

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, October 18, 2012

8:15 a.m.

City Council Conference Room

City Hall at 420 Litho Street

1. Call To Order – 8:25am

Chair – Adam Krivatsy (City Resident)

John Clark (BAC Appointee)

Mike Kelly (City Council Rep)*

Joe Lemon (Chamber Rep)

Peter Van Meter (BAC Appointee)

Eckart Noack (City Resident)

Cheryl Popp (Chamber Rep)

Jeff Scharosch (Chamber Rep)

Herb Weiner (City Council Rep)

John Cox (BAC Appointee)

*Absent

2. Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

City Council candidates Ray Withy and Tom Theodores introduced themselves to the BAC.

3. Approval of Minutes – August 24, 2012

Approved.

4. Meeting with Supervisor Kate Sears

The BAC welcomed Supervisor Sears and her Aide Leslie Alden and thanked them for graciously taking the time to work with the Committee.

The legacy of late Supervisor Charles McGlashan was discussed with particular emphasis on his commitment to the BAC as a vehicle to improve the community with respect to economic performance, environmental sustainability, and resident quality of life.

The BAC credited Supervisor Sears and Ms. Alden for organizing the recent County-wide forum regarding “Choosing the Future” which addressed environmental and equity concerns. The BAC suggested that the scope of that important discussion also include attention to the economic vitality of the community.

The BAC members then individually addressed Supervisor Sears and Ms. Alden regarding their areas of interests and concerns.

LEMON addressed the challenges and opportunities associated with the anchorage in Richardson’s Bay. The potential benefits to be offered through the development of a managed mooring field that would allow existing users and appropriate visitors to have access to the anchorage in a responsible way. Because this proposal was advocated by Supervisor McGlashan and because of the anticipated influx of boating visitors for the 2013 America’s Cup, the need for a thoughtful strategy was discussed.

COUNCILMEMBER WEINER discussed the opportunity to derive occupancy tax revenue from Cavallo Point. He also discussed opportunities to shuttle visitors from

Cavallo Point to Sausalito to improve the economic opportunity for merchants and to mitigate the influx of visitors by bicycle.

COX recommended that proposals to improve the community should be evaluated through a cost/benefit analysis which identifies potential expenses/liabilities compared against the value (financially and experientially) that would be generated by any such improvements.

SCHAROSCH reiterated the costs associated with the existing management of Richardson's Bay, which imposes disproportionate negative impacts on those businesses located near the waterfront. He discussed the frustration expressed by Police Chief Tejada regarding her jurisdictional authority to provide public service oversight in Richardson's Bay.

SCHAROSCH also discussed the opportunities to collaborate with the County's Marin Economic Forum.

SCHAROSCH described the economic challenges associated with certain of the City's business restrictions, including the prohibition of "formula retail" that has led to chronic storefront and office vacancies.

CHAIR KRIVATSY described the BAC's experience in developing economic strategy with the MEF's Director, Rob Eyer, Ph.D. He discussed the importance of identifying and encouraging "clusters" that reflect the community's core competencies, such as creative arts applied, particularly applied in a commercial context (e.g., design, marketing, product innovation, etc.).

On this point, SUPERVISOR SEARS directed the BAC's attention to the "Venture Greenhouse" of Dominican University. She lamented that a number of the program's successful projects located to the East Bay due to the greater availability of appropriate work space. She suggested that the BAC coordinate with Venture Greenhouse's Executive Director, John Stayton, to discuss potential opportunities within Sausalito for that program's enterprises. (<http://venturegreenhouse.org/about/people/the-team/item/john-stayton>)

SUPERVISOR SEARS also informed the BAC that some of her work with BCDC included projections of rising tides and the importance of bolstering infrastructure to protect the waterfront business community and its assets.

NOACK advocated that environmental consulting be shared amongst Marin communities to ensure a coordinated plan to address potentially rising tides. He referred the Committee to the projections offered in SWA's 2050 projected floodplain.

POPP reiterated the importance of providing a managed mooring field in Richardson's Bay, as previously developed by Supervisor McGlashan. She also echoed Councilmember Weiner's recommendation for improved shuttle services.

VAN METER explained that the Economic Study produced by the MEF provided the data necessary to inform decisions about improving economic vitality. He explained the importance for the County to assist with funding of such thoughtful studies, which provide valuable information for all of Marin's communities.

VAN METER also alerted the Committee to the admonitions of the City's Finance Director, Charlie Francis, who has projected a budget deficit for FY 2013 – the first such shortfall in many years. He suggested that Francis's warning should be heeded by seeking to improve economic opportunity that returns tax revenues back to the City's coffers.

PUBLIC GUEST THEODORES expressed the importance of policy makers to assess the needs of the business community by seeking their input on how best to improve their businesses while still preserving the highest quality of life for residents.

PUBLIC GUEST WITHY emphasized the need for leadership at the City Council-level to help guide staff in implementing sound policy.

WEINER suggested that the blight in the Marinship needed to be resolved.

5. Review of Marin Economic Forum Proposed Scope of Work

The scope of work for Dr. Eyler was reviewed briefly.

6. Assistance to Marinship Businesses

Not discussed.

7. America's Cup – Status Report

Not discussed.

8. Agenda Topics for Next Meeting – November 15, 2012

It was agreed that the BAC would reach out to Supervisor Sears with a focus on (a) a proposed mooring field for Richardson's Bay, (b) transportation concerns and opportunities, and (c) opportunities for incubation, such as those developed by Dominican's Venture Greenhouse.

It was agreed that the City's newest Councilmembers should be invited to the next BAC meeting after the November 6 election.

9. Adjourn – 9:50am