

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

7:00 PM

Council Chambers A

Members Present:

David C. Richards, Chair
George S. Hansel
Bart K. Sapeta
Margaret M. Rice

Staff Present:

Rhett Lamb, ACM/Planning Director
Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director
John Rogers, Acting Health Director

Members Not Present:

Philip M. Jones, Vice Chair

Other Councilors Present

Carl B. Jacobs

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

1. Keene Swampbats – Request to Discharge Fireworks

Kevin Watterson of 10 Westview Avenue, addressed the Committee stating that he was representing the Keene Swampbats to request permission to discharge fireworks. He noted the request was for two fireworks displays. The first display will be held on June 16th and the second display on July 3rd.

Mr. Watterson reported that he has met regularly with the Public Works Department, the Keene Fire Department and the Keene Police Department. Chair Richards asked how many years the Swampbats have held these displays. Mr. Watterson replied this was their 15th year.

Chair Richards asked if there are any changes to the event compared to prior years. Mr. Watterson replied there are no changes.

Chair Richards asked the Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist if all City requirements have been met. Mr. Blomquist replied in the affirmative.

Chair Richards asked for Committee questions or comments.

There being no further questions or comments from the Committee or public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Rice.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the Keene Swamp Bats be granted permission for the discharge of display fireworks on the following dates: Saturday, June 16th and Tuesday, July 3rd, 2018 on Alumni Field at no later than 10:00 PM subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council; submittal of a signed letter of permission from SAU 29 for use of their property; and obtainment of a Class B fireworks permit for each display date. In addition, the petitioner agrees to comply with all recommendations of City staff. This permission is conditional upon the Petitioner absorbing the charges for any City services provided for the June 16th display. 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 for the July 3rd display. Said payment shall be made within 30-days of the date of invoicing.

2. Keene Lions Club – Request to Use City Property

Crystal Knowles of 35 Cedar Street, addressed the Committee stating she was present on behalf of the Keene Lions Club. Ms. Knowles stated the request is for the use of the bay at the Public Works Garage to sort ducks, use of a City loader and operator to dump the ducks into the water. In addition, Ms. Knowles requested the interruption of traffic on West Street for 2-4 minutes, in order to dump the ducks into the Ashuelot River.

Chair Richards asked how many years the Keene Lions Club has been holding this event. Ms. Knowles replied this was their 29th year.

Chair Richards asked the Mr. Blomquist if all City requirements have been met. Mr. Blomquist replied in the affirmative.

Chair Richards asked for Committee questions or comments.

There being no further questions or comments from the Committee or public, Chair Richards asked for a motion.

Councilor Rice made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Council grant permission to the Keene Lions Club to use City property on June 16, 2018, to conduct the Annual Great Ashuelot River Duck Race, and permission to use a bay at the Public Works Garage to sort and count ducks on a date to be determined with City staff, use of a City loader and operator to dump the ducks, and subject to the following conditions: subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, and compliance with any requirements of

City staff. In the event of inclement weather, the event may be postponed to a future date to be determined in conjunction with City staff.

3. Peter Poanessa & Judy Rogers/The Magical History Tour - Request to Endorse the 2019 Walldogs Mural Festival and Use of City Property

Peter Poanessa of 36 Dickinson Road and Judy Rogers of 50 Woodbury Street stated they were before the Committee to seek endorsement of The Magical History Tour. Mr. Poanessa explained that the festival included hundreds of artists coming in from around the world to paint murals. The murals are then painted on predesigned walls that will be predetermined through a process they are going to go through in the next year. It was noted that the festival would last 3-5 days.

Ms. Rogers reported they have spoken with the Historic District Committee, the Heritage Commission and the Historical Society. She noted that everyone is enthusiastically on board and they are seeking the endorsement from the City before they begin fundraising.

Chair Richards asked for Committee questions or comments.

Councilor Hansel asked how many murals would be placed around the City. Ms. Rogers replied the goal was to fund 12-15 large scale murals in the downtown area, with some radiating toward the bike path. She reported that a walking tour will be created throughout downtown when the murals are complete.

Councilor Hansel asked how people in the community could contact the group to donate a gift in support of the festival or to inquire about volunteering. Mr. Poanessa replied they have a website for inquiries and donations. The group is also hosting an event at the HIVE for the community to learn more about the festival. In addition, Mr. Poanessa stated they have a space on Main Street that will be open a few nights during the summer in hopes to get the community more involved.

Ms. Rogers noted formal fundraising efforts will be announced on their website. In addition, she noted their Committee is a part of Arts Alive and they are under their fiscal umbrella.

Councilor Hansel commented that he was in full support of the festival, noting that the City of Keene will benefit from this event. In addition, he noted this is an opportunity for the community to come together and to create a unique culture for the area. Mr. Poanessa added that he has been involved in a few of the mural festivals and that it truly is a community changing event.

Chair Richards asked the Planning Director, Rhett Lamb if it is possible for the City to tie into The Magical History Tour's website. Mr. Lamb replied that he would have to look into this request and report back to the Committee.

Councilor Jacobs, stated that he is excited for the festival for all the reasons stated. He stated that he does not recall the City using the word "endorsing" in relationship to an event. He asked

the Committee to clarify because he wanted this to be clear before this item came before the City Council. Chair Richards explained that the planning of the festival is a long process and the City regulations would have to be addressed. In addition, he explained by endorsing the festival it states that the City is doing all of the things necessary to bring this festival to the City. Councilor Jacobs noted that the group was not asking for any resources from the City and that the group would be providing these murals to the City as a wonderful gift. Councilor Hansel stated that by endorsing the festival it states that the City is a willing partner. Mr. Poanessa added that potential corporate donors would not look at sponsorship until the City was onboard.

Councilor Sapeta stated that he is Co-Chair of the College City Commission and explained that the Commission has asked the City to endorse certain events and allow use of the City seal on advertising materials. Chair Richards asked Mr. Lamb if this was something the Committee should approve. Mr. Lamb replied that the petitioners are asking for a general endorsement from the City. He suggested the Committee remain with a general endorsement at this time and as the group develops their plans further they can come back before the Committee with more specific requests.

Councilor Sapeta commented that it seemed this is a complex process and assumed the group would be documenting for the possibility of having a follow-up event. Mr. Poanessa stated that there are endless opportunities to continue this event festival after it ends. In addition, he noted that the documenting piece is a requirement of Wall Dogs and a good record of the festival. There is also a plan to have a book.

Councilor Sapeta made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that City Council wholeheartedly endorse the Magical History Tour efforts to coordinate the 2019 Walldogs Mural Festival to be held in downtown Keene from June 20 through June 23, 2019. The Petitioner agrees to return with further details relative to the use of City property as their plans are solidified.

4. Roger Weinreich - Request to Use City Property - Main Street - Block Party

Roger Weinrich, 110 Main Street, Keene addressed the Committee to propose a block party in front of the Good Fortune block which is located between Cypress and Eagle Court on Saturday June 2, 2018 from 10 AM until 5 PM. He stated this is a family oriented event that would take place in conjunction with the Art Walk and the intention is to build some activities into that event. The footprint is from Bagels Works up to Cypress Street. They are proposing to close Main Street heading north on the east side routing traffic around Eagle Court making that one way. In addition, south bound traffic on Main Street would be left as normal.

Mr. Weinrich reported he has worked out details with City staff in regards to Jersey barriers and how to best protect people.

Mr. Weinrich noted that they do not expect a big turnout but did expect a lot of small hands on events in the footprint. He mentioned yoga classes in the street that will be taught by a local

yoga school, bike races for kids, music and massage class featuring trigger point therapy. In addition, he reached out to the Monadnock Children's Museum to highlight events in that area. There is also an open invitation to all restaurants and retailers to join the block party.

Mr. Weinrich stated that this event is meant to jazz up vitality in the City but is also a little bit of an experiment. He explained the experiment part is to see if closing the street will bring more people downtown to spend money in the shops and restaurants.

Mr. Blomquist stated the Mr. Weinrich met with staff and have come up with the various City services support. He noted this is not a community event and part of the requirement is that Mr. Weinrich will absorb the cost of those services.

In addition, Mr. Blomquist reported there is a rain date included in the motion because the PLD Committee does not meet until a week after the event takes place.

Chair terrific idea likes experiment and put more people involved.

Councilor Hansel thanked Mr. Weinrich for taking on an event of this nature and bringing vitality to the City.

Councilor Sapeta asked if Mr. Weinrich considered holding the event in Railroad Square. Mr. Weinrich replied that part of the event is specific to the block and also to help define and brand his business. He noted that Railroad Square and Central Square sometimes work well for some events and then other times the location does not work.

Councilor Rice asked if there was an adverting plan to help promote the event. Mr. Weinrich replied that most of the advertising would take place through social media.

Councilor Sapeta thanked Mr. Weinrich for spearheading this event and taking the initiative to experiment with closing part of the street in downtown.

Councilor Hansel asked Mr. Blomquist if there will be an alert to the public about street closures for the event. Mr. Blomquist replied there will be a post on social media and there will be a message board at the roundabout alerting alternate traffic patterns.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Rice.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that Good Fortune be granted permission to use downtown city property to host the Good Fortune Block Party on Saturday, June 2, 2018 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, including the closure of two lanes of traffic on Main Street on the northbound side from Eagle Court to Cypress Street. A rain date of June 9, 2018 has been identified in the event of inclement weather. Said permission is granted subject to the customary licensing requirements of the City Council; obtainment of any necessary licenses or permits; and compliance with any recommendations of City staff. In addition, the Petitioner agrees to absorb the cost of any City services provided.

5. Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance - Sign Regulation Changes Ordinance O-2018-02

Chair Richards recognized Acting Health and Code Enforcement Director John Rogers. Mr. Rogers stated the Committee has been aware of the sign code change from the public workshop and from the City Council meeting. He stated this was A version because of the update to the specifications for sign logos.

Councilor Sapeta asked if the Ordinance for the Sign Regulations would be in the same format as the updated Zoning Code. He noted the Zoning Code was easier for people to understand. Mr. Rogers replied that the intent is to create an easier format that is user friendly.

Councilor Rice made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the adoption of Ordinance O-2018-02-A Relating to Chapter 102 Zoning Code Article V111 Sign Regulations.

6. Adjournment –

There being no further business before the Committee Chair Richards adjourned the meeting at 7:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark
May 11, 2018