

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 10, 2009
6th Floor Conference Room
Council Office Building

Commission Members Present:

Nancy Soreng, Chair
Michael Cogan
Karen Czapanskiy
Wilbur Friedman
Mollie Habermeier
Robert Shoenberg
Moshe Starkman
Judith Vandegriff
Anne Marie Vassallo
Charles Wolff

Staff:

Justina Ferber, County Council
Marc Hansen, County Attorney's Office
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council
Amanda Mihill, County Council
Glenn Orlin, County Council

Commission Chair Nancy Soreng began the meeting at 8:06 a.m.

I. Open Discussion of Study Issues – Special Taxing Districts

The Commission broadly discussed with Marc Hansen the differences between a special benefit assessment and a tax. Mr. Hansen explained that a true tax does not have to benefit those being taxed, but with a special benefits assessment there must be a nexus between what the owner is paying and the benefit received.

Some Commission members expressed an interest in fostering communication between the Council, Executive Branch, and Park and Planning and suggested inviting representatives from these entities to a meeting to discuss changes to the Charter that would facilitate accomplishing future County goals.

Wilbur Friedman moved that the Commission endorse exempting special taxing districts, fire station districts, and the potential bus rapid transit district from the tax cap in Charter §305. Mr. Friedman withdrew his motion.

Commission members generally discussed that Ms. Soreng would contact Council President Andrews and Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) Chair Duchy Trachtenberg to discuss whether they would be interested in the Commission fostering a meeting between the Council, Executive Branch, and Park and Planning on this issue. Commission members also requested that Ms. Soreng ask Ms. Trachtenberg about the timing and scope of the proposed MFP meeting regarding funding.

II. Approval of May 13 minutes

The Commission approved the May 13 minutes. Motion made by Wilbur Friedman and seconded by Anne Marie Vassallo.

In favor: Karen Czapanskiy, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Nancy Soreng,
Moshe Starkman, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (8)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

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