



## CITY COUNCIL MCINTYRE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2020 MEETING

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The McIntyre Subcommittee held the December 18, 2020 meeting via Zoom.

**Chair Peter Whelan opened the meeting at or about 10:30 with a roll call.**

Subcommittee Members Present via Zoom: Chair Peter Whelan and Councilors Deaglan McEachern, John Tabor and Paige Trace.

City representatives present via Zoom: City Manager Karen Conard, City Attorney Robert Sullivan, Principal Planner Nick Cracknell and Moderator Synthia Ravell

Also present via Zoom: Russell Preston, Gerald Duffy, Lori Waltz-Gagnon, Mark Brighton, Stephanie Seacord, Councilor Petra Huda and Bill Downey.

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Chair Whelan referenced an email from Mandy of the Principle Group (PG) which reported 299 Portsmouth Listens (PL) study circle participant sign-ups and 39 duplications. The Subcommittee agreed that translated to 257 total. Mr. Preston confirmed he had seen the report and would clarify the duplicate review with Mandy.

Councilor Tabor confirmed with PL that 17 definite facilitators signed up, with another three potentials. PG can provide an additional four, and Mr. Preston said an additional two or three may be available.

Councilor McEachern asked Councilor Tabor about historic drop-off of sign-ups versus once they actually get into a study circle. Councilor Tabor said 20% is a typical attrition rate. He believes it should be up to PL and PG to work out a strategy on correct number of facilitators.

Chair Whelan opened up the meeting to public comment.

### Public comment:

Bill Downey of 67 Bow Street thanked those present for the presentation [from 12/16]. He said it was a transformative evening, and there was now excitement and hope. People that had previously disagreed were now aligned due to the professional nature of the leadership

and presentation. The presentations were excellent and the big take-away is people now believe this is the residents' project, and no longer a give-away to the developer, he added.

Chair Whelan closed public comment at this time as no one else wished to speak.

Those present openly discussed dividing participants into groups to ensure full transparency.

Councilor Tabor discussed the 3<sup>rd</sup> party neutral approach with PG: take the choice of night of the week; break that into groups of 11 or so, then ensure groups are balanced between age, gender, affiliations and opinions. Mandy of PG will send the lists to Jim of PL to review. This would take a couple of days, the Councilor estimated. Councilor McEachern said it was sensible to not have the Subcommittee perform this task. Councilor Trace agreed with the approach.

**Councilor Trace moved that the McIntyre Subcommittee allow the Principle Group to oversee the choice of residents who go into each group in an effort to maintain neutrality and to assure to the residents of the City that we have no fingerprint on this whatsoever; and that the Portsmouth Listens circles be open to residents only and there be no non-residents in any of these circles. This motion was seconded by Councilor Tabor.**

Chair Whelan said they would need a published list of participants at some point from PG.

**On a roll call vote 4-0 the motion passed unanimously.**

Councilor Trace mentioned IT security. She also discussed the possibility of non-residents using a business address being "outed" by a resident. Councilor McEachern discussed residency issues in the State of New Hampshire. He also discussed IT and personal security issues of participants' list. Mr. Preston recommended the best practice of not publishing lists with people's home addresses due to privacy concerns.

Councilor Tabor discussed transparency versus personal privacy issues regarding the publishing of names only. He suggested a hard copy list available upon request at City Hall and Councilor Trace agreed. She recommended one list of alphabetized names only. City Manager Conard pointed out that if the list is in the City's hands, it is public information.

Attorney Sullivan expanded upon that saying once the Subcommittee has determined the form in which it wants this information to be kept, that the PG provide to the City only that information the City wants to have – that is the information that will be public record.

**Councilor Trace moved that the City ask the Principle Group only for a list of participant names in alphabetical order to protect the security of the participants. This was seconded by Councilor McEachern.**

Those present discussed that this information would be public record, and as such, subject to the right-to-know law, making it available upon request. Councilor McEachern clarified the intention is not to put this information on the City website, but to be available upon request.

**On a roll-call 4-0 vote, the motion passed.**

Chair Whelan asked about the schedule, and Councilor Tabor said they were close.

Chair Whelan asked about the architect round table, and how to invite people. Mr. Preston discussed drafting sketches based on PL input, publishing those concurrent with the round table event and critiquing the approaches constructively. Following that would be a public comment time frame.

Councilor Trace asked how to choose the architects and expressed concern about conflicted developers. Mr. Preston suggested contacting professional organizations and choosing the top 10 or 12 from the responses. He would hope all involved would be honest and helpful and not have personal agendas.

Councilor McEachern expressed concern about timeline but felt they earned trust during the meeting from 12/16. He has a lot of faith in the PG to continue with that along with the round table.

Mr. Cracknell mentioned that with an architectural round table they are talking about both architecture and landscape architects, so an “urban design round table” might be a better name so that landscape architects can feel invited. Councilor Trace reminded all to not limit the scope of the project.

Councilor Tabor wanted to ensure as much feedback as possible and asked about online tools for sharing sketches. Mr. Preston said they could accommodate that and believed there would be sufficient time to fine tune the process.

Mr. Preston and Chair Whelan discussed scheduling another Subcommittee meeting on 12/28/2020. Chair Whelan added 1/4/2021 as well.

Mr. Preston next discussed follow-up from the roll-out meeting and publishing the resulting sticky-note comments. The City Manager confirmed it was posted to the website. Those present discussed a frequently-asked-questions and answers segment, and Councilor Trace encouraged PG to use actual questions posed from residents to ensure trust and transparency. Councilor McEachern suggested consolidating information in a meaningful way.

Councilor Tabor said once dialogues start, participants do research and compose questions – those questions will come up through the facilitators. He asked those present whether the questions should be posed to the Subcommittee or the City Manager.

Councilor Tabor suggested possible Zoom technical support for some, and the Chair hoped facilitators could do preliminary check-ins to ensure capabilities and provide feedback to the Subcommittee when assistance is required. The Councilor will follow up with Mandy from PG regarding technical support for participants. Mr. Preston discussed a facilitator training in light of the virtual platform, new to some.

The City Manager said the City would need the list of names once available. Those present discussed duplicate names.

Chair Whelan affirmed the next two meetings would be held on 12/28/2020 at 3:00 p.m. and on 1/4/2021 at 3:00 p.m.

**Councilor Tabor moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.**

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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Peter Whelan, Chair,  
McIntyre Subcommittee

Minutes prepared by  
Marian Steimke, Legal Secretary