

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

7:00 PM

Council Chambers A

Members Present:

Philip M. Jones, Vice Chair
George S. Hansel
Bart K. Sapeta
Margaret M. Rice

Staff Present:

Rhett Lamb, ACM/Planning Director
Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director
Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager

Members Not Present:

David C. Richards, Chair

Other Councilors Present

Carl B. Jacobs

Vice Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Carolyn Sweet/Machina Arts- Use of City Property – First Friday Events

Vice Chair Jones invited Carolyn Sweet from Machina Arts to speak to her proposal. Ms. Sweet thanked the City Council for hearing their proposal and considering the use of Railroad Square. She stated that Machina Arts has requested use of Railroad Square to promote an event that will enhance downtown. Events will be held year round on the first Friday of the month. During the months of March through October, events will be held outside in Railroad Square from 5 PM until 9 PM. Artists are scheduled to directly vend their art and direct service providers will be available to talk about how to access healthy food.

Ms. Sweet reported there would be live music and two pop up galleries. One of the galleries will be hosted by Jim Murphy and another by Meg Rogers.

Councilor Hansel asked Ms. Sweet to describe other First Friday Events that have taken place in other states. Ms. Sweet replied that First Friday Events are primarily used to activate a downtown. She stated that her best example would be Portland, Maine. The goal in this particular area was to attract 10,000 artists and art supporting residents to the Portland area. Ms. Sweet stated that other events she has worked with have varied. There have been groups that have shut down their entire downtown that have bouncy houses, live music and extended seating for bars and restaurants. Ms. Sweet noted that their event was focused on getting people into the downtown businesses in order to help promote the art or music that may be in their store.

Ms. Sweet stated that with their promotional relationship with Machina Arts, a downtown business will be allowed to invite and use their promoter's license for a nominal fee to have a musician perform in their space.

Ms. Sweet reported that their first event is in partnership with the Ewing Arts Award. The pop up gallery will feature Ewing winners and guitarists performing in that space. She noted they are also in partnership with the NH Eat Local Month and are featuring food as a celebration. Chef Jordan Scott is their culinary advisor.

Vice Chair Jones recognized Danya Landis with Machina Arts.

Vice Chair Jones asked if there was any control over controversial content. Ms. Landis asked Vice Chair Jones to define controversial content. He replied that this could be a piece of art that resembles or demonstrates racism. Ms. Landis explained that they will be screening each artist and will not allow a blatantly offensive piece of art.

Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director, stated that everyone is excited and focused on building business in the downtown area. He stated the City had an opportunity to meet with Ms. Sweet last week during the protocol process. The protocol process includes the Fire Department, Police Department, Health and Code and any other department that will help support the event.

Mr. Blomquist explained things are moving quickly because Ms. Sweet is looking to hold the first event on July 6th. He noted there is only one City Council meeting before the proposed July 6th event date.

Mr. Blomquist stated the motion before the Committee was broad, due to the variety of events. He explained the intention is to utilize authority of all departments as widely and greatly as possible. Mr. Blomquist added that the City is looking forward to seeing these events take place.

Councilor Rice thanked Ms. Sweet for doing this for the downtown area. She asked how these events would be advertised. Ms. Sweet replied that pending approval they have a marketing plan in place. In addition, they are in the process of building a partnership with First Friday Monadnock that is located in Peterborough. She explained they would be co-marketing both events. Ms. Landis noted that partnerships will be key in this process. In addition, she stated that she would like to have banners placed in downtown to help advertise the event. Ms. Landis added that there has been a good response about the event on Facebook.

Councilor Sapeta commented that he was happy the group was starting small but at the time thinking big. In addition, he liked the idea of branching out to include other organizations. Councilor Sapeta stated that what the City needs to be cognizant of is that the schedule of events in the City is filling up quickly. He continued stating that the City needs to start thinking about how to best coordinate these events so there is no overlap or competition for resources and funds. Councilor Sapeta then reiterated the need for the Downtown Coordinator position. Ms. Landis echoed Councilor Sapeta's comments noting that the Community Coordinator position would be extremely valuable to the City and a lot of other organizations.

Vice Chair Jones announced that the City Council recently approved the Downtown Coordinator position. He asked Councilor Hansel for his input since he made this motion at the City Council hearing. Councilor Hansel stated that he sees this as part of the same conversation about generating activity and creating collaborative efforts. He stated that he was impressed with how this process has been deliberate and organic. Councilor Hansel stated that that the Downtown Coordinator position will be helpful to this initiative.

Ms. Landis stated that she wanted to open these events as an opportunity for the City to give them ideas on what activities the City would like to see. She said this is a program for the community run by the community. Vice Chair Jones stated that the City could help provide Ms. Landis with a list of names of people who have coordinated different events in the City.

Ms. Sweet reported that someone recently approached her to do an art show around reducing plastic in the community. She stated that she could see the City taking an active role in promoting recycling by demonstrating what recycling looks like in Keene. In addition, Ms. Sweet reported that the Orchard School is coming in the next two months to display children's political art as a pop up gallery. She noted that the school has been painting this art for ten years and expressed their desire to display this art.

Vice Chair Jones stated that he believes these events will draw a lot of people. He asked how the group would handle security. Ms. Sweet replied they anticipate 100 people will attend the first event. She stated they are currently working with the police department and now have a budget for police presence. Ms. Sweet explained that this was part of the reason why they decided to have 3 soft openings. She explained that the cost of working with City is a challenge and impediment to moving forward with the program. Ms. Sweet stated that she, along with Machina Arts, is funding this project out of their own pockets. The reason why she is funding the project is due to the fact that she wants to live in this community for many years to come. She stated the challenges associated with planning this event is the need to have to pay for police presence, barriers and licensing fees. She noted this was also part of the reason for the slow opening process. Vice Chair Jones noted that once the event has been held for a couple years, they could apply for Community Event status and some of these expenses would be covered.

Councilor Sapeta asked what the cost is for the City services. Ms. Sweet replied that as long as there are 500 people or less, it would trigger the cost of 1-2 police officers and the cost of this was approximately \$300. In addition, to the other expense she mentioned earlier there would be the cost of trash pickup. Ms. Sweet stated that she hoped the Downtown Coordinator position could help support activities in downtown that have no economic benefit. Councilor Hansel stated that people need to realize that these are two people who are rolling up their sleeves to do hard work that is also cultural work. In addition, he stated that they are trying to make the City an attractive place for people to live. Councilor Hansel noted that the City needs to come up with a creative solution to help events of this nature. He added that he was in full support of this event and would do whatever he could to help support their efforts.

Councilor Sapeta asked if there was a possibility to reduce the fees for events that need support from the City. Mr. Blomquist replied that there are policies in place that require certain fees. He explained that the City Council adopted Resolution R-2012-19, dealing with community events.

Mr. Blomquist stated that the system that exists today is not designed for events of this size because it was originally designed for larger events such as the events held by Center Stage. In addition, Mr. Blomquist noted another reason the fees cannot be reduced is because these costs are not identified within the budget. He stated that this is good discussion for the City Council to start having during the fiscal policy meeting that will be held in July.

Councilor Sapeta asked if City staff would come back with recommendations on how to deal event fees. Mr. Blomquist replied there is an item on the FOP agenda regarding licensing fees for events that require protocols that can be used as a vehicle to open this discussion. In addition, he noted the fiscal policy meeting in July would result in how City staff sets up things of this nature.

Rhett Lamb, Acting City Manager/Planning Director stated that what Mr. Blomquist was referring to was the fiscal policy process that begins on July 17th. He noted that this is a good time to address these types of policies and questions.

Ms. Sweet stated that part of the reason why their budget looks the way it does for the next year is so that they can develop this program with a reasonable funding mechanism. She stated they are writing grants for this program that would allow them to partner with the City. Ms. Sweet explained that the City and First Friday Events together can apply for a grant that would help cover the costs of things such as policing. She reiterated that she would love to co-partner with the City and match some grants to foundations such as the Putnam Foundation.

Vice Chair Jones told the petitioner not to be afraid to ask local companies and civic groups for sponsorships to help with funding.

Vice Chair Jones welcomed public comment.

Councilor Jacobs stated that he is a cheer leader for this event and thinks this will be a wonderful event for the City. He stated that there are two things that need to happen. The first is the need for First Friday Events to have a license for this small scale event. Secondly, Councilor Jacobs said there is the need to continue the discussion about the various possibilities for the event. He stated that both need to happen in order to have a better downtown in the long run.

With no further comment, Vice Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Rice.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Council grant permission to Machina Arts for the use of City property on Railroad Square to conduct a series of First Friday Arts events from 4:00 PM to 9:30 PM (inclusive to set up and break down) on the following dates: July 6, August 3, September 7, and October 5, 2018. Said permission is conditional upon the following: compliance with the customary licensing requirements of the City Council; submission of signed letters of permission from any private property owner for the use of their property; obtainment of any necessary licenses or permits; and compliance with any recommendations of City staff. The staff reserves the right to bring

back to Committee any changes of scope that warrant the City Council's approval. In addition, the Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services provided.

2. Anthony & Fanella Levick/Granite Roots Brewing – Request to Sell Beer at Keene Farmer's Market

Vice Chair Jones recognized Brian Hadler, head brewer at Granite Roots Brewing. Mr. Hadler stated that he was representing Anthony Levick and Fanella Levick because they are out of town.

Vice Chair Jones stated that Granite Roots Brewing has been selling beer at the Keene Farmer's Market for the last two years. He asked if there are any changes. Mr. Hadler replied that he was not aware of any changes.

Mr. Blomquist stated there are a number of conditions required for the sale of alcoholic beverages at the Keene Farmer's Market. The State of NH Liquor Commission has confirmed Granite Roots Brewing has a manufacture's license. Mr. Blomquist stated that upon notification of the City Council approval, the Commission will proceed with the authorization to sell fruit beer at the Keene Farmer's Market. He stated this is allowed because there was a RSA change that allows sampling of beer and wine at farmers markets if authorized by the local legislative body.

Councilor Sapeta asked if only Farmer's markets qualify or does this extend to other venues. Mr. Blomquist replied that this particular RSA specifically addresses farmers markets.

Vice Chair Jones welcomed public comment. With no comment, Vice Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Rice made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Granite Roots Brewing be granted permission to sell alcohol at the 2018 Keene Farmer's Market of Keene. Said permission is contingent on the following: submittal of a signed letter of permission from the Farmer's Market of Keene, obtainment of all necessary permits and licenses and compliance with all laws, including the requirements of NH RSA 179:44 II-a.

3. Jesse O'Bryan/Branch and Blade Brewing Company- Request to Sell Beer at the Keene Farmer's Market

Vice Chair Jones invited Jess O'Bryan with Branch and Blade Brewing Company to speak. Chair Jones noted that the company has been approved to sell at the Keene Farmer's Market.

Mr. O'Brien, 17 Bradco Street, Keene stated their product has been approved by the State of NH Liquor Commission.

Vice Chair Jones asked if there was any comment from the Committee or City staff.

Mr. Blomquist stated that his comments from the prior application apply to this application.

Vice Chair Jones welcomed public comment. With no comment, Vice Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Sapeta made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Branch and Blade Brewing Company be granted permission to sell alcohol at the 2018 Keene Farmer's Market of Keene. Said permission is contingent on the following: submittal of a signed letter of permission from the Farmer's Market of Keene, obtainment of all necessary permits and licenses and compliance with all laws, including the requirements of NH RSA 179:44 II-a.

4. Peggy Schauffler/Country Life – Use of City Property – Sandwich Board Sign

Vice Chair Jones reported that City staff suggests placing this item on more time. Vice Chair Jones asked if the petitioner was present. Ms. Schauffler was not present.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Rice.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the request from Country Life Vegetarian Restaurant for use of City property be placed on more time.

5. Kevin Dremel – Use of City Property – Keene Music Festival

Vice Chair Jones asked if Mr. Dremel was present. Mr. Dremel was not present.

Vice Chair Jones asked if there are any changes to the event. The Assistant City Manager replied that all proposed changes are minor changes based on what the Music Festival has established. He stated that these changes will be reviewed through the protocol process and this is represented in the motion.

Councilor Rice made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the request from Kevin Dremel to use downtown City rights of way for the 2018 Keene Music Festival be placed on more time to allow City staff to hold protocol meeting(s) with the petitioner.

6. Connecticut National Guard – Request to Conduct Air Drops – Dillant Hopkins Airport

Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager, stated that the Connecticut National Guard has been visiting the airport on an increasing basis. He reported that they have done many fly overs in pairs and have started to expand their activities. The airport has provided them with enough space to practice

some of the drops they do for national emergencies. The drops would include supplies such as water or food.

Mr. Wozmak explained that the City has an airport with 1000 acres and that he has coordinated a safe area for them to drop 300 pound boxes out of a C130. He said this allows the National Guard to engage in training exercises that they use all the time. Mr. Wozmak reported that the City tried to get this program earlier but the National Guard are on active duty and were deployed to Afghanistan.

Mr. Wozmak stated there is a memorandum of agreement that has been reviewed by the City Attorney. . He explained this is a memorandum that there is nothing that obligates either party if either party decides this is not a good fit. Mr. Wozmak stated that the drops will take place away from everyone and are dropped at a low altitude. He added that these exercises are low risk. He explained the memorandum was to get the blessing from City Council and is a formality.

Vice Chair Jones stated although this was handled administratively in the past; it was his understanding this time they are asking for blessing from City Council. Mr. Wozmak replied that was correct and that it was the petitioner asking for the City Council's blessing.

Mr. Wozmak stated there will be a 7 day notice for these trainings and that he will be sending invitations to the City Council as soon as he receives the schedule. He stated that these exercises are nice for people to watch and also gives people an appreciation for the National Guard.

Councilor Sapeta asked if this would generate any income for the airport. Mr. Wozmak replied they could see an income if they purchase fuel from the airport. In addition, he stated that the restaurant will benefit from a few meals for the pilots. Generally, he stated that this is part of the cooperation with the military.

Councilor Rice noted that even if the airport is not gaining revenue from the activity, it does benefit the community. She explained that when natural disaster strikes, the community in Keene can feel proud that in a small way, we have contributed to helping saving the lives of other people. In addition, Mr. Wozmak stated that it may also help provide an interest in aviation that may lead to career opportunities for people or an interest in the military.

Councilor Sapeta stated the City can be proactive with this event, by having the 7 day notice to advertise these exercises. Mr. Wozmak noted that he would advertise on social media and take advantage of other free sources of advertising.

Vice Chair Jones welcomed public comment. With no comment, Vice Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Sapeta made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Connecticut Military Department Air National Guard 103D Airlift Wing to

conduct air-drop operations at the Dillant-Hopkins Airport.

7. Clarence DeMar Marathon – Request to Use City Property

Vice Chair Jones invited Alan Stroshine to speak to his proposal. Mr. Stroshine 27 Salisbury Road, Keene stated that there are no changes to the event.

Mr. Blomquist stated that City staff is recommending the Council grant permission to the sponsor to conduct the Clarence DeMar Marathon that will be held on September 30, 2018. He noted there is \$5,000 in the budget for the community event coverage for City services and anything over that is the responsibility of the petitioner.

Mr. Stroshine announced this year they have partnered with Filtrine. He stated that Filtrine has designed a self-sustained watering cooler and runners will be provided with one water bottle that will allow them to refill their bottle. Mr. Stroshine noted that this would eliminate the use of approximately 3,000 plastic water bottles.

Vice Chair Jones welcomed public comment.

Councilor Hansel commented this is one great event that brings in people from all over the world and is not just for Keene residents. He noted that this event also highlights what Keene is all about.

With no further comment, Vice Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion, seconded by Councilor Rice.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the Elm City Rotary Club be granted permission to sponsor the Clarence DeMar Marathon on September 30, 2018, subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, and compliance with any recommendations of City staff. The Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services over and above any amount of City funding allocated in the FY 19 Community Events Budget, and agrees to remit said payment within 30-days of the date of invoicing.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Committee Vice Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker
June 17, 2018

Additional Edits by,
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk