

REGULAR MEETING DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

June 5, 2008

The regular study session of the City Council was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Mayor Sheckler in the Council Chambers, 21630 11th Avenue South, #B.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE to the Flag was led by Councilmember Pina.

ROLL CALL - Present: Mayor Bob Sheckler, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Sherman, Councilmembers Ed Pina, Carmen Scott, Scott Thomasson and Susan White (arrived at 7:46 p.m.). Absent: Councilmember Dave Kaplan. Also in attendance were City Manager Tony Piasecki, City Attorney Pat Bosmans, Planning, Building and Public Works Director Grant Fredricks, Finance Director Paula Henderson, Planning Manager Denise Lathrop, Transportation Engineer Dan Brewer and City Clerk Denis Staab.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Pina and passed unanimously, to excuse Councilmember Kaplan.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Marine Science & Technology Center (MaST) Parking Agreement with Highline Community College

Planning, Building and Public Works Director Fredricks noted the Code requires that he establish the parking for the Center and using the ITE Manual for higher education, he determined that 6 parking spaces within 600 feet of the Center to accommodate students, faculty and staff, are needed. He noted one of the conditions under the Shoreline Permit required that the College maintain the use of the Center at an historic level and if there is a need to increase the use of the facility then they would reapply to the City for that permission. It was noted the parking spaces needed varies between 6 and 15 spaces based on the number of classes, the time of day and other activities going on. Typically these uses do not conflict with the use of the Redondo lot that is generally associated with boat launching and recreational activities. He noted the proposed agreement provides for use of the Redondo lot at the normal hourly rate and the parkers will be responsible for any fines and fees.

City Manager Piasecki noted that under the proposed agreement we are allowing the municipal parking lot to serve as satisfying the Code requirement for 6 spaces.

MOTION was made by Councilmember Pina, seconded by Councilmember Scott, to authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement for Parking Lot Services between the City of Des Moines and Highline Community College included as Attachment 2 substantially in the form as submitted.

Upon questioning, Planning, Building and Public Works Director Fredricks advised that there are no reserved parking spaces, but only on a first come, first served and they must purchase a parking ticket for the amount of time used.

Upon questioning as to what happens if the agreement is terminated, Planning, Building and Public Works Director Fredricks advised that the College would have to provide alternative ways to get to the facility, such as a shuttle bus, or create additional parking spaces.

Councilmember Thomasson expressed extreme disappointment with the staff for issuing a building permit without having the parking resolved ahead of time. He felt it was clear during the hearing process that when the old facility came down, any grandfather rights evaporated and the building needed to meet Code, which included parking. He noted the City is constantly getting complaints about lack of parking in Redondo. He felt the College had ample time to find property to provide additional parking, and now are taking advantage of the City, and noted he will not support the agreement.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman noted he agrees with some of Councilmember Thomasson's comments.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Thomasson, to remove the final Whereas in the agreement.

7:46 p.m. Councilmember White arrived at the meeting.

Councilmember Scott spoke against the amendment feeling this is an educational facility that provides a great deal of benefit to the community. She noted it is not open on Sunday, has limited hours on Saturday and during the week it is open hours when there is no crowds in the Redondo area. She felt Council is casting blame for parking problems on the College when they are not the primary reason for the problems.

VOTE ON AMENDING MOTION: Motion failed 3 to 3 with Councilmembers Pina and Scott, and Mayor Sheckler opposed.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Thomasson, to amend Section II. Termination, #B, to insert the words "general public access including" between 'on' and 'the' in the first line. Motion failed 3 to 3 with Councilmembers Pina and Scott, and Mayor Sheckler opposed.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember White, to amend Section I. Terms by adding a new E. to read "The College will provide five (5) parking passes to the Highline Community College campus for City staff use."

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman noted the City is allowing the College to use its facility to fulfill a Code requirement, therefore he felt this exchange makes it a little more pro quo.

Councilmember White expressed concern with the summer parking problems in the Redondo area and stated she would like to see the City work with the College and Salty's to try to solve the problems.

Councilmember Pina **CALLED FOR THE QUESTION.** Motion passed 5 to 1 with Councilmember Thomasson opposed.

VOTE ON AMENDING MOTION: Motion failed 4 to 2 with Councilmember Sherman and White voting yes.

Upon questioning by Councilmember Thomasson, City Manager Piasecki noted should the agreement be terminated, then the College must provide the required parking spaces per the ITE Manual as determined by the Planning, Building and Public Works Director.

MOTION was made by Councilmember Thomasson to amend the agreement to add language that should this agreement be terminated the College agrees, and is bound, to construct 15 parking spaces. Motion DIED for lack of a second.

Jack Bermingham, President of Highline Community College, reminded Council that the original hearing for this facility restricted the College to the same level of usage. He further noted the College strives to mitigate parking issues by pushing for carpooling, etc. He expressed concern that the Council is not recognizing they are a public college that has created a public space that is an advantage to the community. He noted the classes are held at off peak hours and they provide community education for schools to promote science education. He expressed disappointment that Council is not focusing on the asset this facility is to the community, without adding any additional usage.

Councilmember Thomasson expressed the opinion that since the College tore down the old facility, and under the building permit law they were required to have parking spaces, and they should contribute to the construction of the parking spaces.

Councilmember Scott noted especially during sunny summer days there are numerous people using the board walk, scuba diving, park, etc. and felt the College cannot be blamed for the parking problems as they hardly use their facility during those peak times.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION: Motion failed 3 to 3 with Councilmembers Thomasson and White and Mayor Pro Tem Sherman opposed.

Mayor Sheckler noted Council is short one member and he felt this matter will be reintroduced at an upcoming meeting.

Councilmember Thomasson requested in the meantime that staff talk with the College to determine where the College may construct 6 or 7 parking spaces.

Downtown Planning - Update

Planning Manager Lathrop noted the next steps for updating the Downtown Element of the Comprehensive Plan are based on input received from Council at the March 29 and April 26, 2008 retreats. She noted key issues involved - considering smaller geographic areas to focus on such as South 223rd as the heart of the area, the QFC site, a better connection between downtown and the Marina, and looking at Des Moines Elementary School as a potential resource should the School District surplus it. Another key issue is addressing infrastructure needs that impact our ability to have a more vitalized downtown such as the water system, parking and traffic circulation, and the pedestrian environment. She noted we need to capitalize on work currently underway, such as:

- Comprehensive Transportation Plan (parking and circulation in downtown area)
- University of Washington's Storefront Studio Project
- Beach Park Improvements
- Marina Master Plan, draft design guidelines

She displayed the draft goals as identified by Council:

- Maintain & enhance the City's infrastructure
- Preserve & enhance livability

- Improve economic vitality & development
- Encourage community involvement through boards, commissions, and committees; stewardship programs; and volunteerism
- Preserve, enhance & celebrate the historic elements of Des Moines
- Provide diverse active, passive & social recreational opportunities

She displayed Strategic Objectives identified by Council:

- Facilitate improvement of the downtown water system
- Update the Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Review & revise the Zoning Code
- Review & revise the Downtown Element of the Comprehensive Plan

She informed Council that a briefing was given to the Planning Agency who expressed great interest in working with Council and being a key partner in some of the work shops and focus group sessions. She reviewed some key planning components:

- Vision statement to guide where we want to go
- Review land use, zoning & urban design
- Transportation infrastructures
- Economic & market analysis
- Environmental management
- Public involvement

She continued by noting use of a phased approach as follows:

- Phase 1: Policy Development & Design Guidelines
- Phase 2: Strategic Plan/SEPA Evaluation

and continued by reviewing details contained in Council's packet.

Upon questioning as to what kinds of things might cost the City money, examples given were: completion of sidewalk connections, change street lighting, directional signs, etc. However, it was pointed out some of these may be funded through developer impact fees, grants, LIDs, etc.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that he feels each Councilmember has their own thoughts on what we want for downtown. He noted he has no need to do a market analysis as he feels property owners will build when the time is right. He feels we have not identified what the problem is or what problem we are trying to solve, but we have developed a process to get a result, when we have not identified what it is we are trying to accomplish.

Councilmember Scott felt the language used for the proposed process is very complex and is not easy for Councilmembers or the public to comprehend. She requested Council be given a drawing of the downtown layout, land grouped by owners or investors with their proposed plans, what downtown would look like if buildings were actually built to current height standards, and identify any buildings that may have historic significance. She stated Council needs to arrive at an answer as to what picture we want for downtown. She noted there are basic concepts that Council needs to understand before we can move forward.

Planning Manager Lathrop noted that Phase 1 is where we will start looking at the existing land use and zoning, including a view analysis as to what it currently looks like versus what it would look like if everything built to existing zoning.

Councilmember Pina felt Council needs to design a vision for what we want to see downtown and needs to review what ideas the Storefront Studio Project has to offer.

Councilmember Thomasson noted that perhaps as much as 60% of downtown is already built out. He felt it would be a good exercise to review actual pictures of what is currently downtown, block by block, to determine what we want to maintain or what we want to improve.

Councilmember Scott advised that the Storefront Studio Project students have already walked every block of downtown and have taken the pictures, so she feels it will be important to hear what they have to say.

Councilmember White felt that the Storefront Studio Project students have some great ideas and good visuals to offer Council. She does not want Council to redo work that has already been done.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman noted we are required to review the Comprehensive Plan periodically and it is time to review the downtown element. He felt that no other element evokes such strong emotions as each Councilmember has their own vision. He requested that when Council visualizes downtown it needs to include roof tops showing elevator shafts, antennas, air condition units, etc. He commented while the process may be more detailed than he wants it to be, it appears to be a good process that should produce a better outcome with less controversy, as long as it is a fair process.

9:10 p.m. Mayor Sheckler called for a 10 minute break.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update

Transportation Engineer Brewer noted staff has held several briefings with the Public Safety and Transportation Committee, collected some stakeholder comments, documented the current transportation system and are now beginning to decide what we want the transportation system to look like in the future. He noted that on Tuesday, June 10th an Open House will be held in the Council Chambers from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.. He introduced the City's consultant Catherine Cassidy, Traffic Engineer and Transportation Planner with Mirai Associates, Inc.

Ms. Cassidy proceeded to brief Council on the current process regarding transportation, which includes moving people in vehicles, on bicycles, on foot and transit, including movement of goods. She noted an underlying goal is making the system as efficient as possible and encouraging support of the local economy. She advised that the review of Comprehensive Transportation Plan involve the following steps:

- Analyze existing conditions, review standards and identify current needs
- Identify key problem areas
- Develop goals, objectives and policies for the transportation system
- Analyze future conditions & facility needs
- Funding strategies for implementing plan

While periodically requesting the Council's input as a whole, she identified the Public Safety & Transportation Committee role is to:

- Provide oversight & guidance
- Give input throughout the process
- Set policy direction
- Select criteria for project selection
- Guide public outreach

She proceeded by noting they have confirmed the need to refine the level of service standard for the transportation network. She advised that there will be between 4 to 6 different briefings before the Council as a whole, a couple of open houses, and updates will be posted on the City's web site. She advised the following key issues have been identified:

- Safety Concerns
 - Need turning pockets on Marine View Drive
 - Bridge repairs
 - Crosswalks on Marine View Drive & Pacific Highway South
 - Pullout areas for school buses
 - Intersection spot improvements
- Congestion Issues
 - Regional system is broken - spillover traffic goes through the City
 - Capacity on South 216th, Marine View Drive & Kent-Des Moines Road
 - Better access to I-5
- Transit & Alternative Travel
 - Extend link to Des Moines
 - Service to the Airport
 - Passenger Only Ferry
 - City circulator bus
 - Evening & weekend buses for seniors
 - Extend service areas and hours of service
 - Connect east-west

Ms. Cassidy concluded by noting they are looking for feed back from the Councilmembers.

Transportation Engineer Brewer advised that the next step is to receive input from Council on what is the level of service standard that the City should provide, what growth do we want to plan for and what are the limitations on the roadway net-work. He advised the next update will be given at the July 24th Council meeting. He requested any input from Council.

Councilmember Thomasson stated that based on what he has read on the invitation to the Open House next week, it is an invitation for a wish list which sets up false expectations of what the City can actually afford. During the open house he requested staff ask the question of "how much are you willing to give the City to pay for these ideas". He felt this will help to avoid false expectations. He questioned what is meant by the term "efficient" transportation plan, as without SR 509 it is almost impossible.

Upon questioning by Councilmember Scott, Transportation Engineer Brewer noted staff has already noticed that transportation is changing with the high cost of gasoline such as Sound Transit ridership was up 28% last month, and that general traffic volume on I-5 is down. He advised this is something they will look at regarding future needs.

Finance Director Henderson informed Council that decline in the sale of homes, the mortgage backed securities and the impacts to the financial markets are taking a toll everywhere, including the City of Des Moines. She advised that during the first four months of this year the real estate excise taxes (REET) are down 49% from 2007. She noted staff has reviewed capital programs to see what was funded with these taxes. She stated a lot of the Beach Park projects were deferred from 2007 therefore there is significant real estate excise taxes in the beginning balance for 2008. In reviewing the Auditorium she noted the construction part of that project will continue to be deferred to 2009, with around \$409,000 of REET. She stated that by deferring the generators for the Activity Center, City Hall and the buildings condition assessment we will be able to fund the remaining projects. She asserted however, the problem will occur again in 2009, if this downward trend continues.

Finance Director Henderson noted there is some good news, just learned today, there was a large apartment complex sale in May, which means the City will receive REET funds around \$200,000 by the first of next week.

Upon questioning by Council, Finance Director Henderson noted the table on page 2 of Council's packet shows the proposed revisions to the 2008 adopted budget for projects using REET revenues as a funding source.

City Manager Piasecki advised that for next year, if staff determines we may not have enough REET coming in to cover all the projects, the City can use other sources of funds to use as a match for grants.

Upon questioning by Councilmember Thomasson, City Manager Piasecki stated the Auditorium has been moved to 2009 and it is totally funded except for now, the \$409,000 worth of REET, which is essentially not available if we were to do the project this year. So next year, if Council wants to do the auditorium project, you will need to figure out what other project will not be done.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman commented that essentially we are lowering the expenditures by \$1 million, and if more REET money comes in, it will first be allocated to the Auditorium project. Finance Director Henderson commented that would be her recommendation.

RECONSIDERATION of Marine Science & Technology Center (MaST) Parking Agreement with Highline Community College

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Pina, to rescind the action that was taken earlier in the meeting on the Parking Lot Agreement. Motion passed to 5 to 1 with Councilmember Thomasson opposed.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Pina, to authorize the City Manager to sign the Agreement for Parking Lot Services between the City of Des Moines and Highline Community College in included as Attachment 1, on Discussion Item #1, substantially in the form as submitted with the following amendments: The last Whereas is eliminated, under Terms add an item E to read "The College will provide 5 parking passes for Highline Community College campus for City employee use, including Councilmembers", and on page 3, II Termination, item B to add the words "general public access including" between 'on' and 'the' in the first line. Motion passed 5 to 1 with Councilmember Thomasson opposed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Mayor Sheckler noted the next regular meeting will be June 12, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:05 p.m. **MOTION** was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Pina and passed unanimously, to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Denis Staab
City Clerk