

CITY OF LEWISTON

CITY COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 25, 2003

SPECIAL MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT 7:00 P.M.

THE HONORABLE LAURIER T. RAYMOND, JR., MAYOR, PRESIDING.

PRESENT: Councilors Philippon, Bernier, O'Brien, Jean, Mason, Paradis, Rousseau, City Administrator James Bennett and City Clerk Kathleen Montejo.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
Moment of Silence.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BATES MILL EXIT/REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

VOTE (1)

Motion by Councilor Bernier, seconded by Councilor Jean:

To conduct a public hearing to receive citizen input and comment regarding the proposed Bates Mill Exit/Redevelopment Strategy. Passed - Vote 7-0

Mayor Raymond then opened the floor to receive citizen input and comment.

Anne Craigs, 94 Fair Street and Dick Albert, 192 Grove Street addressed the Council and outlined the following points:

- this is a difficult decision that represents years of cost to the City
- the proposal is reasonable yet expensive
- this proposal gets the Mill off of the City's books and stops the City's constant funding year after year
- approval of this proposal will allow the Council to concentrate on other things
- approval of this proposal will allow the City to reallocate the CDBG fund to other areas
- approval of the proposal will free up staff time to focus in other areas - a lot of "soft costs" are associated with this
- the City is not a developer
- both urged the City Council to vote to approve this proposal

Mr. Albert noted that the Lewiston Mill Redevelopment Corporation Board of Directors voted 9-0 this afternoon to endorse the proposal and to recommend that the Council approve the proposal.

Charles Soule, 170 Bartlett Street addressed the Council and stated the following:

- he thanked Councilors Paradis and Rousseau from abstaining from the LMRC vote this afternoon
- he noted it is the City Administrator's job to oversee the Bates Mill
- he asked for a moratorium on the sale of the Mill to allow time for the current contract to expire

- he noted the proposal is not an exit strategy and he asked the Council not to approve it
- he said that Mill buildings 4 and 5 are not included in the exit plan
- Lots 1 and 2 are currently occupied and paying \$52,000 in taxes to the City and the proposed agreement would allow these buildings to pass to the developer free of charge
- he noted these buildings are currently up to Code and are valuable and of good quality
- this is a bad deal for the City
- similar plans have not worked in the past
- urged Council to allow current contracts to expire
- suggested the Council do a financial overview of what funds the City will be saving under this plan

Jacqueline Smith, 9 Ward Circle, also addressed the Council at this time. The highlights of her comments are as follows:

- public needs to hear the advantages of getting out of the contracts
- the Council needs to look at both proposals
- can not understand how the City will save \$31 million dollars
- Mills 5 and 9 are the two white elephants of the complex
- how much will it be to renovate mill 5? This needs to be understood before agreement is approved
- the agreement benefits the developer and no one else, including the City

No other members of the public wished to speak and Mayor Raymond closed the hearing at 7:19pm. Mayor Raymond read a letter submitted by Nick Bayley, strongly encouraging the Council to approve the proposal for the Exit Strategy.

VOTE (2)

Motion by Councilor Mason, seconded by Councilor O'Brien:

To enter into executive session to discuss real estate and contract negotiations of which the premature disclosure of the information would prejudice the competitive bargaining position of the City. Passed - Vote 7-0

Executive Session began at 7:21 pm and ended at 7:50 pm.

VOTE (3)

Motion by Councilor Paradis, second by Councilor O'Brien:

To adjourn at 7:51 P.M. Passed - Vote 7-0

A true record, Attest:

Kathleen M. Montejo, CMC
City Clerk
Lewiston, Maine