



Real Property Reuse Committee Agenda

City of Newton **In City Council**

Thursday, January 23, 2020

7:00 PM
Room 204

Item Scheduled for Discussion:

A Public Hearing will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 7:00 PM, second floor, Newton City Hall before the **Real Property Reuse Committee** of the **Newton City Council** for the purpose of hearing from the community how the property should be used.

Referred to the Real Property Reuse Committee

#65-20

Reuse of the West Newton National Guard Armory (295-19)

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT submitting on August 7, 2016 a letter recommending that the West Newton Armory located at 1135 Washington Street be evaluated for the purpose of leasing the property for redevelopment as 100% affordable housing or for municipal uses pursuant to Ordinance Section 2-7.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Danberg, Chair

The location of this meeting is accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.

Sec. 2-7. Disposition of interests in city owned real property.

Whenever a vote is taken or a policy decision has been adopted by the appropriate city agency or officer to declare any city owned real property or portion thereof available for potential sale or lease, or for continued use of such real property by the city agency or officer for a different purpose, the procedure for determining the use to which the real property shall be put and the terms of any disposition thereof shall be in accordance with the provisions of this section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a lease of city owned real property for the purpose of wireless communication equipment or energy generation equipment shall be granted in accordance with the procedures in subsection (6) of this section. Authorization to grant or relocate easements in city owned real property for water, sewer, or utility purposes shall be granted in accordance with the city council rules and orders.

- (1) The city agency or officer declaring said property available for sale or lease, or for use by the same city agency or officer for a different purpose, shall submit to the mayor a written record of the vote or policy decision and shall also state whether such sale or lease shall be conditioned upon continued municipal use of the real property for the same or a different municipal purpose. The mayor may docket such vote or decision with the clerk of the council who shall forthwith notify the director of planning and development of such vote or decision. Within forty-five (45) days of said notification, the director of planning and development shall submit a written report to the clerk of the council with recommendations as to whether this property, or any portion thereof, should be transferred to another city agency or officer or declared available for sale or lease including any conditions regarding continued municipal use. Upon receipt of the report of the director of planning and development, the clerk of the council shall place the matter on the docket of the city council for referral to its real property reuse committee. The membership of the real property reuse committee shall include one councilor from each ward in the city, to be designated by the president of the city council. The chairman of the real property reuse committee shall be designated by the president of the city council.
- (2) The real property reuse committee shall oversee the following steps:
 - a) There shall be an initial determination made as to whether some or all of the subject property shall continue to be used by the sending city agency or officer, transferred to another city agency or officer, or made available for sale or lease including any conditions regarding continued municipal use. No less than ten (10) days prior to the real property reuse committee taking up the initial determination, the city clerk shall send out notice to the abutters to the subject property that the committee is considering whether to transfer the subject property to another city agency or to make the subject property available for sale or lease. Prior to making the initial determination, the real property reuse committee may also hold a public hearing to solicit public comment. Notice of said public hearing shall be provided in accordance with G.L. c. 40A, § 11 as amended. If the real property reuse committee decides that the property continue to be used by the sending city agency or officer or be transferred to the care, custody, management or control of another city agency or officer, then this recommendation shall be referred to the city council. In such event, the city council may, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of the full city council, transfer the care, custody and control of the subject property to another city agency or officer, or to the same city agency or officer for use for another purpose subject to the approval of the mayor, pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 15A. Should the vote to transfer the subject property to another city agency or officer or to the same city agency for use for another purpose fail to pass by the required two-thirds (2/3rds) vote, then the subject property shall return to the sending agency for use for the same purpose.
 - b) In the event that the initial decision of the real property reuse committee is to make some or all

- of the subject property available for sale or lease including any conditions regarding continued municipal use, the proposed reuse of the property will continue to be held in committee and a joint advisory planning group (the "JAPG") shall be created. The JAPG shall consist of not more than nine (9) persons, five (5) members to be appointed by the president of the city council and four (4) members to be appointed by the mayor. The real property reuse committee may make recommendations regarding the qualifications of the members of the JAPG. The JAPG shall elect its own chairperson. It shall be the responsibility of the JAPG to work with the department of planning and development to identify alternatives for the future use of the subject property, including possible continued municipal use. The JAPG shall file a written report containing its recommendations to the real property reuse committee within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date when all members have been appointed, or within such further time as the real property reuse committee may permit.
- c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the case of the potential sale or lease of all or a portion of city owned real property without buildings thereon, the real property reuse committee may, upon a majority vote, waive the requirement contained in subparagraph (2)(b) that a JAGP be created. In the event that the requirement for a JAPG is waived, the committee may consider the recommendations in the written report from the director of planning and development filed with the city clerk pursuant to subsection (1) as providing sufficient information on the reuse of the property. In the alternative, the committee may request the department of planning and development prepare an additional written report to identify alternatives for the future use of the subject property, including possible continued municipal use, and shall file such report with the real property reuse committee within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date the committee waives creation of the JAPG, or within such further time as the real property reuse committee may permit.
- d) Following submission of the JAGP report or the additional report of the department of planning and development to the real property reuse committee, the item shall be assigned by the city council for a public hearing before said committee, which hearing shall be held not less than thirty (30) days nor more than sixty (60) days from the date of submission of said report. The purpose of this hearing shall be to hear the views of the public and all interested parties with regard to the future use of the subject real property. Notice of said public hearing shall be provided in accordance with G.L. c. 40A, § 11 as amended. If the real property reuse committee does not request an additional written report from the department of planning and development, the public hearing required by this subparagraph may be held on the same night on which the real property reuse committee votes to waive the requirement that a joint advisory planning group be created, but in no event shall such public hearing be held more than sixty (60) days from the date the real property reuse committee votes to waive such requirement.
- (3) Following the public hearing, the real property reuse committee shall make its recommendation to the city council. In making its recommendation the real property reuse committee shall take into account the effect of the proposal on the neighborhood and on the city as a whole and determine that its recommendation is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Newton. The committee's recommendation shall include recommendations as to (1) the disposition and future use of the subject real property which may include a recommendation that the City not dispose of the subject real property but the property be returned to the sending agency or transferred to another city agency or officer; (2) the specific use characteristics of the subject real property, including recommendations with respect to zoning and other land-use controls; and (3) the minimum financial terms for sale or lease of the property or any portion or portions thereof.
- (4) The city council shall, within sixty (60) days from receipt of the recommendation of the real property

reuse committee, submit its recommendations by resolution to the mayor for the disposition and future use of the subject real property, and may authorize the use of the subject real property, and may authorize the mayor to sell or lease the subject real property and set the minimum financial terms for such sale or lease. The recommendation of the city council shall require a vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of the full city council. Should the vote on the recommendation to the mayor fail to pass by the required two-thirds (2/3rds) vote, then the subject property shall return to the sending agency for use for the same purpose.

- (5) Requests for the sale or lease of city owned property, including the abandonment of the city's rights in real property, shall first be made to the city agency or officer having custody of such property. The provisions of section 2-7 shall apply in the event that such city agency or officer declares such property available for sale or lease.
- (6) In any instance where the executive department proposes to lease city owned property for wireless communication equipment or for energy generating equipment as part of an arrangement under which the city uses power produced by such equipment and/or receives net metering credits pursuant to state law (both referred to hereinafter as "equipment"), the following procedures shall apply:
 - a) The executive department shall submit a proposal for such lease to the city council for approval. Such proposal shall indicate the location of the city owned property for which a lease is sought and such other information as may be available regarding the likely types of equipment that may be placed at the site. In preparing the proposal, the executive department shall consult with such city departments, councilors for the ward involved and abutting property owners or neighborhood groups as the executive department may consider appropriate, taking into account the procurement requirements applicable under the General Laws.
 - b) At the earliest opportunity, the city council shall, for purposes of this section, assign the proposal for public hearing before its committee dealing with matters of public buildings and facilities, and this committee shall hold a public hearing. Due notice of such public hearing shall be provided in accordance with G.L. c. 40A, § 11 as amended. Said notice shall include the location of the property proposed for lease and a description as to the likely types of equipment that may be placed at the site. The committee shall deliberate and, if recommending approval, may affix such restrictions and conditions to the lease terms, other than financial conditions, as it deems in the public interest. The committee shall make a recommendation to the city council within forty-five (45) days following the public hearing as to whether the proposed lease is in the public interest.
 - c) Within sixty (60) days of receipt of the committee report, the city council shall vote as to whether to authorize the mayor to lease such city owned property for the equipment. If the vote is in the affirmative, then the mayor may proceed on such terms and conditions as determined by the mayor to be in the public interest. If the vote is in the negative, then the mayor shall not lease such property for the equipment, provided, however, that nothing herein shall preclude the council from authorizing the mayor to lease such property pursuant to a subsequent request to lease such property.
 - d) The requirement of notice and public hearing under subsection (6) (b) may be waived by a three-fourths (3/4ths) vote of those members of the city council present and voting.
- (7) In any sale of city owned real property for which community preservation funds have previously

been expended to rehabilitate or restore historic resources pursuant to the provisions of the Community Preservation Act, G.L. c. 44B, such real property shall be bound by a perpetual historic preservation restriction pursuant to G.L. c. 184, §§ 31-33 held by the City or its designee, in a form acceptable to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

- (8) The requirements of this section that are not otherwise required by law or by charter may be waived in whole or in part by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of those members of the city council present and voting.

(Rev. Ords. 1973, § 2-10; Ord. No. 222, 6-6-77; Ord. No. 315, 2-20-79; Ord. No. S-52, 4-2-84; Ord. No. S-52A; Ord. No. T-31, 6-5-89; Ord. No. T-212, 1-21-92; V-209, 11-2-98; Ord. No. X-196, 03-06-06; Ord. No. X-243, 12-4-06; Ord. No. Z-28, 05-19-08; Ord. No. Z-106, 04-02-12; Ord. No. A-121, 12-04-17)



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

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City of Newton, Massachusetts

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2020 JAN -9 PM 3:40

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January 9, 2020

Dear Honorable City Councilors,

As the City Council and the members of the Joint Advisory Planning Group on the West Newton Armory know, the City of Newton applied for a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's Housing Choice Capital Grant Program.

I am pleased to announce we received a \$200,000 grant. This grant will enable the City to conduct a pre-development feasibility analysis of the West Newton Armory's suitability as a site for affordable housing. Newton is one of twenty communities in the Commonwealth to receive a grant award out of forty-three applicants to the Program this fiscal year. With the grant awards ranging from \$40,000 to \$250,000 for an awarded total of approximately \$4 million, Newton's \$200,000 grant award is substantial.

Due to its unique layout and historical significance, the West Newton Armory presents complicated preservation, design, financial, and environmental challenges if it is transformed into housing. These challenges require a high level of analytical expertise. Thus, the grant award will enable the Planning Department to contract with a consultant team to analyze these challenges and determine the feasibility for converting the Armory into affordable housing.

The grant award and consultant team will be of substantial help to the City Council's Real Property Reuse Committee and the Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) who are identifying options for the Armory's future use. Appointed by the Mayor and City Council per City ordinance, the 9-member JAPG will examine all potential uses of the Armory, with the consultant team bringing its expertise on one important option, the Armory's feasibility for affordable housing.

The JAPG is charged with making a recommendation to the Real Property Reuse Committee as to the future use of the property. The Real Property Reuse Committee is then tasked with making its recommendation to the full City Council. The City Council will vote on its final recommendation to the Mayor, and a 2/3 vote is required. If the City Council and I agree that the site should be redeveloped as affordable housing, the City will be presented with the opportunity to acquire the Armory from the Commonwealth's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) for \$1. If we come to the agreement that the Armory should not be redeveloped for affordable housing, but rather for a municipal use, DCAMM would have the property appraised as restricted for that municipal use, and the City would be offered the opportunity to purchase the property at a percentage of the property's full market value. Should the City decide not to acquire the property from the State, DCAMM would offer the property for private sale. The terms of this sale are authorized in Special Legislation currently pending in the Massachusetts State Legislature. Per this Special Legislation, the City must determine the use of the Armory and complete its purchase before June 30, 2020.

I am docketing a request to the City Council to accept the Housing Choice Grant Award. Moving forward, the Planning Department will issue a Request for Proposals to bring aboard a consultant team to help us better understand what is feasible in terms of converting the building into much-needed affordable housing.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruthanne Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal line extending from the top of the "F".

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor, City of Newton