

DOVER PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD: Monday, March 9, 1964
7:30 p.m.
Board Office

ATTENDING: Chairman Wallace I. Akerman, Vice-Chairman Hugh C. Tuttle, Secretary Robert W. Lapointe, Albert O. Bernard, Donald E. Chick, Arthur J. DuBois, Robert N. Gillis, Raymond R. Ouellette, Robert T. Sheldon.

ALSO ATTENDING: Henry Neil, Planning Director, Mayor Walworth Johnson.

Chairman Wallace I. Akerman announced that the first item on the agenda would be an address by Mayor Walworth Johnson.

The Mayor explained to Board Members that he had felt that it would be desirable for him to meet with the Members in order to receive and discuss their views and comments on the joint meeting held by the City Council and on the direction which the Dover Community Renewal Program should take. He asked Board Members for their views on these subjects.

Mr. Lapointe stated that while he felt that everyone present at the joint meeting had learned something, there appeared to be a certain hesitancy evident in some groups. He stated that in his view if Dover is to progress all groups must work together.

Mayor Johnson agreed with Mr. Lapointe in this statement, and added that that had been the purpose of the meeting. He further asked what the City Council might do to assist the Planning Board in the preparation of its Community Renewal Program. He felt that the Council Members were extremely interested in closely examining downtown Dover with respect to what action might be taken to revitalize it. He further asked the Board for their views on Mr. William Ballard, who had addressed the joint meeting.

Mr. Sheldon asked who was responsible for the management of the Community Renewal Program funds.

The Planning Director explained the dual relationship of the City Council and the Planning Board in that the City Council is the applicant and is directly responsible for Community Renewal Program funds, while the Planning Board has been delegated by the City Council as the body responsible for the preparing of the Community Renewal Program.

Mr. Chick then outlined to the Board Members the involvement of the City Council in the Community Renewal Program application. He stated his view that the City Council has delegated the responsibility to the Planning Board and is awaiting results. He further noted the large problems involved in downtown renewal and his feeling that the two groups must work closely together to achieve a useful objective.

Mayor Johnson agreed with Mr. Chick and added that the Planning Board will recommend where and how the Community Renewal Program funds should be spent and the City Council will act upon those recommendations.

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Mr. Neil then explained to the Board that Mr. Ballard had been one of four consultants approached with respect to the Community Renewal Program Marketability study. Mr. Ballard had been the only qualified person available to do the work and willing to do the work. A discussion then followed on urban renewal and its potential effects.

Mayor Johnson stated that he felt that the Community Renewal Program offered the City an excellent opportunity to do the preliminary work necessary before actual involvement in an urban renewal project. Mr. Lapointe noted that Mr. Ballard had promised preliminary results of his study within three months. In answer to a question, Mr. Neil informed the Board that the Community Renewal Program will give the results to the City Council so that they may decide whether or not they wish to become involved in the actual urban renewal project.

Mr. Chick then outlined the various proposals which had been made concerning urban renewal within the City. Mayor Johnson noted that the diversity of these ideas demonstrated the need for joint work.

Mr. Chick stated that in his belief it is the proper function of the Planning Board to coordinate these various ideas. He further stated that the Community Renewal Program provides the vehicle necessary for this coordination.

Motion made by Sheldon that the Planning Board recommend to the City Council that the Ballard Company of Boston be retained by the City of Dover to prepare a marketability study as outlined in the Community Renewal Program Application.

Mr. Lapointe asked whether Mr. Ballard had submitted references to the City. The Planning Director answered that Mr. Ballard had submitted a list of communities within which he had worked and that he himself was familiar with each of these. Mr. Lapointe then seconded the motion.

A question was then raised as to the authorization form of the contract and its availability. Mr. Neil informed the Board that a contract had not yet been finalized but that Mr. Ballard had submitted a recommended contract to the City which must be approved by the City and the Regional Office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in New York.

Mr. Sheldon then stated that he wished to withdraw the motion until the Board could receive a copy of the final contract as proposed. Mr. Lapointe agreed to withdraw his second.

Mr. DuBois stated that he felt that more information was required as to the precise nature of the information which the City would receive from this contract.

Mr. Chick then pointed out that the City Council is relying upon the Planning Board to check all details of the Community Renewal Program before the City Council is called upon to act upon them. Mr. Sheldon suggested that the Planning Director be directed to prepare for the Board a final proposed contract with the Ballard Company for the consideration of the Board.

Mr. Neil informed the Board that he could not have this contract ready for the proposed meeting on March 16. He therefore asked the Board if they wished

to cancel this meeting and postpone it until March 23. After some discussion, it was decided to postpone the March 16 meeting until March 23.

Mr. Chick noted that if the Planning Board approves the proposed contract and after Mr. Tuttle explains to the Council the reasons of the Board in taking this action, the City Council could possibly approve the contract on the same evening as it was submitted to them.

Mr. Tuttle stated his belief that as the situation now exists, the City Council will cooperate with the Planning Board fully as long as they feel the Board is producing results.

Mayor Johnson stated that he felt that Mr. Ballard's address to the City Council and the Board had been extremely helpful and informative.

Mr. Gillis asked whether the Planning Board would be able to get the various recommendations and suggestions of other groups early enough in the preparation of the Community Renewal Program so that they would not require a great deal of work to be redone.

Mr. Tuttle stated that he felt this depended on how well the Planning Board handled the project. He stated that the law gave to the Planning Board the right to obtain information from all departments. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the Planning Board to coordinate all planning done within the community.

Mr. Neil suggested that the Planning Board might call another general meeting at which the various groups would be invited to contribute their ideas and suggestions as they concerned renewal and planning.

Mr. Lapointe agreed that the Planning Board should take full advantage of the ideas of other groups.

Mayor Johnson suggested that the Board or City might wish to hold a general public meeting at which all persons who wished to be heard could speak.

Mr. Neil stated his view that this would be premature until some more definite plans had been prepared.

Mayor Johnson noted that people will hear something and that it's better to have them hear the truth than rumors.

Mr. Chick agreed and stated his view that it is better to invite criticism early than to lose the whole project at a later date for lack of public information.

Mr. DuBois suggested that Mr. Neil be directed to extend invitations to the various community development groups to meet with the Planning Board and discuss common problems and potential solutions. He stated that good relations had been established between the various groups and they should be maintained.

Mr. Chick suggested that at the meetings with these various groups the Planning Board present work as it develops and obtain comments upon this work.

In answer to a question, Mr. Neil stated that he would rather have these groups meet with the Planning Board than with him individually.

Mr. DuBois suggested that the Board meet each Monday with a different group.

Mayor Johnson agreed that the proposed system would result in an exchange of ideas.

Mr. Chick restated his belief that all planning done in the community should be coordinated through the Board. He further stated that urban renewal should be a result of planning rather than the reverse. In his opinion the Planning Board has a tremendous responsibility to coordinate all planning work.

Mr. Lapointe noted that the Director will shortly have an Assistant who can take some of the work off his shoulders.

Mr. Chick agreed that it is physically impossible for the Planning Director to do all the work alone and must have assistance from not only his staff but Board Members also.

Mr. Ouellette asked when Mr. Ballard might be able to present his results to the community.

Mr. Neil answered that preliminary results would be available within three months with a final report in twelve months.

Mr. Ouellette asked if the results would be generalized rather than specific. Mr. Neil answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Chick stated that he felt that the City had to approach renewal from some logical point and that the Ballard Company appears to be that point. He would rather take a longer time to prepare a good report than attempt to rush it and prepare a bad report.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Ballard Study might not support downtown renewal.

Discussion then followed as to the degree of specificity of the Ballard report.

Mr. DuBois then asked if it was agreed that the Board would meet with the various groups in the community.

Mr. Chick recommended that the preliminary details be left to the Planning Director.

Mr. Neil suggested that he write a letter to the various groups mentioning to the groups the availability of the Community Renewal Program funds,

asking these groups for their views and offering the services of the Board where appropriate.

Mr. Akerman then stated that if no further discussion was forthcoming, the Board would now consider Mr. Robert J. LaPointe for the position of Assistant Planner.

Mr. Neil outlined the search by the Board for an Assistant Planner and the process by which Mr. LaPointe had been selected.

Motion made by DuBois, seconded by Tuttle, that Robert J. LaPointe be appointed as Assistant Planner under the Dover Community Renewal Program and that he begin his duties on Monday, March 16, 1964. Motion adopted unanimously.

Mr. Akerman then directed the Planning Director to schedule the next meeting of the Planning Board for March 16 and for each Monday thereafter as long as any group requests a meeting with the Board.

Motion by Tuttle, seconded by Bernard that the meeting be adjourned. Motion adopted unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert W. Lapointe,
Secretary.