



RE: Fairhaven Design Review / Historic Resources - response

Bill Geyer to: JThomas

05/25/2011 01:57 PM

"David Moody", "John Servais", "Katie Franks", "Kurt Nabbefeld",
Cc: NOliver, "Vince Biciunas", cdm, MLilliquist, SSnapp, JWeiss, DPike,
DWebster

Hi Jeff,

Thanks for the timely response. Glad to hear the City has found the resources to fund the design review services. I will inform our clients to see if they wish to reassign their funds to their other needs within this planning process. Should the City change its mind on this task, please advise and I will return the item to our clients for their consideration, and likely approval. Per our discussions, we anticipate the deliverable would be a document sufficient for review and consideration as part of the development regulations for Fairhaven.

Regarding the Commissions, yes, we discussed the Historic Preservation Commission would be used as a resource. My concern remains the execution of the planning tasks so that stakeholders' can analyze and recommend prior to submitting items to a Commission for action. The former process engages the stakeholders into the substantive issues while the latter can prematurely set up a need for folks to argue about issues that are not ripe for review. Our comments last night were made to avoid the latter situation.

Going forward, you might consider a system for quality checks with a limited number of people. It could be as simple as 5-6 stakeholders meeting to answer the following questions:

Is the issue properly framed?

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Do the recommendations support or support recommendations in other topical areas?

Are we ready to publish the results, that is, they are complete and clear?

What else can we do to improve the product?

The staff may be asking these questions internally while they work, but it would be helpful to ask these among a few stakeholders to maintain quality in the process. Sometimes we get too focused on the topics and slip on tactics that maintain quality work.

Thanks for listening, and your leadership. Looking forward to tonight's meeting.

Bill Geyer, AICP

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360.738.2836 office / 360.224.6317 cell

From: JThomas@cob.org [mailto:JThomas@cob.org]

Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2011 1:27 PM

To: Bill Geyer

Cc: David Moody; John Servais; Katie Franks; Kurt Nabbefeld; NOliver@cob.org; Vince Biciunas; cdm@masterplanning.com; MLilliquist@cob.org; SSnapp@cob.org; JWeiss@cob.org; DPike@cob.org; DWebster@cob.org

Subject: Re: Fairhaven Design Review / Historic Resources

Hi Bill -

Thanks for your email - I've had a chance to review it as well as debrief with City staff in attendance at the HPC meeting last evening.

Let me start with agreeing to one of the very last comments in your email below:

"Last night was an unfortunate trip on the path."

You have provided some very valuable thoughts in your email. However, there are two important points that must be addressed and made very clear:

1. The City's request for consideration to share design services with your clients.

You will recall our meeting at City Hall on Tuesday, March 1, 2011 with staff Greg Aucutt and Nicole Oliver. This meeting served as a follow up to direction received by staff from the City Council on Monday, February 7, 2011. That direction was to look for opportunities in blending the approaches of staff and that contained in your 2011 docketing request for Fairhaven. Near the conclusion of that meeting, I proposed the possibility of the City and your clients cost sharing the design services of Dave Christensen, with whom I was of the understanding that your clients had a contractual agreement with for such services related to this effort. You appropriately responded that you would need to confer with your clients. The reason for my proposal was simply that the City had no identified budget in 2011 to pay for necessary studies and services related to this effort as we had initially projected this work in 2012.

Part of the direction received by staff from the City Council was to return and provide a project update by the end of March. This was done on Monday, March 28, 2011. During this update, I informed the City Council of the need to find financial resources and/or alternative ways to complete the necessary studies for this project in 2011 including working with Parking Services on the parking study, using existing information and analysis for the traffic study and cost sharing with your clients for design services although the City had not received any response from you to my March 1st proposal. After the update, we chatted briefly in the City Hall lobby and you told me you were working with your clients on a response to the proposal.

That was almost 2 months ago during which we have communicated at least a half dozen times, including yesterday afternoon and the first response is in your email below this morning.

The City has moved on during this time and identified funds that may be used to provide design services for this project. When these services are needed, the City will secure a direct contractual agreement with a design professional and pay the full cost for such services.

2. The City's use of commissions and boards to support this project.

While I agree with a number of thoughts related to this in your email, I am unclear as to your surprise last evening when the request for a subcommittee of the HPC to work on this project was requested by Katie Franks because I told you the HPC would have a "guiding and reviewing role" in such during our chat at the planning counter yesterday afternoon. Certain commissions and boards will have such roles in this project as they do in similar projects including planning efforts in Samish, Fountain, Old Town and the Waterfront. The HPC, Transportation Commission and MNAC are three of them.

Finally, I would like to thank you once again for all your hard work and productive input to date as a stakeholder in this project from the perspectives of both a planning consultant and nearby resident. The important work occurring now is critical for providing a draft plan later this year to be used as the foundation for the legislative process in 2012.

Best regards - Jeff Thomas

From: "Bill Geyer" <billgeyer@comcast.net>
To: <JThomas@cob.org>, <NOLiver@cob.org>, "Katie Franks" <kfranks@cob.org>, "Kurt Nabbefeld" <knabbefeld@cob.org>
Cc: "David Moody" <david@davidmoodyrealtor.com>, "John Servais" <john@nwhouse.com>, "Vince Biciunas" <vbiciunas@comcast.net>
Date: 05/25/2011 08:51 AM
Subject: Fairhaven Design Review / Historic Resources

Good morning Jeff,

When we spoke briefly yesterday afternoon at the Planning Department counter, you mentioned the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) would be used as a resource during the Fairhaven planning process. Multiple sources of information will help all the stakeholders as we consider and deliberate the choices before us. However, last night's staff presentation to the HPC surprised me and other Fairhaven supporters. In particular, we were surprised staff requested the HPC form a working committee to revise the design guidelines for Fairhaven. I believe the task is premature at this point.

Nicole presented a good foundation describing the Fairhaven planning process, Jacqui presented the current design review and pictures of recent building projects (past 20 years) incorporating historic elements, and Katie followed with the importance of historic resources in our planning effort. The surprise to us came when Katie requested the HPC form a working committee to write design guidelines. This idea was not previously disclosed to Fairhaven stakeholders. Staff's description of the working committee's

purpose evolved during the HPC deliberations. Several commissioners stated their confusion and felt a clearer charge was needed. The intentions for tapping the HPC as a resource is well intentioned, but the execution was lacking as it has the potential to create another path the stakeholders must follow. It became apparent at the end of the meeting the HPC intends to focus their input solely on the historic guidelines, not the more comprehensive issues of overall design review and boundaries as presented by staff. We concur, however we believe this must be coordinated within the planning effort.

As we will discuss tonight, a unified development regulation for all of the area within the Fairhaven UVP boundary is the preferred tool. As presented by John Servais last night, the design review components would be the main component, with a sub-component for the historic review. This affords the opportunity for a single review system and published design standards for all. The initial concept as presented by staff last night could work directly against achieving this unified development regulation.

Our objective is to move through the Fairhaven planning process in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion so that a unified plan with supportive regulatory guidelines are adopted at the end. The stakeholders are presently in the information stage which continues through the remaining scheduled meetings in June. Thereafter, our hope is the stakeholders move into the analytical/deliberative stage where we are sitting at the same table, markers in hand, sharing/comparing ideas. John Servais and I discussed this principle with Vince Biciunas and Ralph Thacker after the HPC meeting. All remain positive towards the planning process producing a workable plan, and all are committed to getting to the substantive choices soon.

This is an evolving process, however we suggest future tasks not create separate review paths into separate commissions (HPC, Transportation Commission etc). Rather, we suggest the substantive planning issues first be presented, analyzed, deliberated within the stakeholders prior to making specific requests for review by the various City Boards and Commissions. We can build a level of agreement among stakeholders prior to engaging on-the-record Commission reviews.

One other issue from last night. John and I took your challenge to the property owners regarding the City pursuing the traffic and parking analysis in exchange for the core property owners performing the design review technical analysis. The property owners were very positive to that request, and I mentioned this verbally to you in March and April. I drafted a scope of work with Dave Christensen as an extension of our firm's prior planning charette work. The scope was under review to obtain private funding when the City announced the May and June planning sessions. Our clients shifted their attention to participate in these meetings, and postponed a decision on the design

review funding. Although we are tardy in delivering a written acceptance of your offer, be assured the property owners wish to perform this task. The efforts would become a written resource for review by all stakeholders in the planning process.

Sorry for the length of this email, but I will close with a comment I made last night. The components to adopt a revised plan for Fairhaven are present this year, more so than I have seen in the past 10 years. Residents, merchants and property owners are engaged and discovering commonalities as we move forward. Disagreements will occur, but moving through the issues in an informed fashion will generate new solutions. Last night was an unfortunate trip on the path. Our hope is better coordination among the shareholders can help the staff avoid these missteps so we focus our time on substantive decisions. We remain committed to assist where we can.

Thank you, and looking forward to seeing you and staff at tonight's session.

Bill Geyer, AICP

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360.738.2836 office / 360.224.6317 cell



Fairhaven Design Review
lee to: jthomas
Cc: NOliver, kfranks, knabbefeld, MLilliquist

05/25/2011 04:05 PM

Hi Jeff,

I attended the Historic Preservation Commission meeting last night and was disturbed but not surprised by the actions of the FVA proponents. Their complaints that Planning's request that the HPC form a working committee to write draft design guidelines "was not previously disclosed to Fairhaven Stakeholders" is not only incorrect but can only be seen as an attempt to interfere and indeed control Planning's discretion as it processes the Fairhaven Neighbors Update Plan.

This observation is strengthened by the subsequent correspondence this morning from Mr. Geyer where he suggests:

Regarding the Commissions, yes, we discussed the Historic Preservation Commission would be used as a resource. My concern remains the execution of the planning tasks so that stakeholders' can analyze and recommend prior to submitting items to a Commission for action. The former process engages the stakeholders into the substantive issues while the latter can prematurely set up a need for folks to argue about issues that are not ripe for review. Our comments last night were made to avoid the latter situation.

Going forward, you might consider a system for quality checks with a limited number of people. It could be as simple as 5-6 stakeholders meeting to answer the following questions:

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Run through the gobbledygook decoder he is demanding that Planning submit its actions to "5-6 stakeholders" for "quality checks." This is a blatant attempt to control the City's planning process to favor his employers. While he does have planning expertise we question his role in the Update process. He neither lives or works in Fairhaven, and his former role as a City employee should give him no special place.

We strongly urge the City to reject any "process suggestions" from the FVA and its lobbyist and continue a fair, balanced, and independent Update process.

Sincerely,

Larry Kimmett
Fairhaven Neighbors