

City of Dunedin
Committee on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
Virtual Public Meeting
Special Meeting Minutes, Wed., Sept. 16, 2020

Call to Order: 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Debby Sheldon

Attendance:

Members Present: Alan Brand, Debby Sheldon, Mary Schoonover, Patricia Blizzard, Howard Gray, Charu Leininger, Jeremy Reynolds, Vicki Love, Laurie Beaty

Members Absent: Phillip Oneil

City Staff Liaison: Natalie Gass, Dunedin Sustainability Coordinator

Visitors: Jessica Andringa, Kelly Johnson, Tim Valle, Tracy Love Tippin, Katie Conrad, Pete Gallagher, Joan Skolte, Mitch Shaffer, Michelle Birnbaum, Nichole Mattheus, Lynn Olson, Leigh Fortuna, Mike Quill, Dawn Burke, Dee Wilcox

Single Item Agenda, Gladys Douglas Hackworth Property:

Mary Schoonover gave a synopsis of the Sept. 3, 2020 Dunedin Commission Workshop which included a history of how this property came to be of interest to the city according to City Manager Jennifer Bramley.

CEQ members discussed the following:

- Option to annex the property into the City and provide time for public input. More information was requested as to the process of annexation into the City.
- Jessica Andringa said she will send information about funds and grants. Deadline for FL Forever Funds is Dec. 1, 2020
- Pat Blizzard spoke about the species on the property including habitat for gopher tortoises. She highlighted that one of the beneficiaries of the Douglas estate, the Presbyterian Church offered to accept less funds from the sale of the property to enable it to remain as a green space. Other members suggested asking the other three beneficiaries to do the same which could alleviate some financial pressure on the County and City.
- Vicki Love suggested that information on State funds should be sent to the County.
- Kelly Johnson offered to send Natalie more information on State environmental funds.
- Nichole Mattheus feels we should make it clear that all three parcels of land be purchased for preservation.
- Jeremy Reynolds stated that the property was land locked but there could be a type of easement to access Lake Jerry.

- **Vicki made a motion** for CEQ to write a letter to include **a)** insure that annexing this property be an agenda item requiring public comment and that enough time be given to research and report back. **b)** include grant information and deadlines to pass onto the County. **c)** include State fund information that may be available. **d)** encourage the City to use their LDO (Land Dedication Offset) monies to add to the County monies. **e)** Add a description of the environmental impact of this land and its importance. **f)** the letter and its contents will be voted on at the next CEQ meeting, Sept. 29, 2020.
- **Pat seconded the motion.**

- **Discussion:** Howard stated that the owner had years to state her wishes regarding the property but her actions did not support these wishes. He is concerned that the owners had paid fewer taxes because of an old appraisal value; he wanted to see a cost benefit analysis which would include spending public funds initially and the potential tax revenue lost if the property is not developed. Howard also invoked a **point of order** stating the topic of the letter is outside of the CEQ's charter.

Natalie was asked how this matter came before this committee. She reported that City Manager asked her to reach out to CEQ and The Sierra Club because this was tasked by the Commission as a special request.

Jeremy requested that we discuss CEQ Charter Revision at our next regularly scheduled meeting as our Charter should align with the City's Epic Goals.

- **The Question was called, a roll call vote was taken:** Yeses: Debby, Jeremy, Mary, Char and Pat Nos: Howard **Motion passes.**
- Because this issue is time sensitive **Jeremy made a motion** for Natalie to convey to the City Manager our desire to purchase the Douglas property and **Vicki seconded the motion.**
- **Discussion:** Howard expressed his opposition for spending the money for the purchase and Debby said she needs more time.
- **Zoom Chat:**
- Kelly Johnson opined that tax revenue can be recovered in other places. "We need to protect our green spaces; we cannot continue to use money as the deciding factor for development."
- Dawn Burke: "I live around the corner from the Douglas property and there is NO way we support in this area the traffic from 140+ homes. We need to ensure this green space is preserved. You can never have enough green spaces."
- **Jeremy amended his motion:** CEQ is giving direction to Natalie to communicate our support for working with the County in a fiscally responsible manner toward the purchase of the Douglas/Hackworth property. **Motion passes unanimously.**
- Jeremy volunteered to attend the Friday, Sept. 18, 2020, 3-4 p.m. meeting with the Conservation committee of the Sierra Club and will report at the next CEQ meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Next regularly scheduled CEQ meeting is: Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2020 at 8 a.m. via Zoom or telephone.

Minutes submitted by Mary Schoonover, Secretary