



LOWELL CITY COUNCIL
AD HOC S/C - SUPERIOR COURT HOUSE RESTORATION

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: May 21, 2024
Time: 5:45 PM
Location: Mayor's Reception Room, City Hall / Zoom(Hybrid)

PRESENT:

Present on Roll Call were C. Robinson, C. Noun and C. Scott. Others present were Maura Fitzpatrick (Director of Homelessness), John McDonough (Funeral Director), Yun-Ju Choi (CBA), C. Descoteaux, C. Mercier, C. Gitschier, C. Descoteaux, City Manager Golden, Lisa Golden (Director of Health and Human Services), Marty Lorrey.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order noting the attendance and the discussion regarding specifically restoration of the Superior Court House.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Chairman Robinson opened up the meeting to speakers. John McDonough, Funeral Director spoke regarding the use of the courthouse for the homeless and commented that they City needs to come up with a plan for the unhoused, a plan that would be 24/7. Chairman Robinson noted the first meeting that this committee had was focused on what the neighborhood was interested in seeing developed in that area. Chairman Robinson then recognized City Manager Golden to provide a preliminary stance of city. City Manager Golden commented that there is always a concern. City Manager Golden noted that right now we are looking for special legislation for property on Hurd Street, the old Lowell District Court where we can work with DCAM for the possibility of getting it completed or possibly having some construction for market rate apartments in the downtown area. City Manager Golden explained that he has concerns, and that in speaking with the state regarding the Superior Court House they believe auction is the best chance to get a development moving that might avoid further neglect and deterioration. City Manager Golden noted that the physical layout. City Manager Golden commented that his concern as well as cities on the perspective that this large piece is historic and the physical conditions. City Manager Golden noted that there are attractive pieces to this



property which are the 2 vacant lots as well as parking, however mass historic building and the condition concerns me and others. City Manager Golden asked if it is the wish of the City Council to move forward, think it would be challenging to reconfigure the interior space. City Manager Golden commented that DCAM would be looking to move forward on this building sooner rather than later and that it is important to note when folks go to buy it, we would still have some say. C. Descoteaux asked city manager what he meant by the city would have some say and City Manager Golden explained that the city would have say as to what could go there by right. C. Scott commented on what work has DPD done to gauge interest in this property, also has the city done any outreach and City Manager Golden said that DPD has not done a fit study over there. C. Scott asked if the study would be done before it went to auction, and City Manager Golden commented we have not done that as we do not own the building. C. Scott also asked if there has been any interest in making housing at that location and City Manager Golden said there was in the beginning, but it has waned partly because of market conditions and building overall. C. Nuon noted the court was built for a specific reason and that it will be difficult and costly to make change. C. Nuon noted that if the city wants to have some control as to what goes there, the only way would be through a partnership with DCAM. Chairman Robinson agreed that this will be challenging. Chairman Robinson commented that if this goes to auction the city loses a lot of control if its social services. Chairman Robinson noted that this is not what the neighborhood wants. Chairman Robinson commented on the advantages of the building artists lofts, museum, pop ups, that the building is in the MBTA zone. Chairman Robinson noted the possibilities are endless. Chairman Robinson commented that we take this in partnership with DCAM, we try to draw a developer, idea or concept to go for RFP for something different in this area. Chairman Robinson further commented that if we fall short, we go to auction. C. Descoteaux noted he understands where Chairman Robinson is coming from, but this is a heavy lift. City Manager Golden asked if the city, could give him a day or so to get a better idea on how much say the city would have, to which he would share with the committee in a timely manner and then to City Council as a whole. After further discussion Chairman Robinson asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn by C. Scott, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Angela Gitschier, Assistant City Clerk
