



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

5:00 PM

Council Chambers

Contract Approval Meeting

Call to Order: President Roger MacLean

Present: 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

[15-2411](#)

R84

Authorization for Contract with Fourth Economy Consulting, Inc. in the amount of \$176,110 to assist the City's Bureau of Planning and Zoning in preparing a new Comprehensive and Economic Development Plan - multiple bids.

Attachments: [R84 Request for Council Approval - Fourth Economy- Bid No. 2018-07](#)
[Resolution #29673](#)

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that Ms. Baraket will explain the basics of the contracting and Mr. Stewart will speak to the details.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that this was done as RFP 2018 - 07. The RFP Evaluation Committee consisted of a total of five voting members and four nonvoting members. We received five responses to this RFP. The committee did a technical and cost evaluation of the five responses and was short listed to two vendors and then they did oral presentations with the two vendors with final recommendations to award to Fourth Economy. He stated that he is very much in support of what has been submitted.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked about checking for any donations from any companies.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that this RFP is a very long process. That was talked about two Council meetings ago. This RFP was already out before and was not included in the package. However, we have secured the political contract form prior to this meeting. We do have them in file.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked Ms. Baraket if she could tell him.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that they would not put anything forward without telling Council.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated in the Municipality's Planning Code requires that municipalities adopt a new plan every 10 years. The last plan that was prepared and adopted in the city was in 2009. We are embarking on a major planning effort that takes into account the 2009 plan pre-dates the NIZ and pre-dates and technological changes facing cities everywhere. We are looking at a plan that is not only a comprehensive land use plan, it is more or less the focus of a previous plan, but we are looking at it will be multi-disciplinary. We are calling it a Comprehensive and Economic Development Plan. We sent out an RFP that was very extensive. It is not just a land use plan on how we have map that maps out. It looks at strategies. We want to recognize that the city can't just rely on the NIZ and Waterfront. We have to look at neighborhoods. We have a wonderful proposal. It is a multi-discipline effort.

Mr. Roger MacLean thanked Mr. Stewart and asked if Council had any comments.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked Mr. Stewart about the recommendation of Fourth Economy Consultant. He asked Mr. Stewart to talk a little bit about Fourth Economy.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that they are based in Pittsburgh. They have a national reputation for being innovative. In land planning there are two different kinds of approaches. One is a traditional physical design planning firm. That is the basis although it was done in-house. It was oriented towards land-use maps and looking at zoning. Cities have changes in the last 10 years. Fourth Economic has the talent and have the credentials to bring us well into the 21st century.

Ms. Julio Guridy stated that this was a proposal bidding process and you don't have to use the lower bid. He asked if they went back and negotiated with them to be \$176,000. Because it is a consultant service they haven't done anything.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that we have done research on their qualifications and other qualifications on studies that they have done. Our new Senior Hannah Hart is here with us tonight is familiar with their services. We had a very close debate in our selection committee between two firms. It was a very close thing. I am confident that Fourth Economic is aware where the city needs to go. We are looking at adoption of the Comprehensive Plan for December 2019. It is basically an 18 month contract.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that it is understanding that nine years ago we did it in-house and you don't believe we have the personnel to do this. He

asked if Mr. Stewart considered going to the NIZ in perhaps joining us and helping us pay for this.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that they are looking at such a wide scope that he believe that the city is best served by bringing in an outside source. We have limited staff and I believe we have to bring in an outside consultant that would work hand and hand with our staff. The last study pre-dates the NIZ when the whole city changed and pre-dates what is happening at the Waterfront. The city staff, the city government, the city Planning Commission need to look beyond the NIZ. We need to look at our neighborhoods. There are housing issues.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked is the money budgeted for this. Where is the money coming from?

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that they procured money in last year's budget for majority of this study. There will be some portion for next year's budget. There is \$150,000 that has been budgeted from the \$172,000.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that there have been budgeting this for the past couple of years in anticipation it was coming up. I am aware of the issue.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that you are aware of the issues, but are you comfortable with funding that.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that he trusts Mr. Stewart's judgement. He is a very smart Planning Director and he knows his stuff.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that we are also applying to the state for additional funding.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if it was going to make up the \$26,000 or for something additional.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that he is not looking for anything additional. This is a fixed-fee contract.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that you are just applying to the state to hopefully have them kick in the \$26,000.

Mr. Courtney Robinson thanked Mr. Stewart, his department and the Purchasing Department. He stated that he is happy to he is making a Comprehensive approach to the Comprehensive Plan. It makes sense to do a Plan like this. In comparison with the Planning Department's staff what other services will be provided?

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that the scope of services includes geographic and demographic research. He was assured by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission that where they can supplement the information so we don't reinvent the wheel. If we can find a savings by utilizing the data from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission we can focus on other things. We have HARB talents, Community Development talents. My focus is on zoning and we have to get with the zoning issues and Hannah Hart has capabilities. We don't have expertise with community and economic development. We need a nation view of housing policies and how to implement housing programs. That is something that we are lacking from the 2009 Plan.

Mr. Courtney Robinson thanked Mr. Stewart and asked about the scope of public participation or participation from large interested bodies and other elected officials throughout the city.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that what he come to realize that social media is a way of communicating and is a major impact to dissimilate information or gather information. We made that a point of the contract. They have to have the ability to engage the community through social media. Neighborhood meetings have limitations. Working the bilingual needs into the contracts. They have to be able to do interpretation. It will be produced in a document and a thumb drive so that people can plug it into the computer. It will be online and produced in Spanish and in English.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked about organizations such as Muhlenberg, St. Luke's Hospital, the NIZ itself. Will you try to hold conversations with them independently or memos from them.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that he can't say there is a specific way to do that, but they are stakeholders. People that have influence will be included with direct conversations.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he appreciates the answer that you gave to Mr. Hendricks to keep the NIZ out of this because they are a stakeholder in this. This has to be independent. He stated that he knows from his interaction with Mr. Stewart's department that you are vastly under-manned and you have two members of your Planning staff and have to focus on multiple things from Upside Allentown and HARB. I understand why you are using outside consultants.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked if the Planning Department been working on this since 2009 or did you just start working on this now.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that in 2009 the Plan was adopted. He stated that he began working for the city in September. It was my immediate goal to set out what was needed in the city with the Comprehensive Plan. I was able to assess immediately that we needed to reach outside of the staff. Because there has been so many changes due to the NIZ the city is a different place since 2009. That Plan is out dated and we need a new one. We are about to embark on something that is terrific for the city.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that knowing you needed extra money for this, wouldn't it be a good idea to seek help of the state prior to now, financially.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that he has been working on it since September.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked are you talking about 2017 or 2009.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated 2017.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if there were any other comments from Council or the public.

Mr. John Ingram stated that he has a planning background with a Master's in Planning from Rutgers University in 1975 and also geography and political science from Penn State undergraduate, I have had some experience in this area in terms of Comprehensive Planning. Not recently because I have been focusing on commercial real estate. I was going through your Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and I noticed the Planning Department \$934,000 was spent on the Planning Department in 2017 and \$1 million was spent on the Director's office of Community and Economic Development. That is almost \$2 million from your over \$100 million budget. I know that you have a Director of Community and Economic Development and you have a Director of Planning Doug Stewart along with a Chief Planner, a Senior Planner and staff. This whole idea of spending \$176,000 on someone else from the outside when there is an existing staff with a budget of \$1 million even though they may be overworked and underpaid. Why can't we increase their salaries a little bit. Let's add another Planner to the department and do our own Comprehensive Plan. They are intimately familiar with the city of Allentown. They live and work here. This is an excellent firm and come with excellent credentials.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked Mr. Stewart if the contract calls for them to be in Allentown.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated no question. They would need to be here. As we need them to be here, they will be here.

Mr. John Ingram suggested the American Planning Association. He suggested that the title read Comprehensive and Community and Economic Development Plan.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated that in the industry the comprehensive plan is a comprehensive community plan. We added economic development to encompass a broader scope that the city needs.

Mr. Tom Hahn, 2016 E. Highland Street, stated that Dennis Pearson could not be here and asked about the development part that pertains to the eastside of Allentown where the State Hospital land is and asked to get the school district involved. He suggested that the initial plan to have Dieruff into a junior high school and Harrison Morton closed. He stated that the better schools of Ritter and Moser in the school district right now would feed the high school that can be put on that property. He talked about multi housing and economic development communities are condos, single family homes, apartments, doctor's office and a center and it is a walking community. he stated that Dennis Pearson suggested that they compete with the NIZ zone offering multiple families could have on the eastside. A playground and sports could be included.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked Mr. Stewart if this would encompass the whole city including the eastside.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated yes.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked if they were working with Upside Allentown.

Mr. Doug Stewart stated yes.

Mr. John Hoffman, 334 N. 13th Street, stated that he listened to the entire procedure and is confused. He stated that if you say that your planning staff is as good as it is and is insufficient in quantity to do its current work then how in the world would they be able to do a \$176,000 comprehensive plan and continue to do their current work. A comprehensive plan is the one time in the day to day life of a planning department to get an honest outside look from a group of professionals who have been all over the country and seen things throughout the country similar to and different from Allentown that's able to get advice that you can't get here. he stated that he knows that the city is under the gun financially and you could always find a way to change something, find something or change something, alter something. This city has a future and has a powerful new future. I say The

Morning Call article with the complete shift in population and what that means to his town.

Mr. Roger MacLean thanked Mr. Hoffman and asked if there were any other comments from the public.

Yes: 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

Enactment No: 29673

[15-2412](#)

R85

Authorization for Contract with Penmar Systems, Inc. for an estimated sum, not to exceed \$70,000 to perform emergency demolition and remediation services for buildings located in the City.

Attachments: [R85 Request for Council Approval - Penmar-Bid 2018-05](#)
[Resolution #29674](#)

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that this was done as Bid #2018-05 for as needed demolition services. We did receive only one bid for this response. It was sent over to the department for them to evaluate since we only received one response. We asked the department to take a look at it and see if it is fair market price. We tried to do our own evaluation of pricing. It is recommended that we do award this bid to Penmar.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that \$70,000 is the maximum from what he is seeing here. It could be less depending on the needs.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that it is for as needed services.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if there were any questions from Council.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked is this the company that we had previously engaged with. What did we expend last year in 2016 and 2017. Do we know? What is less than the budgeted amount of equal to. What is the average of the cost if we had to call them out if it is for remediation or demolition? What is the process if we had a large industrial building that needs to come down. What is the process if we have to go over the \$70,000.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated less than.

Mr. Bill Harvey stated that it is hard to say. It depends. A single family dwelling might be \$25,000 - \$30,000.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that we will bring it back to Council for approval and make an adjustment to the contract.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if there were any other questions from Council or the public.

Yes: 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

Enactment No: 29674

[15-2413](#)

R86

Authorization for Engagement of Professional Services with Base Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$600 for Engineering Services and Structural Assessment for City property at 1602 Park Drive.

Attachments: [R86 Request for Council Approval - Base Engineering Inc.](#)
[Resolution #29675](#)

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that it seems self-explanatory, but explain it to us.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that this is for an Engineering Study for a rental property. One quote was received which is all that is required for that dollar threshold. The company that we have used in the past for other similar services.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that in the rental agreements with the city owned properties in the parks there are certain items that are the responsibility of the tenant to repair and certain items that are for the city to repair. This is one of those that fell within the city's responsibility.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if there were any questions from Council.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked is this the home across from Robin Hood.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated the one that Mike Adams used to live in. He asked if an engineering firm couldn't do the work? He stated because it is structural. We don't have a structural engineer on staff.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that she doesn't know.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he was not certain where that was. I googled it and it doesn't come up.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that Mr. Hendricks is correct on the location. I believe it is the former Adams residence.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that there are some people who are confused. What we the work that was done so that we will know what was

done?

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that it is looking to be done. It is not done yet. They are looking at something structural.

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that she has a structural assessment on city property.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated if we could get an answer.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that has been a property that had the uncertainty about its condition after the last occupant in it and we have liability issues with it. They want to ensure from a structural standpoint what shape it is in and what we need to do with it going forward.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked that Council be notified about the results.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that it is a historic property and he hopes they can make it right. He asked if there were any other questions from Council or the public.

Yes: 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

Enactment No: 29675

[15-2414](#)

R87

Authorization for Engagement of Professional Services with McMahon and Associates in the amount of \$2,750 for Technical/Grant Submission Assistance for American Parkway Lighting Funding

Attachments: [R87 Request for Council Contract Approval -Am Pkwy Lighting McMahon2 Resolution #29676](#)

Ms. Jessica Baraket stated that this falls under the one quote requirement. One quote was received from a vendor who we have done business with in the past.

Mr. Craig Messinger stated that this is a continuation of two other grants we received for lighting along American Parkway. There is no lighting along that whole roadway. This is actually Phase III. This will be from Front Street to Airport Road. We are looking for funding for that part of the roadway.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that we are looking for funding from the state and that's actually McMahon will help us through. He asked if there were any other questions.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked how did we know about the bridge and we built that length and never put in for lighting.

Mr. Craig Messinger stated that they put in lighting for the bridge and that was fully funded federally. We asked for lighting along the long part of the stretch. They only provided lighting for the bridge.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked if there were any questions from Council or the public.

Yes: 6 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, and Ed Zucal

Absent: 1 - Julio Guridy

Enactment No: 29676

ADJOURNED: 5:43 PM