

ROCHESTER ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

5-6-24

Roll Call

A quorum was present as made up by the following current REC members in attendance:

- Rosemary Jonientz, Chair
- Kate Powers, Vice Chair
- Bob Schellinger
- Carlos Perez

Absent:

- Mia Morgillo
- Elizabeth Primus

Chair Jonientz led the meeting.

Housekeeping

There were no housekeeping matters.

Agenda Approval

The agenda was accepted without a vote.

Review/Acceptance of Last Minutes

The prior meeting was the regularly scheduled April meeting of the REC. The April meeting minutes were distributed to all REC members in advance of the May meeting.

Chair Jonientz asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Perez so motioned, Commissioner Powers seconded, and on a vote of 4-0-0, the REC voted to approve the April minutes as distributed.

Review of Correspondence

There was no correspondence for review or to be issued.

Reports

There were no reports for review or to be issued.

Old Business

There was no old business to conduct.

New Business

- **SEQR/Chapter 48 Referrals**
 - a. Bull's Head Redevelopment Project

Applicant Attendees:

- City of Rochester
 - o Rick Rynski (NBD)
 - o Tom Kicior (DES)
 - o Lisa Reyes (DES)
 - o Harold Thurston (DEQ)
 - o Anne DaSilva Tella (NBD)

- Fisher Associates
 - o Frank Armento

- Erdman Anthony
 - o Rob Schiller

- Ravi Engineering and Surveying
 - o Jim MacKecknie

DES staff Tom Kicior described the various aspects of the larger Bull's Head project included in this environmental assessment form. For purposes of the SEQR declaration, the Bull's Head project area is that area around the intersections of West Main Street, Chili Avenue, Brown Street and Genesee Street. The particular strategies/projects made part of this specific SEQR are:

- Amending the Bull's Head Urban Renewal Plan
- Adoption of the Bull's Head Urban Renewal District (zoning district and requirements)
- Subdivision and/or Resubdivision of parcels within the project area
- Sale of City of Rochester-owned parcels within the project area
- Construction of a mixed-use development in the Bull's Head Area
- Street Work:
 - o Realignment
 - o Narrowing and widening
 - o Milling and resurfacing

The street work is nearing the point that city council approval is required for it to move forward. It includes:

- Realigning Brown Street out of the Genesee Street / West Main Street intersection
- Reconfiguration of Danforth Street and Silver Street in association with an extension of Genesee Street north from West Main Street to connect it to Taylor Street,
- Reconfiguration of West Main Street / Brown Street / Genesee Street and West Main Street Chili Avenue / West Avenue / York Street intersections
- Construction a New Street between York Street and Algonquin Terrace.
- Removal of Ruby Place and Kensington Street
- Remilling and repaving of unaltered streets in the vicinity
- Construction of dedicated bike lanes, improved lighting, and other complete streets conditions
- Utility improvements and/or relocation as necessary

The overall project plan calls for mix-use development including:

- Over 800 residential units
- Commercial space
- An urban agriculture facility
- Parking facilities

The Urban Renewal District intends to facilitate desired development and heavily relies upon upcoming zoning code except in minor instances where preferred development requires custom code. The Bull's Head redevelopment project is phased, starting now through 2028; Urban Renewal Plan to be revised to accommodate current preferred plans using preferred developer, DevelopROC, chosen in 2021 as lead developer.

Preliminary design phase for streets is wrapping up; final design to be completed by 2025 with construction in 2026 through early 2028. Preliminary design costs of approx. \$670K with final design costs of \$1.0M with state and federal matching. Construction costs totaling \$10.88M

Commissioner Powers asked about the increase in impervious surface due to development, and whether existing stormwater infrastructure could handle the increased volume and velocity as SEQR forms indicated was planned. Design project team indicated this area had been built out somewhat recently so the project is actually bringing the impervious area back to its previous levels, not new levels, and the infrastructure was in place and handled that previous level. In response to concerns raised about the traffic impact of this development by Commissioner Powers, the design team indicated that the street reconfigurations are designed to improve traffic and pedestrian safety and improve flow of traffic.

Commission Powers asked about reality of excavation, as the SEQR Part 1 indicated no excavation and removal of soil from the site (Part 1 defines excavation/mining/dredging as excluding all general site prep, grading, utility installation, foundations where materials remain onsite) but the draft SEQWR Part 3 provided for review indicated there would be excavation. The discrepancy stems from the exclusion permitted in Part 1 of the EAF and the more detailed description of what might occur given in Part 3. Design team indicated the city had done significant testing of the area; that environmental management plans will be in place that manage development of all projects, and that, while minimal to no removal of soil is expected, they will be prepared to handle the need of soil removal if further testing or surprises during construction indicate the need. In response to concerns expressed by Commissioner Schellinger about contractor capability and preparedness to do so, the design team reiterated that the city will be closely managing the process through environmental management plans and expects no problems in this regard. Commissioner Schellinger reiterated the importance of ensuring the public is aware of what environmental risks may be on site and how they are being managed. Specific questions about contamination of the soil were raised, with the design team indicated that all contamination is occurring in the bedrock, not the overburden, and therefore, it is not expected to be in the 5' – 9' depth of overburden, thereby not likely to come into contact with residents. The design team also reminded the commission that Rochester drinking water is not ground water.

There being no further questions or comments from the Commission, Chair Jonientz asked for a motion to vote to recommend the lead agency issue a negative declaration; Commissioner Perez so motioned, Commissioner Schellinger seconded, and on a vote of 4-0-0, the REC so voted.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.