

MMC Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC)

Agenda

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Noon-1:00

- 1) Approve Minutes** of December 13 and January 10 - a motion was made and seconded to approve both sets of minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.
- 2) Construction Update (Q&A)** - Walter Pochebit gave a brief recap. The Committee had no questions.
- 3) MMC Update** – Jennifer McCarthy updated the Committee on a number of items related to Maine Med.
 - MMC is planning to host the May meeting of the NAC and give a tour of the new Malone Family Tower.
 - Information regarding the new MH branding will begin to be released to the community soon. All the MH facilities currently have their own branding and logos. Moving to a unified brand will help communicate to our clients that the many facilities are all part of one organization. The Biddeford and Sanford locations will be joining with Portland under one license, which will be beneficial in several ways. One example will be the ability to expand the federal resident program, increasing the number of Fellows and Residents. A five-year plan is being developed to look at what type of Residents/Fellows would be added and where they would be based.
 - An outside company has approached MH to discuss plans for renovating 222 St. John. The building is unsuitable for patient care and needs extensive work. The company is interested in converting it to work force housing. They are considering everything from studio apartments to multiple bedrooms. MMC would “own” some of them to supply housing opportunities for staff.
 - There has been a lot of discussion at MH regarding the Strategic Plan. As it develops, more and more issues have come to light. The process is so big that it may become advisable to bring in outside resources to get all the pieces organized.

Discussion: Several questions were asked about the development of 222 St. John. Members of the Committee encouraged Jennifer to have the potential developers meet with community members to hear what the community would like to see in that space before beginning.

4) 2024 Work Plan Draft

Discussion: Consideration was given to the proposed work plan that had been sent out with the agenda. Multiple suggestions were given for moving items around, including rescheduling the new MMC President Britt Crewse to a later date. A suggestion was made that the Caring Community Grant Program become a flat grant instead of a competition. Once all the revisions were in place, a motion was made and seconded to approve the 2024 Work Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: Add the topic of the Caring Community Grant Program to a future agenda to discuss whether to change it to a flat grant.

Further Discussion: The topic of the makeup of the Caring Community group was raised. After

a brief discussion, it was decided that the members would remain the same except for switching Damon for Zack. Steven noted that he wanted to continue to chair it since Damon has left the committee to take over as co-chair of the NAC.

Action: Steven will contact the members to confirm their willingness to continue and approval of him continuing to be the chair.

Further Discussion: Anne noted that the members of the Healthy Community group also needed to be appointed. A short consideration was given to who should be on it. Brian Batson will represent MMC.

5) Discuss NAC Report – Next Steps

- Anne Pringle review of meeting with MMC on 1/24/24

Discussion: Several Community Members commented that it would be beneficial if MMC/MH were more transparent with the NAC. They felt that if this were the case, concerns could be addressed in the planning process and the group could present a unified front when going to the city Planning Board. Opinion seemed to be that initiatives which should have progressed fairly rapidly were unnecessarily delayed by unforeseen issues that could have been prevented if the NAC had been fully informed in advance. Hopes were expressed that moving forward, topics like large scale development of the Union Station Plaza and/or Classic Eyewear locations would be shared with the NAC in the earliest stages. The topic of meeting frequency was also raised. It was noted that the NAC is obliged to meet monthly during construction but that it could return to quarterly once that had been completed. The suggestion was made that smaller meeting groups might be more productive than the large monthly group. Several members agreed that the idea made sense and the suggestion was made to trial moving to every other month at some time in the future when construction has been completed.

6) Old Business (5 minutes)

- Food Pantry Mural – Brian Batson: Brian stated that the Food Pantry was celebrating its one-year anniversary. Currently the plan is still to be open one day a week.

Discussion – several opinions were given of the mural.

Action – Brian will send a mock-up of what it will look like when completed.

- Traffic Signal Update (Parking Garage at St. John St.) – Al Green : As Al was unable to attend, Walter shared that proposals had been presented to the City of Portland and the DOT and they were waiting to hear back.

Discussion – a number of questions were asked, and opinions offered. It was suggested that the Committee should make a formal recommendation.

Action – a group of the members will take it up. Nell will coordinate the meeting.

- Potential for Transit funding – Al Green: As Al was not present, this item was postponed.
- MMC security – Brian Batson: Brian explained the current status of security at the Union Station Plaza, including the frequency of rounding. He commented that prior to MH purchasing the property there were no security patrols. He also spoke to the challenge of preventing people from loitering while not alienating the patrons.

Discussion – while Brian's details were appreciated, it was still felt that Carole should be

reached out to for more specific details.

Action – Brian will reach out to Carole

- Snow ban parking report back

Discussion - the question was asked whether there had been issues since the last meeting.

The answer was that there had only been one snow ban since then and the neighbors put up the signs.

7) New Business

- Grant Subcommittee Brief Discussion – not addressed due to the time

8) Adjourn – As it was already several minutes past the hour, multiple participants had signed off so the meeting was adjourned.