, and noise issues. She noted that it is an already congested area, and that there is a difference of opinion on how to execute it. She suggested an alternate route that involves using Francis Street.

Charlie Meyer was concerned with the proposed change to Stillman Street, and was emphatic about keeping it a two-way street. He noted that changing it to a one-way street will affect the restaurants and parking lots.

Ms. Pettine noted that RIPTA is considering all issues. In response to a question by Leslie Gardner regarding the traffic study that was completed, Ms. Pettine replied that RIPTA is currently assessing the traffic study.

Chairman Sherman explained that no action would be taken by the Commission. He added that any comments regarding this project should be forwarded to Ms. Pettine or Ms. Nickerson.

4. Parcel 1: Union Station Parking Lot

Request for Extension of Parking Attendant Booth and Pylon Sign Approvals.

Chris Marsella appeared to present the request for a two-year extension of the approvals for the attendant booth and pylon sign for the parking lot located on Parcel 1. Ms. Creppell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sinnott, to approve the request. All voted in favor.

5. Parcel 15: RI Credit Union

Request for Extension of Parking Lot Approval.

David Suvall appeared to present the request extend the approval for the interim surface parking lot for the Rhode Island Credit Union for an additional two years. Mr. Fain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Colaiace, to approve the request. All voted in favor.

6. FY 2019 Budget

Chairman Sherman explained that there are no state subsidies, and no application fees this year so far, noting that the Commission now relies on application fees. He added that the Commission has \$80,000 in the bank account. Ms. Werenfels made a motion, seconded by Ms. Carnevale, to approve the 2019 budget. All voted in favor.

7. Other Business

7.1 Report on the performance audit of the Capital Center Commission by the State's Office of Internal Audit.

Chairman Sherman updated the Commission regarding the recent audit by the State's Office of Internal Audit, required by the Quasi-Public Corporations Accountability and Transparency Act. He noted that he and Mr. Ise met with the auditors who are requiring that the Commission develop written policies regarding the Capital Center Commission's operations. Chairman Sherman stated that he is working on drafting policies, which he will share with the Commission at the next meeting

7.2 Update on the Providence Intermodal Transit Center (PITC) project.

Chairman Sherman gave a brief update on the proposed project. He stated that an RFP was issued two months ago, noting that Marsella Development has proposed an underground

transit facility. Chairman Sherman announced that when the CCC reviews the project, he will invite all members of the Commission to the DRC meetings for participation.

Chris Marsella announced that the project is still going to procurement, adding that there's about 5 to 6 months of design work before it can go to the Commission. He added that the team understands the importance of the site and public participation. Mr. Marsella explained that the facility will be located underground, with the lawn and public space above. He added that he is looking forward to working with the Capital Center Commission.

7.3 Discussion regarding the potential retention by the Commission of a design consultant for the PITC project.

Chairman Sherman stated that in connection with the PITC project, he is considering hiring a design consultant. He asked the Commission for suggestions. He noted that Sarah Williams Goldhagen was suggested, adding that he preferred that it be someone that is not local. In response to a question by Mr. Colaiace regarding the project, Chairman Sherman agreed that the concern is the look of the surface above the facility. Ms. Creppell suggested Alex Krieger. Chairman Sherman remarked that Dan Wood from WorkAC is the project architect.

At this time, Ken Orenstein noted the passing of former Commissioner Glenn Kumekawa.

8. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:03 PM.

Barry Fain
Secretary/Treasurer