

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SUMMIT**

Distributed: 7/1/22

Approved: 7/5/22

The meeting was called to order by Council President Marjorie Fox at 5:30 PM. The City Clerk then read the following notice:

“Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the City Clerk’s Office in the preparation of the Council Special Meeting Notice, dated June 24, 2022, which was properly distributed and posted per statutory requirements.

Please be advised that the FIRE EXITS are to my RIGHT, your left, and at the BACK OF THE ROOM.”

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Lisa Allen, Susan Hairston, Beth Little, Andy Minegar Danny O’Sullivan, Greg Vartan and Council President Marjorie Fox.

ABSENT: None

Also in attendance were Mayor Radest and staff members Michael Rogers, Rosemary Licatase and Professionals: Matthew Giacobbe, City Solicitor; Joseph Maraziti, Redevelopment Attorney.

Minutes of this meeting are recorded on CD # 2022-13

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESOLUTION

The respective Committee Chairman, Committee member, or Councilmember, as indicated for the Committee, introduced the following resolution(s) and on motion, duly seconded and on roll call, unanimously adopted or adopted by the vote shown, if any:

CAPITAL PROJECTS & COMMUNITY SERVICES

40355 Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Summit to Reconsider the Introduction of an Ordinance to Amend the Redevelopment Plan for the Broad Street West Redevelopment Area and to Rescind the Resolution Referring the Proposed Amendment to the City’s Planning Board

RESULT: APPROVED [Unanimous]

MOVER: O’Sullivan

SECONDER: Little

AYES: Fox, Allen, Hairston, Little, Minegar, O’Sullivan, Vartan

Councilmember Vartan read from a prepared statement, which is hereto attached.

Councilmember Allen read from a prepared statement, which is hereto attached.

In response to comments made by Councilmember Allen in her statement, Council President Fox spoke of Councilmember Allen's participation on the steering committee, to which Councilmember Allen responded and clarified her role and participation.

Councilmember Hairston reiterated and confirmed her support for the ordinance at the last special meeting. She also expressed her support of council's decision to pause and her hope that this decision would help the community regain confidence in the members of the governing body through public engagement.

Peter Kane, Iris Road, questioned what changes would be made to the BWS Steering Committee structure and the committee's communication with the public.

In response, Council President Fox explained that a mechanism would have to be put in place which has not yet been determined and that such decisions would be made soon.

David Cook, Blackburn Road, questioned whether there was any discussion with the developer since the last meeting. In response, Council President Fox advised that there was general discussion with the developer advising of the council's anticipated consideration and to confirm that the developer was still on board.

Don Nelson, Plain Street, asked for clarification regarding an opportunity to have public input on the BSW Steering Committee. In response, Council President Fox advised that council and public representation has to be determined. Mr. Nelson expressed his appreciation to the council for listening to the community. He further commented that he felt that the City should not be taking any risks with such a project, but rather it is the developer who should be taking the risks.

Miriam Zahn, Sweetbriar Road, thanked Council for holding the special meeting and shared her thoughts regarding using the Broad Street West redevelopment project as a cure all for the City's debt problem. She asked Council to focus, rather, on what is the best building for the site, which will work with the Master Plan.

In response, Council President Fox, stated that there is a balance that must be considered with competing needs, including, but not limited to, the City's debt.

Vivian Hardy, Oak Knoll Road, thanked the governing body for its decision to reconsider the size and scope of the project. She expressed her hope that the Council is still on the path of listening to the community, emphasizing that there is a rich resource of talent within the community that the City should consider tapping into. With reference to an article recently written by Councilmember Vartan in the *Tap*, Ms. Hardy asked for clarification about whether the size of the building would remain the same.

In response, Councilmember Vartan stated that he felt his article was clear that Council would be considering a smaller building design, in response to the community's input.

Sean Heany, Portland Road, asked for the names of the members who currently serve on the BSW Steering Committee. In response, Council President Fox advised as follows: Mayor Radest, Council President Fox, City Administrator Rogers, two Councilmembers – Councilmember Allen and Councilmember Little, two Planning Board members – Jay

Brinkerhoff and Chairman Bill Anderson and one Environmental Commission member – Rick Bell.

Kevin McGoey, Woodland Avenue, volunteered to assist the steering committee. He asked Council to allow him to help them do what is best for Summit. He spoke of the need bids for a new developer and he expressed confidence that Summit can do a project that is stays within the existing redevelopment plan, which would be profitable for both the City and the developer.

Mayor Radest thanked Mr. McGoey for his offer to assist and advised that consideration would be given to his offer.

Councilmember Allen read from a prepared statement, hereto attached:

City Clerk Licatase advised of one email received for public comment from Dorrie Gagnon of Bedford Road and proceeded to read the statement into the record, which is hereto attached.

Mayor Radest wished to emphasize that while the Council has made the decision to withdraw the actions taken at the June 21 special meeting, the governing body will work during the summer months and have discussions with the developers and will continue working until the project is done right.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

ADJOURNMENT REGULAR MEETING – Upon motion of Councilmember Minegar, duly seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalia M. Licatase
City Clerk

MINUTES ATTACHMENTS *(personal email addresses and mobile numbers have been redacted)*

- Statement – Councilmember Vartan, re Resolution #40355
- Statements – Councilmember Allen, re Resolution #40355
- Public Comment – D. Gagnon, Bedford Road, re BSW

Councilmember Allen Statement

June 27, 2022 Special Council Meeting

Council President,

I would like to say that I'm thrilled we are reversing course, and setting a new direction for Broad Street West Redevelopment tonight.

Last week..... my vote was clear that I did **not** support the ordinance to amend our current Redevelopment Plan nor did I support the resolution that would send those amendments to the Planning Board.

There are many reasons why I voted no, which I won't belabor, but two specific reasons were:

- First, the volume and intensity of engaged residents who wanted Council to stick to the current redevelopment plan and scale back the project.
- Second, I believe the amendments dismissed the hard work of our volunteers who worked on both the master and redevelopment plan over the years, and potentially could open the door for a new standard of development across town.

My vote **today**.... is to **reconfirm** my previous vote and believe we can build a better project that is consistent with the character of our community.

That aside, on a personal note, at last week's meeting, it was stated I may have been **confused** about what I was voting on.

I want to be crystal clear – I knew exactly what I was voting on, and this meeting tonight reiterates why I voted the way I did.

Public Comment
June 27, 2022 Special Council Meeting

Licatese, Rosemary

Subject: FW: Letter to read at Special Meeting tonight

From: Dorrie Gagnon
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 11:57 AM
To: Licatese, Rosemary <RLicatese@cityofsummit.org>
Subject: Letter to read at Special Meeting tonight

CAUTION: This email has originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Radest and Council Members,

I would like to thank you all for taking this summer to rethink the Broad Street West project.

I do have some questions and concerns in regards to this special meeting.

Why didn't any members of council second Ms. Allen's motion to postpone this project last week? With the huge public outcry in the last few months, the residents for Summit deserve a reason WHY.

I would also like to insist that Residents for Summit to be a part of the building process for Broad Street West. It is important that residents have a say as to what their downtown looks like. It is apparent that having a vital downtown community is important to each and everyone here in town. Please consider opening up a committee to Summit residents who care for their downtown.

I look forward to an open and honest conversation with you all during the following months to get this project done right!

Truly,

Dorrie Gagnon
27 Bedford Rd.

Statement - Councilmember Vartan
June 27, 2022 Special Council Meeting

Thank you, Council President.

I am thankful for the thousands of hours of work by everyone involved in the process thus far, including current and past members of Council, steering committee members, professionals, and members of the community. We're here at our third meeting in as many weeks because we're deeply committed to delivering the best possible product for Summit.

I strongly supported the amendments to the Redevelopment Plan that we introduced last week. I said the reasons why during the meeting. I think they limited the scope of the project and I would have liked the Planning Board to confirm their consistency with the Master Plan.

But we've learned there is a possibility that we can get a revised plan. A plan that could address some of the concerns of the community, therefore I think it's our responsibility to pursue it.

So we will take the summer months to reconvene the Steering committee, speak with the re-developers, professionals, and members of the community. Redevelopment of this area is still absolutely essential to the future of this City. It is our responsibility as stewards of the Master Plan - that clearly prescribes redevelopment, it is our fiduciary responsibility to utilize this opportunity, and it is our responsibility to meet our affordable housing commitments.

As we move forward, I will be strongly advocating that this project:

- Includes as much affordable housing as possible
- Maximizes the purchase price and annual income to the City
- Includes environmentally sustainable features, pedestrian and traffic safety measures, and a robust parking plan

And I believe that it is incredibly important that we continue to do this responsibly and while incorporating community feedback. We do that by:

- Communicating clearly, transparently, and regularly about what we are working on, what can be shared publicly, and what is in negotiation and must remain confidential
- Providing the background and context surrounding the trade-offs that are inevitable

Everyone knows, this will not be easy. But nothing worthwhile is. This will require balance. This will require compromise. This will require patience.

I think this process has been similar to a long road trip. We've planned our route, but sometimes we need to navigate unexpected detours, perhaps ask for directions, and even stop and rest from time to time for a breather. We've experienced the detours, some rough and stormy weather, and we've also had some arguments with each other. But in the end, we will reach our destination.

This is what progress looks like. This is what democracy looks like. And this will be a better community as a result of doing this work, together. Thank you.