

**Peaks Island Advisory Council Workshop**  
**September 10, 2008**  
**Douglas E. MacVane Center**

**Present:** Councilors Tiffany, Stout, Langella, Bohan. Moxhay, Richard, Hurley

**Guests:** Mike Murray, Island Administrator; and Catherine Debo, General Manager of CBITD

Chair Councilor Langella called meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

- Public Comment - Councilor Langella reiterated that speakers in the Public Comment section speak only once on only one item.

An individual, speaking for a handicapped neighbor, stressed a request to put lines in the Welch Street lot, at least in the handicapped parking spots.

Another individual urged the PIC to be aware of and involved with the series of public meetings conducted by the PPL regarding potential hour and closing changes. A second person added that the Island meeting with Library Director and Trustees would be at 7:00 in the MacVane Center on the 16<sup>th</sup> Changes in the library system due to budget issues will be discussed. He urged all to come to support the Peaks Island Branch.

Mike Murray provided an update to the parking sign situation at Thames and Hancock. The signs just placed on these streets were incorrect, the wording requiring cars to move from *both* sides for street cleaning. They should be corrected by the end of the week.

- Presentation by Catherine Debo, General Manager of CBITD, regarding plans for expanding the CBL parking garage, and other plans

Ms. Debo distributed a 4-page handout of talking points, speaking to the items as listed, beginning with the Background information. In 2006 the CBITD Board approved the goal that CBL be well-integrated into the regional transportation system, with an emphasis on the proposed terminal area expansion. In July 2007, a questionnaire was distributed to islanders, which was summarized in August of 2007. Forty percent of the all-island respondents (262 individuals) were interested in more parking at or near the terminal. In December 2007, the Board of CBL established a "Committee of the Whole" to review the Draft 5 Year Plan. Between January and February of 2008, this Committee met with various individuals: i.e. Peverada, . Becker, Needleman. On March of 2008, the 5 Year Plan was adopted by the Board of CBITD. It seeks to identify and obtain potential new revenue sources, pursue parking options, and establish how to best work with intermodal parking proposals. The Committee of the Whole, to that end, established a Working Committee, consisting of CBITD members Frank Peretti and Chris Hoppin, Peaks Islander Steve MacIsaac, and Catherine Debo. In April 2008, the CBITD submitted its initial application to CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) funds to MDOT, via two applications, one somewhat larger than the other: The larger application, of \$7.6 million, was to acquire and expand existing parking facilities by 500 spaces, working within any proposed intermodal designs. The smaller grant, of \$500,000, was to pursue a schematic design

for the new intermodal transit/welcome center. In June 2008 CBITD submitted a revised scaled-down project, considering becoming an additional (3rd) partner in the CBG condo, with the two existing partners, the City and Casco Bay Garage. This would provide 250 more park&ride spaces, with the potential for 250 more. The current design concept to obtain these additional spaces is to extend the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of the current garage over the current terminal entrance area. The project also includes two passenger jitneys for the islands, which would provide home to ferry, ferry to home service on the islands, with such service performed by private contractors. Ms. Debo indicated the entire project would be on a phased schedule, with a construction time frame of 2010 to 2012. The current best-guess estimate of the total cost would be \$9.5 million, with \$7.6 million (80%) provided through the MDOT Transit Enhancement Grant. The remaining \$1.9 million would be the local share, which could be raised by one of two potential arrangements: 1) a revenue bond for CBITD, paid back through with withdrawals from an "Excess Fund of current parking garage revenues established in the City/CBITD lease agreement. Costs of a bond payoff would be as follows: for 20 year bonds for project est. of \$1.9 million, the debt service would be est. at 2.9% interest, spread at \$170,000 over 20 years, with a total of \$3.4 million. 2) the alternative is that CBITD seeks funding from MDOT through State Transportation. Bond issues such as these have been received in the past. The substantial new (NET) revenues that are estimated to come in through the project are: an estimated \$570,000 (\$500,000 from the additional 250 parking spaces, \$50,000 from NET increase in CBITD passenger revenue due to new riders, and \$20,000 in other NET revenue streams, including rental spaces, ticket sales, vending and so forth. These NET revenues would be a means to offset annual operating increases without relying on rate increases. As benefits of the project, there would be the additional parking spaces in the initial project: 100 of 250 spaces would be priority allocation to year-round islanders, then seasonal residents; 100 would be for daily parkers, and the balance to others, i.e., tourists, fire department parking, and so forth. The project would provide an intermodal transportation center of benefit to everyone, and would include transportation and welcoming centers.

Ms. Debo is attending this evening's PIC workshop because she feels that the project at this stage needs to be "fast-tracked." She wants a strong vote of PIC support, including a strong letter for her to bring to the City. This would further strengthen the MDOT application. Councilor Bohan requested further information at this point. Councilor Stout asked if the original proposal wasn't to acquire the entire CBG? Ms. Debo said that acquiring the garage was not any longer of interest as it is not fiscally beneficial. She emphasized that being a partner of the City in the Garage was "as good as owning it." She reiterated that the City is a condominium partner with the Casco Bay Garage, and the CBITD would become the 3<sup>rd</sup> partner under this proposal. Councilor Stout asked what the end date of this project would be, and Ms. Debo gave a projected completion date of 2012.

Councilor Richard asked for the PIC to be given copies of the grant proposal, especially those items pertaining to operations. She was concerned that islanders not be put at fiscal risk in the future. Ms. Debo agreed to provide the paperwork requested.

Councilor Bohan asked if there has been any feedback to date from the MDOT regarding the application. Ms. Debo stated that there was little competition at this time, that she "had good feedback" and felt that the project had a "good shot." She emphasized that this is why very strong support from the City, and the PIC, is needed.

Councilor Tiffany asked that the parking space allocation be explained again: 150 for

year-round and seasonal islanders, then 100 for Olympia.

Councilor Langella inquired if the CBITD Board has yet given its approval of the project. Ms. Debo said she expects 100% support from them, and added that many questions can't be answered yet, as it is so early in the process. He also referred to Councilor Bohan's earlier question regarding a response date from MDOT. Ms. Debo estimated that this date would be within the next six weeks.

Councilor Hurley asked if she expected any problems with the City? Ms. Debo said that she is a member of the City Transit Committee, which supports the development of an intermodal center at the terminal. There would be a potential tremendous benefit to the METRO, and therefore a tremendous benefit to the City. "I think we will get support," and are "chipping away at other officials."

Councilor Stout wondered if the proposed project significantly alters the current Olympia schematic. Ms. Debo said it does not, and that the CBITD would look to a conceptual designer for minimal impact on the water view. Councilor Stout also wondered if there had been any consideration of moving to the international terminal on Commercial Street, now vacated by the CAT. Ms. Debo said no, because they have the real interest in the garage, and that the container cargo/warehouse environment of the international terminal is inappropriate.

Councilor Langella asked, since the terminal area is already very congested, could she speak to how the intermodal center would address this situation. Ms. Debo pointed to the overhead design as addressing this issue. She suggested that as a welcome center for the intermodal it would lend itself beautifully with the planned hotel on the site. They will continue to work the details out with Olympia. Councilor Langella stated that the PIC will have other conversations with Ms. Debo after the October workshop, and thanked her for appearing with her presentation.

#### Update on the City Council Housing Committee meeting of September 2<sup>nd</sup>

This meeting was attended by Councilors Tiffany and Richard. The meeting, requested by Homestart, had originally been scheduled for May; however Homestart felt this was premature and requested more time to complete their presentation. On August 26<sup>th</sup> a "brainstorming session" was organized by the PIC on Peaks, designed to provide another shot at consensus. There was a hope that important points from that meeting be included in the September 2<sup>nd</sup> presentation to the CCHC by Homestart. At the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, Homestart presented two original schematics from January 2008, and also requested a partnership alliance with the City. Committee Chairwoman Jill Duson urged Homestart to go directly to the City. Committee Member Councilor Donaghue, commented that "anything under 5,000 s.f. that's on sewer and water and not built on, is a waste of the community's resources." Councilor Mavadones, also a member of the CCHC thought that more community input was needed. PIC Councilors Tiffany and Richard were disappointed that Homestart was bypassing the PIC via their request for a city partnership, as well as with Councilor Duson urging them to move forward quickly, without referencing and/or incorporating the results of the August 26th brainstorming session on Peaks. Councilor Richard felt that it is very important that items which arose from that meeting need time to play out. She also noted that the PIC was not included on the Agenda for the Sept, 2<sup>nd</sup> CCHC meeting, as was promised by Chairwoman Duson, who stated that the PIC should speak in the public comment portion of the meeting. She added that she "certainly hoped the PIC

would not be roadblock” for the project. Councilor Richard stated that she would very much like to see the minutes from this meeting. Mike Murray informed her that there is a digital recording of all meetings, including this one.

Councilor Stout was concerned that this may set a precedent that any group or individual need not go through the PIC, but could deal directly with the City.

Councilor Richard noted that Homestart had hired a feasibility study, and that Ellen Mahoney, Homestart Committee member, had said it would be completed by December. She added that CCHC Chairwoman Duson has stated that there should be plenty of public input on this project, but on the other hand the City has in writing a provision urging affordable housing to be passed in one meeting.

Councilor Langella felt that this was all theoretical until they actually make their submission.

Councilor Stout noted that, given the City’s charge that the PIC provide input before decisions, it appears that this is not, in reality, happening.

Mike Murray said that how this process usually works is that the planning board hears the proposal, then sends it to workshops, then a public hearing follows. After these steps, the Planning Board sends the proposal along to the City Council for deliberation and approval/disapproval. He said that this process on another island took approximately 6 months. Councilor Richard inquired if there was an appeal process in place, but Mike Murray was not clear if there was.

Councilor Tiffany emphasized again that there is a provision on the books that affordable housing can be determined in one meeting only. Councilor Bohan asked what the actual definition of affordable housing was. Councilor Richard replied that the definition was created by HUD, but that the PIC does not have the specifics from Homestart of their definition.

Councilor Tiffany said, returning to the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, that he felt the overriding issues were difficulties with City Councilors Duson and Donaghue, and how this defines our working relationship with the City. Councilor Stout added the comment, How do we play into it?

Councilor Tiffany suggested that the PIC could offer recommendations, but once it goes to the Planning board, any modifications can only be made by them (the PB). Councilor Richard commented that the wheels seem to be turning with or without the PIC, and felt that a decision may be made without any island input. She cautioned the PIC that such a decision may happen before they, and the community, are ready. Councilor Bohan agreed with Councilors Tiffany and Richard, and felt that the PIC was being ignored on this issue. He felt that the situation was outrageous and that the PIC should follow up with the City’s Legal Counsel Woods, reminding him of our stated role vis-a-vis the City. Councilor Langella said that he is still trying to contact the Mayor to schedule the second PIC meeting with the City Council. Such a meeting was originally suggested by the Mayor for sometime in October, so that it would occur before the November elections, but at last contact, it appeared the Mayor was now suggesting sometime in December. Mike Murray offered that the Mayor sees a December meeting as allowing for personnel changes following the election. Councilor Richard recalled that the last time the PIC tried to schedule a meeting with the City, it’s first such meeting, it took 6 months. She is concerned that the PIC is being ignored. Councilor Langella confirmed that the PIC unanimously wanted to proceed with an October, rather than a December meeting, and said that he would continue to try to contact the Mayor to schedule this.

· Discussion of the Issue of Funding Ferry Tickets for Students who Attend Non-Public

## Schools

Councilor Moxhay requested that the agenda item referring to transportation vouchers for non-public school students be moved up for discussion next, to accommodate the large number of parents in the audience. All agreed to do so. Councilor Richard said that a month ago, the PIC had asked for a reconsideration of the transportation voucher cut. The Finance Committee at that time made a decision not to reexamine or reinstate. She asked if the next step was for the PIC to fund the cut out of the \$50,000 Mayor's discretionary monies.

Councilor Bohan was concerned that a traditional City cost was being pushed off onto the PIC for funding. He added that it was important, however, that the island remains family friendly, and therefore favors, to a certain extent, that the PIC help.

Councilor Stout thought it unfair that since all parents pay taxes. Additionally, if the PIC pays, the amount would be a significant % of our budget, whereas payment from the City would comparably be a much smaller percentage. She was also concerned about the equity of subsidizing just a few islanders, but agreed that the PIC needed to do something to address the situation.

Councilor Richard felt that it was frustrating, because the City reduces services, while handing out moneys to the island and pushing the island to pick up the costs. She referred to this as a "shell game."

Councilor Langella asked David Norton (representing the effected students and their families) what the actual # of students was: he said that there were 10 on Peaks, 1 on Great Diamond, and 1 on Cliff.

Councilor Bohan shared Councilor Richards qualms over picking up the costs, but felt that we should do something to assist those middle and high school students affected, who are buying yearly or monthly passes. He was not in favor of including elementary or home-schooled children.

Councilor Hurley noted that a state statute allowed a municipality to fund transportation service from island to mainland, but the wording is "may fund"; it's not stated as mandatory. He thought that the City was sending the signal that "we're not funding it anymore, but you can."

Councilor Stout wanted the PIC to consider funding half of the pass amount, for both yearly and monthly. Councilor Langella wanted any action to be retroactive to September, in order to be able to reimburse monies already spent by the student's families. Councilor Richard totally agreed with the idea of funding one-half of the cost. She added that the PIC should keep in mind that any money not spent by the end of the fiscal year would have to be turned back, and the PIC could adjust the percentage if there was money left at that time.

Councilor Langella suggested that the PIC make plans this fiscal cycle to not have to return any money at all on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Hurley stated that under equal access, there should be equal distribution. Councilor Langella asked that this be brought back to the table when the PIC discusses vouchers for the coming year. He added that it is a priority to keep kids and families on the City's islands. He asked that, as a matter of procedure, should a motion be made to move into a special meeting in order to take a vote? Councilor Richard felt that the PIC was not ready yet, and wanted to see how the student vouchers would fit into the \$50,000 budget, then vote on everything at one time. Councilor Tiffany added that, since the ticket vouchers would be retroactive to September, we should wait and continue the conversation. Councilor Langella suggested that the PIC act by the regular September meeting, but Councilor Richard thought only two weeks from now felt uncomfortable. Councilor Stout thought that the

PIC was all moving in the direction of support of some kind. Councilor Richard said that she had a different idea on usage of the \$50,000, and wondered if doing it (voting on the distribution) quickly would impact this? Councilor Langella said that an ad hoc committee needs to be formed to look at this. There were no other comments.

· Update of meeting with Sasa Cook, representative of the Olympia Company on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, regarding the MSP development

Councilors Stout, Tiffany and Langella attended, and Councilor Stout reported. They had gone to meet with Cook to get a project update directly from Olympia. They were told that things are not moving forward very quickly, as one problem is who owns the space underneath the MSP. Cook reported that the City has given a title insurance guarantee to Olympia, which would hold Olympia harmless. Cook impressed her that the door is wide open, not just for PIC members, but for all islanders. Councilor Hurley wanted consideration for islanders for parking and other issues. Councilor Tiffany said that he asked Cook two questions: 1) Do you still have \$13 million on the table for comprehensive parking? Yes; and 2) When is the meeting on the parking scheduled? Spring 2009. Councilor Richard noted that there wasn't a parking schedule before, and wondered if the strong letter written in January by PIC had made a difference. She asked if there was currently a partnership between Olympia and CBITD? Councilor Langella said not a partnership, but an ongoing dialogue. Olympia is currently neutral on CBITD plans, and asks for island input.

· Update of Public Safety Issues as Described in Councilor Hurley's Written Report.

The report summarizes issues and concerns by both individuals and groups, and additionally summarizes what is most important to islanders. This appears to be the training of EMT first responders, the presence on the island of adequate medical support, and amount of time that presence is actually on-island. The number of EMT calls by month and by year was last summarized in the h2002 survey.

Councilor Langella thought the report was excellent and extremely comprehensive. He suggested that the PIC form an *ad hoc* committee to come back with a presentation of priorities. He emphasized that he is extremely concerned with the inadequacy of the emergency dock, particularly in low tide situations.

Councilor Hurley thought that another survey would be a good idea since the more recent sampling was in 2002 (with 465 respondents). He suggested that there be a survey of those individuals who have actually used the service in the past 2 years to ascertain their sense of the experience, and then break up the questions into the steps of the process (initial response, transportation to dock, etc.) and their satisfaction with each.

Councilor Bohan asked if these individuals would be self-identified. If the survey that is needed is created, the PDF would have to do the actual identification of those individuals, due to privacy issues. Councilor Hurley agreed. Councilor Richard was concerned where the fire boat is going to tie up as there is little room at the new dock, and using the regular ferry spaces could be problematic if there were ferries present at the time of the emergency. Councilor Hurley asked if an *ad hoc* committee should be formed to create the survey, and Councilor Langella agreed.

Discussion of how the PIC will expend funds for parking and transportation issues this year.

Councilor Bohan of the parking and transportation committee asked for an *ad hoc* committee to prepare several proposals to present to the PIC at large. Councilors Moxhay and Tiffany would be on this committee also, in addition to one or two members of the public.

- Discussion of the planning for the October meeting with the Portland City Council regarding our working relationship.

Councilor Langella said that he has been frustrated in trying to get a meeting set up. The PIC doesn't care whether the location is here or on the mainland. He suggested for meeting content, the following criteria: 1. How is the PIC treated at meetings?; 2. How many meetings should there be a year?; 3. How best should the PIC present information requests? There is a need to discuss and clarify again the City's responsibility and the PIC's role. Councilor Stout thought that whenever the PIC tries to address the CC, it falls on deaf ears. Councilor Langella said that the PIC has a list of the criteria, those agreed upon between the PIC and City in June 2007. He said that all members of the PIC have had different experiences depending on the part of the City they were dealing with, and he suggested that each PIC member do a report on their experiences. Councilor Richard felt that the PIC needed to educate the city as they are not working from a place of understanding, and we should help them to understand the frustrations and expenses, etc. We need to do this so that they do not think "we are just whining." Councilor Stout commented that the City thought of Peaks as a foreign country, and suggested that we use this foreign country metaphor and invite the City Council to meet the PIC members on-island. It is urgent that they be gotten out here. Councilor Richard pointed out that the ordinance creating the PIC, it was strongly suggested that city councillors attend meetings. Councilor Donaghue, as our councillor, was required to be here at least 40% of the time, but he has not. He should be asked for better attendance, as should also those at-large councillors. Councilor Hurley asked why WE need to do all this? Councilor Langella said that this is basically a business relationship, and that the PIC needs to think of interactions that way. He asked that if there were any other suggestions on this issue, to please forward them to him and he will in the meantime continue his effort to get a meeting scheduled. As of now, the PIC is not on the mayor's calendar. Councilor Stout noted that Mr. Cook came out to the island on his own for information gathering, and wasn't even an elected official. Councilor Richard reiterated that the PIC really needs the CC to come out to the island.

- Other

Mike Murray\_ reported that 179 parking stickers have been issued. Councilor Moxhay was concerned about individuals without a current mainland car being ineligible. Councilor Bohan said that this issue was being worked on.

Councilor Richard suggested that the PIC sponsor a Candidates' night on Peaks. Councilor Langella has two ideas on this: 1. It be run in conjunction with the October 18<sup>th</sup> daytime dialogue session; or 2, as a separate event in the evening to be held at the School. Councilor Tiffany preferred a nighttime meeting at the school, after the 18<sup>th</sup> but well enough before the election date. Councilor Langella said that a date in the week of October 19<sup>th</sup>, either the 21<sup>st</sup> or the 23<sup>rd</sup>, would be good, and he would inform the Council when confirmed. All were in agreement.

Councilor Langella stated that at the Charter meeting for the PIC held last November, responsibilities were discussed. At that time, the length of service for the Chair was not clarified, but he felt that one year is sufficient. He informed the PIC that he does not wish to be in the role of Chair for more than a year, as he wants to be more involved in other important island issues, i.e., PEAT and energy issues. The role of Chair is very tiring and time-consuming. The PIC will pick a new Chair in November, after the election.

Councilor Richard requested that at the next meeting, the divisions and workloads on the PIC be reviewed. Perhaps a separation of the transportation and parking committee, for example.

Councilor Bohan wished to report on 4 items:

The new PIC computer has arrived, and he wondered where best it should be housed. There was some discussion, but the location was not clarified.

He informed the PIC that PEAT has asked it to be a fiscal sponsor. PEAT is receiving a grant from the Peaks Island Fund, and neither is a registered 501(C)3 nor a municipal entity. Going through the PIC, as a municipal entity would address this: it would be PEAT's money, and PIC's role to approve and oversee. Does PIC wish to do this? Unanimous agreement.

An island constituent contacted him regarding beach fire smoke from Centennial Beach, wafting up to her house and making her ill. Was there anything the PIC could do? Councillor Richard observed that since the Wells Maine Decision, the Centennial Beach is all private property to the low-tide line.

4. Suggestions had been made for a monthly newsletter on the PIC, for the public Councillor Langella will put this idea on the agenda for the next workshop

### Public Comment

Regarding the student transportation vouchers: One individual felt that the PIC should pay the full amount as keeping kids here and attracting families is the most important priority. Another felt that the City is willing to bus any students who live over one mile from school, but not over 3 miles of water. The City should be ashamed: the State mandates education and we pay taxes. Children simply should be transported to school.

Regarding parking vouchers: One individual noted that with last year's parking vouchers, some folks may have thought that by not using the \$25 voucher they were saving money for the PIC. They perhaps did not realize that any unused money has to be returned.

Regarding the CBG and the 250 spaces: this individual felt strongly that there were already more than 250 people on the waiting list, as well as more islanders than 150 who want spaces, so how will all this be dealt with equitably?

Suzy Kane, speaking for Homestart: As a follow-up to the Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with the CCHC, there will be a needs assessment done. A meeting later this month will ask islanders what they think is affordable housing.

An islander asking of the status of making a report to Senator Schneider, in Augusta. She felt that all of our agenda items seem to need attention vis-a-vis Senator Schneider, in a report on the

operation of the first year of the PIC.

### Councilor Comments

Councilor Richard stated that Mike Murray has been wonderful to work with this past year and offered thanks.

Regarding planning for the use of the \$50,000, she said that the PIC should keep in mind some of the needs in addition to vouchers, such as taxi, senior issues and etc..

Councilor Bohan said that the taxi needs to be on the agenda; for various “ridiculous” reasons, he said that we can’t actually pay the current drivers, but we could pay the organizer(s). A note was made that as George and Cevia Rosol, the current organizers, are leaving the island this month, new organizers need to be obtained.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16.