

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, August 25, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
REMOTE MEETING
-Minutes-

Present: Council President, Councilor Steve LeBlanc; Council Vice President, Councilor Val Gilman; Councilor Melissa Cox; Councilor Jen Holmgren; Councilor John McCarthy; Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor Sean Nolan, Councilor James O’Hara; Councilor Barry Pett; Former City Councilor Joe Orlando

Also Present: Mayor, Sefatia Romeo Theken; Acting CAO, Vanessa Krawczyk; City Clerk, Joanne M. Senos; CFO John Dunn; City Auditor, Kenny Costa; Building Inspector Bill Sanborn; Planning Director Gregg Cademartori

Absent: None

This meeting was conducted remotely through Zoom, All votes were ROLL CALL votes

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilor LeBlanc announced, “This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state Open Meeting Law. Consistent with the Governor’s orders suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and banning gatherings of more than 25 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. Additionally, all votes taken by the City Council during this and future remote meetings will be by roll call vote. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (*9) to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device there is a “raise hand” button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options during oral communications to be recognized to speak.”

Councilor O’Hara joined the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Dennis McGurk, 283 Concord Street

He stated that he asked the Planning Board a year and a half ago what their mandate (guide) is, but never received a response. He also sent a couple of letters to the City Council and the Mayor over the course of the summer expressing his concern about development in Gloucester, particularly West Gloucester). He commented that the Mayor appoints and the City Council approves board members, so he guessed that they know what they’re doing, or should know, and he questioned if they had ever seen the results of their work in West Gloucester right now, because he believes it is a mess. He referenced the work of Carrigan Development LLC, specifically the ongoing project at 173 Concord Street, along with how Marshall’s Farm Stand has continued to expand.

He stated that the zoning ordinance is very clear (although he believes it is weak in some areas) about what the development should be, and without special permits and variances, they would not get nearly as much approved as they do now. He mentioned that there are three consistent themes that run through the housing production report, the open space plan, and comprehensive plan for the city.

1. The character of a neighborhood can be diminished by new development that is strikingly different than its surroundings.”, and he believes there is a concern for that.
2. “Land previously considered unbuildable because of granite ledge that was expensive to remove, will now be targeted due to increasing land values”, and he believes that is already happening.

3. "Identify the environmentally-sensitive areas" He stated it is all right there, and he feels as though the guidelines are being ignored. He requested a response to explain the guidelines, and invited all meeting attendees to take a ride through West Gloucester to see what is happening there.

PRESENTATIONS/COMMENDATIONS: None.

CONFIRMATION OF NEW APPOINTMENTS: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

• ***CONFIRMATION OF REAPPOINTMENTS***

• ***MAYOR'S REPORT***

1. Supplemental Appropriation-Budgetary Request (# 2021-SA-33) from the DPW (Refer B&F)
2. Memorandum from the CFO re: loan authorization request for the Gloucester Water Pollution Flood Mitigation Project in the amount of \$4, 200, 000 (Refer B&F)
3. Memorandum, Grant Application, & Checklist from the Economic Development Director re. request acceptance of an Essex National Heritage Commission Grant in the amount of \$2,500 (Refer B&F)
4. Memorandum, Grant Application, & Checklist from the Library Director re. request acceptance of the federal Library Services & Technology Act Grant in the amount of \$7,500 (Refer B&F)
5. Memorandum, Grant Application, & Checklist from the Fire Chief re. request acceptance of FEMA FY18 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) in the amount of \$466, 460 (Refer B&F)
6. Memorandum, Grant Application, & Checklist from the Fire Chief re. request acceptance of FEMA FY19 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) in the amount of \$490, 670.91 (Refer B&F)
7. Flyer from CATA re. 2020/2021 Student Bus Pass Info (Info Only)
8. Flyer regarding Count Down to Kindergarten drive-through celebration (Info Only)
9. Mayor's response to the oral communications at the 7/28/2020 City Council meeting (Info Only)

• ***COMMUNICATIONS/INVITATIONS***

• ***INFORMATION ONLY***

• ***APPLICATIONS/PETITIONS***

• ***COUNCILLORS ORDERS***

1. CC#2020-011 (Holmgren) Ordered that the City Council, based on the Traffic Commission Speed Study, petition the MassDOT to reduce the speed limit on Nashua Avenue to 15 MPH (Refer O&A)
- ***APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS***
 1. City Council Meeting: 8/11/2020 (Approve/File)
 2. Standing Committee Meetings: B&F 8/20/2020 (under separate cover), O&A 8/17/2020 (no meeting), P&D 8/19/2020 (under separate cover)(Approve/File)

Items to be added/removed from the Consent Agenda: None.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Consent Agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

• **Budget & Finance – August 20**

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Unanimous Consent Agenda for the August 20, 2020 Budget and Finance meeting.

1. Memorandum from Police Chief re: request acceptance of a computer donation from Dell with an estimated value of \$1,308.99 for the Community Impact Unit

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, §53A ½, a tangible property donation of a Dell Latitude Laptop 5510 from DELL with an estimated value of \$1,308.99 for the Police Department's Community Impact Unit.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A ½, a tangible property

donation of a Dell Latitude Laptop 5510 from DELL with an estimated value of \$1,308.99 for the Police Department's Community Impact Unit.

2. Memorandum from Police Chief re: request acceptance of an additional \$3,500 for the FY20 Traffic Enforcement Grant

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, an amendment to FY20 Traffic Enforcement Program Grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration through the Mass. Executive Office of Public Safety & Security in the amount of \$3,500 for a revised grant total of \$14,000 for the purpose of traffic enforcement in the city of Gloucester. The grant period is from January 6, 2020 through September 15, 2020 and there's no local match for this grant.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, an amendment to FY20 Traffic Enforcement Program Grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration through the Mass. Executive Office of Public Safety & Security in the amount of \$3,500 for a revised grant total of \$14,000 for the purpose of traffic enforcement in the city of Gloucester. The grant period is from January 6, 2020 through September 15, 2020 and there is no local match for this grant.

3. Memorandum from Mayor re: request acceptance of \$10,000 donation from SeniorCare to be used for kitchen renovations at the Rose Baker Senior Center

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a cash donation in the amount of \$10,000 from SeniorCare, Inc. for the purpose of renovating the kitchen at the Rose Baker Senior Center to help feed seniors.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a cash donation in the amount of \$10,000 from SeniorCare, Inc. for the purpose of renovating the kitchen at the Rose Baker Senior Center to help feed seniors.

• Ordinances & Administration – June 15 (Cont. from 8/11/2020)

1. Application of Sarah Valencik for a Permit of Scientific Research in the Coastal Waters and Tidal Flats in the City of Gloucester pursuant to GCO Ch. 20, Sec. 20-27 "Permits for Scientific Works in coastal waters and flats of city."

Summary of Discussion: Sarah Valencik informed the Council that all permit conditions have been met now that she has received a negative determination from the Conservation Commission, approving the Massachusetts Oyster Project to proceed with its research. The Ordinances and Administration Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve a permit for Massachusetts Oyster Project.

Councilor LeBlanc repeated a statement that Ms. Valencik had made at the July 28, 2020 City Council meeting when she informed the Council that there would be other participants assisting with the project whose names were listed on the permit application. He asked if the participants would be with her at all times, and she responded most likely that would be the case. **Councilor LeBlanc** advised her that is the permit recommendation, and commented that the Shellfish Constable believes this is going to be a great project.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor

Nolan, the Ordinances and Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor 0 opposed to recommend that the City Council approve under GCO Ch. 20, Sec. 20-27 “Permits for Scientific Works in coastal waters and flats in the city,” a permit for Massachusetts Oyster Project to conduct a scientific study of Mill River to evaluate and quantify how successful the seeding effort has been and identify how many oysters are harvested with the following conditions:

1. Acquiring the appropriate permit from Mass. Dept. of Marine Fisheries;
2. Appears before the local Conservation Commission for a negative determination of applicability for the proposed work;
3. Obtain signoffs from the Department of Public Works on behalf of the City Administration as property owners where the work will take place.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 9 in favor, 0 opposed to approve under GCO Ch. 20, Sec. 20-27 “Permits for Scientific Works in coastal waters and flats in the city,” a permit for Massachusetts Oyster Project to conduct a scientific study of Mill River to evaluate and quantify how successful the seeding effort has been and identify how many oysters are harvested with the following conditions:

- 1. Acquiring the appropriate permit from Mass. Dept. of Marine Fisheries.**
- 2. Appears before the local Conservation Commission for a negative determination of applicability for the proposed work.**
- 3. Obtain signoffs from the Department of Public Works on behalf of the City Administration as property owners where the work will take place.**

- **Ordinances & Administration – August 17 (no meeting)**
- **Planning & Development – August 19 (no items under this heading)**

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Gilman stated that there were no items to report, she just wanted to inform the Council that during the August 19, 2020 Planning & Development Committee meeting, for *SCP2020-004: Folly Point Road #1, Map 146, Lot 28, GZO Sec. 3.1.6(b) “Building Heights in Excess of 35 Feet” in the R-20 District (Cont. from 5/20/2020)*, Attorney Favazza, representing the client, brought to the attention of the committee the fact that there was a technicality with the balloons being shorter than expected during the site visit. It was then agreed that an additional site visit should be held, so the next one is planned for **September 9, 2020 in two scheduled, socially-distanced groups with a maximum of ten attendees each, one at 5:00 p.m., and the next at 5:30 p.m.** She specified that the 5:00 p.m. visit should contain the three Planning and Development Standing Committee members, along with as many abutters as possible. The 5:30 p.m. visit will include any City Councilors who would like to attend, as well as any remaining abutters. **The Public Hearing on this matter has been extended to September 22, 2020 because it must be duly advertised.** A notice will be sent informing abutters that **Councilor Gilman** is the contact person scheduling the site visits. **Councilor Cox** asked why the site visit groups are limited to a maximum of 10 attendees if the current Governor’s guidelines state that the limit for outdoor gatherings is 50, and the indoor limit is 25. **Councilor Gilman** explained that per the Gloucester Board of Health, the Planning and Development Committee was asked to adhere to a 10 person maximum for site visits because there could be contained areas that might need to be viewed (such as a porch or small indoor space in a house) to determine whether there will be height issues or shadowing.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. City Council Vote of August 22, 2017 re: COV2017-166 re. GZO Sec. 5.30.1 “Purpose” regarding the sunset clause (**Cont. from 7/28/20**)

The public hearing opened at 6:17 p.m.

Those Speaking in Favor: Attorney Joel Favazza and former City Councilor Joe Orlando

Those Speaking in Opposition: None.

Communications: None

Councilor Questions: None

The public hearing closed at 6:51 p.m.

Summary of Discussion: Attorney Joel Favazza, 28 Middle Street, spoke in favor of some form of extension of this program to provide incentive for property owners with illegal apartments to be held accountable for their unclaimed units, such as a database that can reconcile the number of claimed units found in assessor records versus the number listed on building permits. He explained that he worked with the councilor who helped to author this clause, and that the idea behind it was the city of Gloucester has a lot of safe apartments that exist although they are not considered legal dwellings because they do not meet zoning requirements. He recommended that a way be found for the city to reach out to everyone with an illegal apartment encouraging them to obtain a certificate of residential dwelling, and then allowing them to become legal once a health inspection is passed by granting a special zoning permit. He expressed concern for the truly unsafe apartments in the city where someone could possibly get hurt or killed if an accident occurs in one of them. He explained the sunset clause is necessary because once it expires, they need to be found and eliminated. He stated that he believes widespread advertising and commitment from the Council and city administration is necessary to get people with safe, illegal apartments to come forward under this program.

Former City Councilor Joe Orlando, 6 Angle Street, creator of this sunset clause, also spoke in favor. He thanked the **Council** for hearing him on this matter, **Councilors LeBlanc** and **Gilman** for inviting him to attend this meeting, and Attorney Favazza for his assistance in crafting this sunset clause. He echoed Attorney Favazza's statement in favor, and provided background information for the councilors who were not on the City Council when the clause was created. He explained that the purpose of the ordinance amendment was for the city to find a way to take current market-rate units and make them affordable, so long as they were safe and fit all the criteria outlined. This resulted in increased affordable housing units that are much-needed for the city, and incentives given to property owners who provided the city with affordable housing deed restrictions on their units who wouldn't have otherwise had access to the streamlined ability created by this sunset clause to get the necessary zoning relief.

He elaborated that a market rate unit currently being rented in the city can be turned into an affordable rate unit. The market rate version of it is illegal, however the affordable rate unit of it is legal. The amnesty period was provided so that property owners could come forward without being penalized if their units were rejected since they would be provided time to fix any problems that were cited. He reiterated Attorney Favazza's statement that at the end of the sunset clause, the Building Department should enforce the identification and elimination of any remaining illegal units.

He explained that after he and former City Councilor Lundberg appeared before the City Council regarding this matter in 2018, it was discovered that a volunteer Zoning Administrator position needed to be created, and one needed to be appointed by the Mayor, City Council, and Zoning Board of Appeals, which never happened although a memorandum of understanding had been drafted and agreed to, and a qualified volunteer had been identified. The candidate must understand zoning ordinances, as well as building and safety codes. The benefits of appointing someone to this position would be that it is independent from the enforcement of the Building Department, acting as a proxy of the ZBA to provide a contact person that a property owner would present the necessary information to when requesting an inspection certificate, ensuring that all criteria are met. This eliminates the deterrent cost of hiring a lawyer or architect that would be borne by the property owner. Zoning Administrators stamp the application packet, providing prima facie evidence (accepted as correct unless proven otherwise) that the property owner is in compliance of the zoning amendments. The completed packet is then forwarded to the ZBA for a full vote at their next regularly scheduled meeting. He warned that if the city continues to have people go before the Building Inspector regarding this matter, it will deter them from coming forward with their unit to become affordable, and to be documented because they are

afraid that if they get turned down, they are automatically going to be enforced against, which is in direct opposition of the purpose of these zoning amendments.

He encouraged the Council to approve extending the clause with modifications for another three years, since the program should be more successful if the recommendations are implemented. He stated that he also believes the program should be significantly promoted so that the real estate, community development, and income property communities understand their rights. He offered to answer any questions that anyone may have on the subject, and reminded meeting attendees that the City Council voted unanimously to adopt it the first time.

Councilor Holmgren thanked **former Councilor Orlando** for his work that brought forward this unconventional way to examine affordable housing, and commented that the city needs to look at every single opportunity. She asked whether the Zoning Administrator position would be a temporary one if the sunset clause was extended, and if it would be possible to shorten the 30-year affordability deed restriction since it may be a deterrent to creating additional safe, affordable housing. **Planning Director Gregg Cademartori** explained that 30 years is the required period for a unit to count on the subsidized inventory.

Building Inspector Bill Sanborn clarified that the Zoning Board is the only appointing authority for a Zoning Administrator, and that it was discussed during the meeting in which this sunset clause was presented, and the decision was made to not appoint one for this order. He stated that **former Councilor Orlando** had a valid point about someone outside of the Building Department being the contact person for this initiative. He shared that he may have received a total of 6 applications since it took effect, and only 1 completed the process. From his perspective, the restrictions on inclusionary housing are the biggest deterrent, not only in tying up the property owners, but also the banks might not be willing to mortgage a property with the uncertainty of what future problems the restrictions may create. He stated that this was a great ordinance with some great content, and he believes **former Councilor Orlando** and **Attorney Favazza** did a fantastic job of trying to create something. He believes it could be more successful, however, if it is extended, adjustments needed to be created so more applicants will come forward. He explained that his department does investigate illegal apartments when they become aware of them, however, with limited staff it is not possible to check every property in addition to fulfilling all of the other duties that need to be performed. He presented the option of hiring outside consultants such as the ones used by other communities to perform multi-family inspections every five years.

Councilor Gilman stated that she had submitted some questions to **Acting CAO Vanessa Krawczyk** to give to the **Building Inspector** and **Planning Director**. She asked **Mr. Sanborn** if he believes an adequate job had been done of advertising this program to the general public, and his response was that he does not believe any type of advertising was done besides word of mouth. She also asked if the Council extended this sunset clause, how in their opinion would this adversely affect the motivation of landlords to expand affordable housing opportunities by creating accessory units. **Mr. Cademartori** stated that he cannot speak to someone else's motivation, however the restriction length, along with the concern that coming forward may result in having to modify the unit, or restrict it again, is not a small task for a property owner to undertake in terms of preparing a restriction that needs to be recorded against the property are both deterrents. He explained that during their August 20, 2020 meeting, the Planning Board held a public hearing on this matter and recognized that their preference was to focus on some of the other available options such as creating accessory units. He reiterated the sunset clause was created as an incentive, and he believes the real estate community was made aware of it since they are most attuned with owners who encounter these situations that often occur during the formulation of a zoning opinion or appropriately marketing a property. He was unable to predict whether additional time and a marketing campaign would increase utilization.

Councilor McCarthy asked if the 30-year restriction is necessary to count it against the city's stock of affordable housing, and whether this in any way restricts the resale of a property in terms of how much they

can sell the property for. **Mr. Cademartori** explained that during the sale, the market will bear the price of that multi-family property, however, the purchaser of the property would need to understand that they're going to have to continue to rent those particular units to income-qualified individuals. Also, a lender viewing it as an income property, will recognize that there are set rental rates that will be allowed for the designated units in the multi-family. A 30-year minimum restriction is required for a municipal decision, and for a deed restriction to be recognized by the state to be placed on the subsidized inventory as a local initiative unit.

Councilor McCarthy opted to not vote to continue the clause for another year and expressed hope that it will come before the Council again as a revised plan to create more utilization and apartments that the city needs. He heeded the vote of the Planning Board, and thanked **former Councilor Orlando** for contributing to the start of the conversation.

Councilor Pett expressed concern for the magnitude of potential issues created by the decision of whether or not to extend this sunset clause, and suggested the possibility of gathering more information and giving the matter more consideration, reviewing the ordinance as a whole and determining how it affects the current housing development plan would be a better option than voting on it this evening. **Councilor Cox** agreed, and stated that unless there was a major overhaul, she does not see the benefit of continuing it for another year since the City Council is making decisions for a committee that has recommended that it not be continued, and would not be supporting it this evening. **Councilor Holmgren** voiced agreement for the statements made by **Councilors Pett** and **Cox** and expressed that she strongly favors affordable housing initiatives, and would like to be able to vote in favor of this measure to extend the sunset clause, however thoughts of property owners approaching banks for refinancing, and any difficulties the Council may have unwittingly contributed to inclined her to vote no at this time unless she heard compelling arguments in favor since there are upcoming measures that are potentially more tenable in terms of affordability such as accessory dwelling units.

The **Mayor** stated that unfortunately, even though it was advertised to some extent, and members of the public asked questions, it was determined that even if they complied and the apartments passed all regulations, they would not be able to afford the betterments for one reason or another. She explained that betterments are charged for each unit, and in most cases, they cost more than the rental income received from a unit. She would like to see the clause moderated once the YMCA and Cameron's property affordable housing projects are completed, because then the state legislators can be consulted, and it might be possible to ask for a waiver to reduce the 30 year restriction to 20. She explained that no one wants a lien on their home, because every time a property owner wants to refinance, they must request an extension from the city and sign documentation if the request is approved.

Councilor LeBlanc favored the City Council voting for a one-year extension during which time the clause can be revisited and adjusted since he believes the decision should be left to the homeowners as to whether or not they want to acquire the lien created by a deed restriction. **Councilor Nolan** opted to support the extension for the reasons stated by **Councilor LeBlanc**, and the fact that it provides property owners access to a tool to try to make this happen with a focus on safety. **Councilor O'Hara** was also in favor for the reasons provided by **Councilors LeBlanc** and **Gilman**.

Councilor Memhard expressed his thanks and appreciation to **former Councilor Orlando** for creativity and initiative to follow through with this great tool, however he stated that he does not think it is practical yet for a number of the reasons that have been provided during the course of this discussion. The fact that the ZBA and **Mr. Sanborn** do not feel that they are in a position to support the Zoning Administrator position caused him great concern, and he stated that it needs to be fine-tuned, and ZBA engagement is needed to support this becoming a viable program, so he does not support this at the present time.

Councilor Gilman expressed support for the sunset clause being extended for another year, and shared that she felt the most passionate about **Mr. Sanborn's** honest response that he really did not feel an adequate job had been done in communicating this initiative, since she believes **former Counselor Orlando** put a lot of heart and soul into this, so she does not see a big downside as long as it does not affect the ability to focus on matters such as accessory units. She also volunteered to work on a team to review this matter if the will of the committee was to not extend the clause at this time.

Councilor Pett asked if it was possible at this time to amend the clause while reviewing the possibility of revamping it. **Councilor Holmgren** stated that she hoped that it does not duplicate the efforts that are being put forward to implement the housing production plan. She asked **Mr. Cademartori** for his opinion, and he explained that part of the goal, as he understood it, was to address the subsidized inventory. Different durations of affordability are helpful, which is why federal and state funding runs on different time periods. He expressed wanting to see the original purpose and goal revisited.

Councilor Cox stated that in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, banks and homeowners are not focused on these types of projects, so she believes it would be best to revamp it and spend time internally trying to create a better program rather than just extending it for another year that it could possibly continue to fail.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council amend the City Council vote of August 22, 2017 re. COV2017-166 re. GZO Sec. 5.30.1 "Purpose" permitting of certain pre-existing multi-family uses regarding the sunset clause and adding "with a sunset clause of August 22, 2021".

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 4 in favor, 5 opposed to extend the sunset clause. Motion fails.

2. PH2020-010: SCP2020-002: Essex Avenue #99A, Map 216, Lot 126, GZO Sec. 1.8.3 "Standard to be applied," Sec. 3.1.6(b) "Building Heights in Excess of 35 Feet," Sec. 2.3.4(13) "Marine related service, storage, or repair, limited primarily in the MI District to commercial fishing vessels," Sec. 5.5 "Lowland Requirements," Sec. 5.5.2 and Sec. 5.5.3 in the EB District (**Cont. from 7/28/20**)

Councilor LeBlanc opened and continued this matter until September 8, 2020.

FOR COUNCIL VOTE:

1. City Council Resolution re. authorization of the City of Gloucester to participate in the Massachusetts Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (PACE Massachusetts)

Summary of Discussion: Councilor Cox explained that the state conducted a Zoom workshop on August 19, 2020 that members of the City Council and Clean Energy Commission attended, and the commission wrote a letter in support of the program. **CFO John Dunn** had asked her some questions regarding the legalities of the program, but for the most part is not opposed to it. **CFO Dunn** confirmed that he believed that overall, the program would be beneficial.

Councilor Holmgren stated that she was happy to vote for this tonight, and thanked **Councilor Cox** for bringing it forward. Since she was unable to attend the workshop, she spoke with a member of the Clean Energy Commission, and thinks it is a great idea to provide another initiative to help commercial buildings stay cleaner, especially during COVID. She mentioned that it should also hopefully be economically advantageous as well. **Councilor Gilman** stated that she sees absolutely no downside to this since it is

definitely a feel-good type of initiative that is progressive and is supported by the advisory board and the Mayor's office.

Councilor McCarthy shared that he attended the entire workshop, and had some initial concerns that the city would be used as a collection agency by putting this as a betterment, but after conferring with **CFO Dunn**, he believes it's going to be limited to commercial and large apartment buildings, and is not a residential type of thing that will burden the Collector's office, so he's comfortable voting this forward. **Councilor LeBlanc** thanked **Councilor Cox** for bringing this matter forward.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL, 9 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the City of Gloucester participating in PACE Property Assessed Clean Energy Massachusetts pursuant to the PACE Act, and authorizes the Mayor to enter into a PACE Massachusetts Municipal Assessment and Assignment Agreement with MassDevelopment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

INDIVIDUAL COUNCILLOR'S DISCUSSION INCLUDING REPORTS BY APPOINTED COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES: None.

COUNCILORS' REQUESTS TO THE MAYOR:

Councilor O'Hara mentioned that the city has lost two athletic fields, Charles Thomas Memorial Field at the former Fuller School site, and the relocation of Mattos Field to Green Street, both of which have yet to be replaced, which he does not believe is wise with record child and adult obesity. He asked the city and the administration to determine when the field replacements will occur.

Councilor LeBlanc requested that couple of handicapped parking spots be removed from in front of 6 or 8 Commonwealth Avenue.

COUNCILORS' THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Councilor Cox thanked **Mr. Cademartori** for attending the meeting, and the administration for their support.

Councilor McCarthy thanked all the volunteers and city staff for what seems like a monumental task of sending the election mailings out for early voting.

Councilor Holmgren thanked the Gloucester School Committee and Public Schools, including the teachers, administration, and parents/guardians for weathering these past few weeks. She stated it has been a challenge for everyone, but we are getting through this together, and she cannot thank them enough for sitting in on these hours of meetings. She thanked **Councilor Gilman** for her assistance as well.

Councilor O'Hara echoed **Councilor Holmgren's** comments pertaining to the School Committee. He thanked them, and also wanted to remind everyone that there is an important subject coming before the City Council regarding the combined schools. He asked School Committee President Jonathan Pope to answer the questions he has passed on to the committee from his constituents. He also thanked the DPW for the paving that has been going on throughout the city, and expressed the appreciation conveyed by tax-paying residents. **Councilor Nolan** also echoed **Councilor Holmgren's** appreciation for the School Committee, schools, teachers, and staff. He also thanked the DPW for all their hard work around the ward, and mentioned that he has received constituent emails specifically thanking Bill Gillis and Jack Carrancho, along with the entire Water Department for their work on Woodman Street, as well as the administration's work to ensure that these projects happen.

Councilor Pett thanked the administration and the Board of Health for their continued work and guidance during this pandemic, along with all the other departments assisting them. He mentioned that the percentage of new COVID-19 cases is way down. He also extended thanks to the City Clerk and the entire group of staff and volunteers for all their work during this election. He also congratulated the Fire Department on their pending almost half million dollar training that will be tremendous for them moving forward.

Councilor Gilman thanked the **Mayor**, Harbormaster, and Police from the bottom of her heart for their great effort this past weekend. She personally witnessed so many environmental police, MA police boats, and Gloucester police boats out patrolling, and mentioned that she did not see any boats rafting, so she believes the word got out, and that great progress has been made.

She also acknowledged the school community for their hard work, and mentioned that they have a new Facebook page, and are trying to communicate as clearly as possible every step of the way. She referred to the joint meeting between the City Council and School Committee, and the community vote that will take place during the presidential election on November 3, 2020 regarding the transfer of land and the debt exclusion override. And, you know, this is this is a school this is a big deal. She mentioned that the School Committee has been working on this for about six years, so she would like to make sure that constituents are directed to the correct people who can to answers their questions, and that everyone be allowed to express opinions regarding the matter in front of us. She also thanked the other City Councilors for working so hard to deliberate on the sunset clause, and **Councilor LeBlanc** concurred.

COUNCILORS' WARD UPDATES AND COMMUNITY NEWS:

Councilor LeBlanc shared that he has requested that the Traffic Commission begin meeting again via Zoom meetings.

Councilor Memhard wished everyone a happy end of August 2020 and encouraged everyone to vote next week if they haven't already since the state primary will be held on Tuesday, September 1, 2020.

Councilor O'Hara shared that at Magnolia Library on Monday, August 31, 2020, there will be a blood drive from 2:00-7:00 p.m. He encouraged everyone to schedule an appointment by calling 1-800-REDCROSS. He mentioned that they will also be performing COVID-19 antibody tests that identify whether a donor has already had the virus, and that they receive the results within 10-12 days, potentially allowing a person who had already had the virus to help somebody fighting it, so that is another reason for people to consider rolling up their sleeves and giving the gift of life. **Councilor Cox** informed **Councilor O'Hara** that blood drive is currently completely full, because she tried to schedule an appointment a week ago and was unable to. She mentioned that it also took two weeks to receive her antibody test.

Councilor LeBlanc shared that he and School Committee Chair Jonathan Pope are trying to settle on a date for the upcoming joint meeting so that it can be scheduled as soon as possible.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Holmgren, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the City Council voted by ROLL CALL 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 absent to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brianna Komi
Administrative Support
City Clerk's Office