

**KENAI CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC INCENTIVES  
AUGUST 4, 2021 – 5:00 P.M.  
KENAI CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
210 FIDALGO AVE., KENAI, AK 99611  
MAYOR GABRIEL, PRESIDING**

**NOTES**

Council present: B. Gabriel, H. Knackstedt, B. Molloy, T. Winger J. Glendening, G. Pettay, V. Askin

Others present: City Manager P. Ostrander, Finance Director T. Eubank, City Attorney S. Bloom, City Clerk J. Heinz, Deputy City Clerk M. Thibodeau, Planning Director R. Foster, Director E. Conway, Police Chief D. Ross

**A. Call to Order**

Mayor Gabriel called the work session to order at 5:00 p.m.

**B. Introduction and Presentation – Paul Ostrander, City Manager**

City Manager Ostrander provided an introduction on the Waterfront Development and Economic Incentives noting that the Comprehensive Plan included the Waterfront was a goal for development. He spoke of having a feasibility study done which would engage the community and determine what their vision is; was hopeful to introduce this concept tonight and get approval to bring forth an ordinance to fund the Feasibility Study at the next meeting. He added that the feasibility study would include property from the City Dock, down river to Millennium square.

**C. Public Comment**

Chidem Cherrier spoke in favor of waterfront development noting that she owned the old Port of Kenai property and has had many ideas through the years, one being a boardwalk from the City Dock to her property with a lodge and restaurant. She added that a recent client said they'd love to see a farmer's market and live music; another customer said they'd love to see a park and restaurant on the water. Chidem noted she has visions of a little fisherman's wharf including a vibrant water front adding that she would like to see Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center, Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District, and the City work together. She thanked those working on this initiative.

Fred Braun spoke in favor of waterfront development noting there was no other place on the road system like this property and adding that he hears often from chamber members that traffic goes from Anchorage to Homer and ask how we can get visitors to Kenai. Fred also noted that the ideas mentioned were great ideas and it would be a win/win for the community and city.

Gwen Woodard spoke in favor of waterfront development and suggested incorporating our cultural history and the Kenaitze Tribe; thought it would be fun to see Kenaitze words used around town.

Will Jahrig spoke in favor of waterfront development noting he lived adjacent to the waterfront, that the property meant a lot to them, and tipped his hat to those working on the initiative and adding that he recently purchased 8.5 acres nearby. He suggested looking at developing small sections of property with high end usage adding that proper construction was important as Mother Nature had a way of destroying things if not constructed well. Mr. Jahrig noted it was great to see the City exploring the idea and expressed appreciation for that attitude adding that it will take time, thought, and input to maneuver through development and zoning. He agreed that native heritage was important as was the history of the Port of Kenai. Finally, he encouraged following through on stabilizing the bluff.

Randy Lukasik presented a proposal to issue casual use permits for anchoring on the south shore of the river, on City owned property, noting that during dipnet season wildlife troopers would not allow boats to anchor citing they were in navigable waters; he suggested it could be a revenue stream for the City.

Mike Dunn noted the number of people that participated in the dipnet fishery and suggested anchoring in the river was dangerous.

Ron Hyde spoke in favor of waterfront development noting the infrastructure he owned across the river; the Cannery Lodge. He suggested more this section of the Kenai River can be a destination and, once it's complete, businesses will prosper. He envisioned shuttles across the river and dinner cruises to make this section of Kenai a destination.

Brittany Brown spoke in favor of waterfront development noting that many communities were still struggling but that Kenai did well coming out of the public health emergency; businesses in Kenai were having to find bigger spaces, go online, and do more. She added that being able to look at a development opportunity coming out of the public health emergency was exciting for the community and would be a way to capitalize on the dipnet fishery.

#### **D. Council Comments**

Council Member Glendening noted that he liked everything he heard and wanted to engage the Planning and Zoning and Harbor Commissions in the project.

Council Member Winger noted she thought it was a great start and agreed the city needed something to increase traffic; noted this was a good opportunity to work together and put together a good solid plan.

Council Member Askin echoed comments from previous Council Members and added that she liked the idea of bringing in Kenaitze history.

Council Member Pettey noted that "making the right turn to Kenai," was epic, and would like to see this orchestrated.

Council Member Knackstedt expressed appreciation for everything he heard this evening noting the area had been busy before and this was a new opportunity for this area; encouraged those in the room to spread the word.

Vice Mayor Molloy thanked those that attended and provided input; thanked the City Manager and the Assistant to the City Manager for their work.

Mayor Gabriel thanked those that attended the meeting and added that he was looking forward to improving the view.

**E. Adjournment**

The work session adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Notes were prepared by:

*Jamie Heinz*  
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Jamie Heinz, MMC  
City Clerk

