INFORMATIONAL MEETING AGENDA

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018
CITY HALL (COUNCIL CHAMBERS)

This Meeting Will Begin Immediately Following the Conclusion of the Special Council Meeting

A. Items for discussion submitted by the City Council and/or the City Manager:
1. Howard Hill Management Plan – City Manager
2. Proposed Zoning Change on Leighton Road (Dostie) – City Manager
3. 115-117 Bridge Street – City Manager
4. Maple Street Parking – City Manager
5. Creation of New Full-Time Code Enforcement Officer Position – City Manager
6. Location Change of Ward 1 Polling Place – City Manager
7. Discussion of Charter Amendment Process – City Manager

B. Persons wishing to address the City Council who have submitted a formal request in accordance with Section 2-61 of the Code of Ordinances:

C. Open comment period for any persons wishing to address the City Council:
Memo

To: City Council
    William Bridgeo, City Manager

From: Matt Nazar, Director of Development Services

Date: January 22, 2018

Re: Dostie Rezoning on Leighton Road

The City Council requested that the Planning Board review a possible zone change and make a recommendation to the Council on Tax Map 5, Lot 110A, owned by Kevin and Jessica Dostie. The lot is currently a vacant parcel and Mr. Dostie would like to construct a new “Auto Repair/Service (No Sales)” use on the property, which is not allowed in the Rural River (RR) zoning district where the property is located.

The Planning Board reviewed the request and voted to unanimously recommend a contract rezoning to allow all of the RR uses as currently allowed and add “Auto Repair/Service (No Sales)” as a permitted use. Because it would be new construction, the proposal would require a major development review by the Planning Board so that the Board could mitigate any negative impacts on neighboring uses. The Board also recommended a reduction in the bufferyard standards from 45 feet to 20 feet.

The information that the Planning Board reviewed is below. If the Council wishes to move this forward, staff can write the text of an amendment creating a contract zone as described above.
1. Consistency with the 2007 Comprehensive Plan

The proposal is in the northern subdistrict of the Economic Growth area described in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use map notes the area as Industrial. The proposal is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Consistency with Established Land Use Patterns

Leighton Road consists of a mix of uses including residential, industrial and commercial. Across Leighton Road from the subject property is an industrial park. To the south are the North Augusta Fire Station and residential properties. To the west are residential properties and the Maine Veteran’s Cemetery. To the north are residential properties. The nearest car repair/service garage is 1/3 of a mile to the north, which in the Rural River District and is a grandfathered use. The proposal is consistent with established land use patterns.

3. Creation of an Isolated District Unrelated to Adjacent Districts

The subject property is within the Rural River (RR) District in the southern portion of an isolated island of this zone. A large lot to the west, owned by the State of Maine, was changed from Rural River to Planned Development District for expansion of government uses in 2013. The lot to the south, owned by the City of Augusta, was Contract Zoned in 2000 from Rural River to Industrial District. As the subject property is on the southern end of a zoning district which is already isolated, creation of a contract zone in this area will not create an isolated district.

4. Potential Impact on Utilities, Roads, and Services

A minimal impact on utilities, roads and services would be anticipated with the development permitted as part of the contract zone. A new driveway would be constructed and public water and sewer are available in the area.

5. Changed or Changing Neighborhood Conditions

Development of the fire station and expansion of the MDOT lot on the west side of Leighton Road, which was primarily a residential area, started a trend for changing conditions in the neighborhood. Non-residential development on the lot in question would not create a unique change to the area.

Text of Proposed Amendment

Assessor’s Map 5 Lot 110A, zoned Rural River District (RR) shall be Contract Zoned in accordance with Section 300-106.B.(d)[1] of the Augusta Land Use Ordinance to add the use “auto repair/service (no sales)” as a permitted use. The landscape bufferyard standards abutting parking lots with 6 or more spaces shall be reduced from bufferyard D (45 foot width) to bufferyard B (20 foot width).
Zoning Map.
RR: Rural River; PD: Planned Development; IA: Industrial; CD: Civic Center; CON: Contract Zone
Arrow notes location of proposed Contract Zone.

View looking west at the property from Anthony Avenue intersection with Leighton Road.
MEMORANDUM

To: William Bridgeo

From: Dan Nichols

Date: January 22, 2018

RE: 115, 117 Bridge Street

These are abutting properties.

117 Bridge Street – Map 28, Lot 311. This is a vacant, two family structure that is currently vacant. The overall condition of the building is poor. The City acquired this property through the non payment of property taxes on March 31, 2017.

115 Bridge Street – Map 28 Lot 112. This City purchased this property on June 26, 2017 for $28,000.00. This is a vacant single family home. The overall condition of the building is good to average.

Lori LaRochelle of LaRochelle Interior Designs on Oak Street in Augusta is interested in purchasing both properties. Her intention would be to do a complete rehab on the 115 Bridge Street site, and raze the 117 Bridge Street site that would allow her brother who owns the abutting property to the north on Bennet Street parking for his two unit building.
Memo

To: William Bridgeo, City Manager
From: Matt Nazar, Director of Development Services
Date: January 22, 2018
Re: Maple Street Parking

The Planning Board approved the proposal for a Maple Street Affordable Housing project by the Augusta Housing Authority at its January 2, 2018, meeting. One of the conditions of that approval was for the Augusta Housing Authority to request that the Council review the idea of eliminating parking on one side of Maple Street to address traffic safety concerns by residents in attendance at the meeting. Due to the width of Maple Street, when vehicles are parked on the street directly across from one another, the width of the travel lane is reduced to a single car’s width.

Currently, city ordinance does not limit on-street parking at all on Maple Street south of the railroad crossing. There is a sidewalk on the west side of Maple Street and none on the east side of Maple Street. The east side of Maple Street has several very wide curb cuts for driveway openings. If the Council were to limit parking to one side of the street, planning staff would suggest that the east side of the street have on-street parking prohibited, allowing drivers to park on-street against the curb of the sidewalk on the west side of the street. The curb openings are narrower on the west side and having vehicles parked in a straight line against the curb would make the street safer than if there were parking on the east side, which does not have a straight line for the edge of the pavement. The Traffic Calming Committee has not reviewed this issue.
Memo

To: William Bridgeo, City Manager

From: Matt Nazar, Director of Development Services

Date: January 22, 2018

Re: Minor Department Reorganization

Shifting needs within the city combined with staff retirements have presented an opportunity to consider several changes to the Department of Development Services staffing. As construction activities have ramped up over the last 5 years and the city has adopted several new ordinances (Historic District Ordinance, Property Maintenance Ordinance, etc), the Code Enforcement needs of the city have increased. Our goal is to work with residents and businesses in as efficient and collaborative fashion as possible and that has become increasingly challenging as development activity has dramatically increased in the last 5 years.

With the retirement of Dan Nichols, and the ability of Keith Luke to focus all of his attention on Economic Development, unlike Mike Duguay before him who also had to manage the Department, Keith can take over all economic development activities with some minor outside contractor assistance when needed. The pressing need to be able to keep the city development activity smoothly moving through the process is a third full-time Code Enforcement Officer.

The Department currently has two and three-fifths Code Enforcement Officers and it is clear that they do not have adequate time to address all of the needs in the city. I propose converting the 3/5 time position (24 hrs) to a full time position. This will have no impact on the budget, and is just a reallocation of dollars to different staff positions and some outside contract work. I believe this will make the Code Enforcement Office more able to address some of the concerns that I heard expressed by Councilors at Saturday’s Goal Setting meeting.

I will have a second memo for the Council in the next few weeks to dig a bit deeper into the concerns Councilors have relative to enforcement so that staff time is focused as much as possible on those concerns. I can’t promise that the staffing shift above will address every concern Councilors have, but it will give the Bureau of Code Enforcement some additional staff resources to deal with extremely time consuming enforcement issues. Issues like Cony Street, or messy yards, or other property maintenance concerns are very time intensive.
To: William Bridgeo, City Manager  
From: Roberta Fogg, City Clerk  
Date: January 22, 2018  

Re: Polling Place Change  

Due to the construction at the Augusta Armory prior to the November 2017 election, we moved the Ward 1 polling place to the Bunker Community Center at 22 Armory Street. This change went very well and as a result staff has been discussing making this change permanently.

Some of the reasons for changing the polling place are as follows:
1) There is minimal to no costs associated with using this facility.
2) There is much less likelihood of the city elections being displaced from this facility.
   a. Using the Armory there is always the chance we could be displaced because of the threat level and the facility is needed for national security or an emergency.
3) It allows for better flexibility for staff when setting up and taking down the election related materials. Staff has full access as needed.
4) It’s a city owned facility.
   a. More control over issues with the building or parking.
      i. Lighting
      ii. Signage
      iii. Traffic flow
5) It’s in the same ward so its location will help minimize confusion and impact on the voters.

To make the change permanently we need the Council’s consent to proceed with the application to the Secretary of State’s Office. The following are the steps required for the application:

1) Application must be submitted at least 60 days before election. No later than April 13th, 2018 to be effective for June 12th, 2018 election. As part of that application we need to provide the following documentation:
   A) Dimensions of voting area (diagram of building and set up)
   B) Number and size of voting booths
   C) Location for Express Vote (audio voting system)
   D) Location of components within the voting place
      a. Ballot box/tabulator, guardrails, incoming voting list, registrar’s area, poll watchers.
   E) How accessibility requirements will be met for items listed.
      a. Parking, accessible entrance, navigation through voting place (wheelchairs, walkers, assistance animals, etc.)
   F) Municipal Self-Certification for Voting Place Accessibility.
Augusta

Unless otherwise required by municipal referendum or state law, a Charter Commission shall be created and elected in accordance with state law at least every 10 years in order to provide for citizen review of the structure of City government.

Auburn

The City Council shall provide for the review of the City’s Charter and ordinances in their entirety at least once every fifteen (15) years.

Lewiston

In calendar years ending in 1, the Mayor shall appoint a charter review committee composed of seven members who shall be residents of the city and who the Mayor determines to have a background in or understanding of city government and its operations. The committee shall undertake a comprehensive review of this charter and shall recommend to the city council amendments to the charter designed to improve the operations of city government, such recommendations to be made no later than the date established by the Mayor at the time the committee is established. (Amd. effective 12-6-1)

Waterville

The City Council shall, in a manner consistent with applicable state statute, propose creation of a Charter Commission to the voters of the City of Waterville at a regularly scheduled election in 2012 and every seven (7) years thereafter. The City Council may also, in a manner consistent with applicable state statute, propose creation of a Charter Commission to the voters of the City of Waterville at times other than those required by this section.

Sanford

At least once every ten (10) years the City Council shall appoint a committee to review the provisions of this Charter and make recommendations to the City Council on any amendments deemed necessary or appropriate.

Ellsworth

Sec. 10.11 - Charter Review. The Council will review the Charter at least once every ten (10) years to determine whether any amendments should be considered by the Council or whether a Charter Commission should be established.

Biddeford

The Charter may be changed in matters of form and substance only by a duly elected Charter Revision Commission consisting of nine members selected as follows: Seven members, one elected from each ward and two appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, who shall serve in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A, §§ 2101 — 2106, as amended. A candidate for the Charter Revision Commission shall be a resident of the City of Biddeford for at least six months prior to the date on/or before which nomination papers are to be filed. Charter Revision Commission members may not hold another elected office within the City

Westbrook

The City of Westbrook is governed by a Charter and Code of Ordinances. The Charter is updated from time to time by referendum -- that is, the people of the City of Westbrook vote upon any and all changes to the Charter. The ordinances guiding municipal operations are updated from time to time by City Council.