



MINUTES
CITY OF SAN DIMAS
Special City Council Meetings
November 20, 2006, 3:00pm-7:00pm
City Council Conference Room-City Hall

COUNCIL – STAFF RETREAT SESSION

PRESENT:

Mayor Curtis Morris
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Templeman
Councilmember Denis Bertone
Councilmember John Ebner
Councilmember F.D. "Sandy" McHenry

City Manager Michaelis
City Attorney Brown
City Clerk Rios
Assistant City Manager/C. D. Stevens
Assistant City Manager Duran
Public Works Director Patel
Parks and recreation Director Bruns
Planning Manager Hensley

Captain James Curtis
Liz Hattox, Pierce/Cooley Architects

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(For anyone wishing to address the City Council – limited to items on the agenda.)

1. Members of the Audience

There were no comments.

B. City Hall expansion report – alternatives.

Assistant City Manager Duran provided an update on the City Hall Space Evaluation conducted by Interior Space Planner Liz Hattox. He reported that in Phase One, Ms. Hattox studied existing conditions to understand and evaluate existing and future growth needs. It became apparent that existing needs exceeded available space with the current interior floor plan. He reported that second and third phases provided suggestions to modify the interior of city hall to create usable work space. However, even with dramatic changes, permanent solutions could not be achieved to meet current and future growth. Phase four evaluated

options to create new work space with expansion opportunities to city hall. The preferred concept includes a reconfiguration of the floor plan of the existing staff areas, addition of a 4,900 square foot mezzanine over the north section of city hall, expansions to the north east and south east corners of city hall and as well as to the main entrance and lobby area. Staff requests review and feedback from the Council.

Liz Hattox, Interior Space Planner, responded to Council's questions that there is not a final plan, however, they narrowed it down to one concept that more than meets space needs. She added that future public meetings would also be held. Ms. Hattox reported that her firm looked at different concepts for additional square footage to the existing building such as utilizing usable space; adding a second story or a mezzanine; extending the building outward and adding a community room.

Ms. Hattox responded to Council's questions as it relates to the expansion; use of lobby and outside space; constructing a second story; elevator access; and said any plan involves a huge redo and will impact employees and citizens. She further replied that staff brought up including a community room for public use or if the City does not want a community room, the size of the mezzanine could be reduced.

Councilmember Ebner commented that he would miss the open area and high ceilings. Ms. Hattox recommended moving upwards to get volume at a low cost.

Mayor Morris suggested looking at ways to make the city hall secure. Ms. Hattox stated they looked at security issues and suggested two gate accesses at the counter with keypad access; however, Administration prefers open visibility.

In response to Councilmember Ebner, Ms. Hattox replied that Parks and Recreation would be reoriented to have additional space for queing and sitting; all departments would have proper signage.

Mr. Duran stated they are also exploring the concept of having a second floor for parking above the existing parking lot.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated that 40 additional parking spaces might be available by providing two separate entries and not connecting the lower and upper decks.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman cautioned about having an accurate project budget to include architect fees, construction, and furniture.

Ms. Hattox replied to Council that counters would be accommodated based on function and location and said the existing electrical has maxed its capacity. They will be utilizing solar panels and construction should take approximately one year.

Mayor Morris inquired if anyone has thought about where employees would be moved.

Mr. Duran replied that the purpose of the report was to get feedback to see if staff is on the right track.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested keeping in mind for the next phase to determine where to use professional services or to go to bid.

Alline Kranzer said a media center in the Council Chambers is necessary. She praised Council for saving money by expanding the existing building, rather than tearing down the building and constructing a new structure.

Councilmember Ebner said currently there is a lack of meeting rooms. Ms. Hattox replied that the proposed community room could also be used as a conference room.

C. Set reserves from 2005-06 fiscal year General Fund balance

City Manager Michaelis presented the June 30, 2006 General Fund position and recommended reserve designations of surplus funds from the previous fiscal year. He responded to Council that after an audit, staff is setting priorities and as more information is received on expenditures, staff will return to Council for formal action.

D. Development Services restructuring – status report.

1) Assistant City Manager of Community Development Stevens reported that recruitments are closed and underway to interview candidates for Administrative Aide, Administrative Analyst and Director of Development Services.

2) Mr. Stevens reported that RKA is in place as City Engineer with office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays and actively involved with staff.

3) Mr. Stevens reported that development procedures and responsibilities are still in the transition period.

4) Mr. Stevens said some projects are underway, while other projects are pending hiring of staff.

Mr. Michaelis said staff is pleased with applicants for Director of Development Services.

E. Report on city projects

1. Walker House – update

Planning Manager Hensley reported that he has six qualified bidders for the renovation of the Walker House. He said contractors do not have the time to look through plans or address questions and suggested extending the bid process. Staff will advise by the next meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested video taping the interior of the building for possible viewing on the web and Cable for the public. Mayor Morris suggested talking to Ken Pucci regarding lighting issues and explanation of work.

In response to Council, Mr. Hensley stated he was not sure the bid process would be completed for approval on December 12. He indicated he would know more after receiving the bids and checking background references for low bidders.

Mr. Stevens said because the bidders are pre-qualified, if bids come in close, it would be easy to do background checks within a short time frame; if there is a wide disparity in bids, staff would proceed cautiously.

Alline Kranzer said if the time table does not fit, staff should be given time to do the best job.

It was the consensus of the City Council to aim for January to approve the low bid.

2. Canyon Center – update

Mr. Stevens reported that a letter was sent to Guy Williams identifying concerns not reflected in the revised plans for Bonita Canyon Place. He distributed the most current plans for information only and said he might contact City Councilmembers to set up meetings. He stated that there are two variations of the same residential project, and there is not enough to explore a mixed use/commercial project. Staff is not supportive.

In response to Council, Mr. Stevens said staff referred two interested parties to Mr. Kosmont and it was made very clear that the site is zoned for commercial use; however, that is not what they want to hear.

3. Open Space Plan – update

Mr. Stevens reported that the work program for the Open Space Plan has been postponed and once additional staff is in place, the schedule will be adjusted and the work program will be activated. Mr. Stevens reported that staff identified and inventoried current open space in the city and will establish criteria to prioritize implementation of acquisition and/or preservation. He said he met with Mr. Kim Scott and Belinda Faustinos, Executive Director of the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and felt it was prudent to move quickly to have a policy in place.

Councilmember Bertone stated that funds are available and there is a good possibility the City can be awarded grant funds.

Mr. Stevens responded to Council's questions that staff will continue discussions with Mr. Scott; expend funds for an appraisal; explore grant opportunities in the northern foothills; and report back to Council if additional direction is needed.

It was the consensus of the City Council to authorize the City Manager to pursue stated activities and keep Council apprised. Staff is not authorized to expend funds for the acquisition of the property.

4. NJD – update

Mr. Stevens stated that staff worked actively with the City of Glendora for the acquisition of NJD property using grant funds, which did not materialize because the amount of funds necessary is not available. He said staff prepared and submitted the application; had open space acquisition discussion, and wants to pursue development application more aggressively. One parcel exists in both cities. Mr. Stevens stated that the settlement agreement requires demonstration of access and because of Glendora's prohibition of access and lack of public streets to the east, the property is landlocked.

5. San Dimas Grove Station Project (Fox) – update

Planning Manager Hensley provided a brief update on the San Dimas Grove Station project and said the project is progressing positively. A hydrology study is being conducted to determine the size of the storm drain pipe; grading plan is near completion; and the office commercial building is in first plan check. He responded to Mayor Morris that Fox Group is working with Fish and Game to resolve flood issues.

City Attorney Brown reported he is working with the City Engineer regarding improvements on San Dimas Avenue, medians, undergrounding and crossing on Arrow Highway. He will try to move ahead to be in a position to close escrow, transfer the property, transfer bonds, and get money back to the Agency.

6. Dentec Vista Verde Ranch – update

Mr. Stevens presented an update on the Community Forum held on Thursday, November 16, 2006, where he summarized the main points of the project. He will try to get the information on the City's website. He said other than a few people representing the developer, no one expressed support for the project, tree removal, or grading issues.

Mr. Stevens responded to Councilmember Bertone that some people in the area are more supportive than in the past because the developer is offering a free sewer, and there are a few additional supporters who have septic system woes.

Mr. Stevens said 30 people signed up to attend the County Planning public hearing on December 6, 2006 at the Hall of Records. Staff will be preparing detailed letters outlining the issues on the EIR, tree removal, access, grading and the bridge.

Mr. Stevens responded to Council's questions regarding the potential of Calle Bandera being used as an alternative emergency access; requirement to conduct another EIR study; and Fire Department requirement to build a bridge prior to using Calle Bandera which does not meet County code standards.

Mr. Stevens said for the record, staff would point out the issues related to the project; however, he did not know how the County Planning Department would handle responses to their comments. He would provide copies of the CD of the forum to each Commissioner. Per the Mayor's direction, Mr. Stevens would also provide a copy of the CD tape to Supervisor Antonovich.

7. Emergency access through Horsethief Canyon Park

Public Works Director Patel reported that the December 2004 and January 2005 storms necessitating closures of several streets brought two issues to head: 1) the vulnerability of alternative emergency access available to residents living northeast of San Dimas Canyon Road and Sycamore Canyon Road; and 2) long term impact of access availability to residents as repairs are made to damaged segments of roadway and channel. Staff presented three alternatives for discussion and consideration, and recommended that the City Council authorize the design of alternative No. 1 – a 24' wide all-weather emergency access road, 1,650 feet in length, following existing dirt road, for an estimated cost of \$50,000. He added that the access road would also be incorporated in future park expansion plans with minimal impact.

Mr. Patel responded to Council's questions regarding runoff; design of road; and said the 24' wide emergency access road would be able to provide 24-hour access without a Sheriff escort.

Mayor Morris felt alternative 3 had the advantage of paving an existing roadway for purposes of access if the Adairs were willing to negotiate an access agreement for access through their leasehold.

Councilmember Ebner suggested two 12' lanes blending into the road to encourage use of different parts of the Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman expressed concern that trucks and trailers would use the access road and how it blended in with the Park.

Parks and Recreation Director Bruns conveyed the sentiment of the Parks and Recreation Commission and said this plan is different than what was presented to the Commission. She was assured the road would be gated to monitor the emergency use; and thought the road would be the minimum width, not 24'. She inquired if the road could be a path that people could use for walking or bicycling.

Mr. Patel was directed to make the road all weather to be used by most people and to address water issues.

RECESS

Mayor Morris recessed at 5:57 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

F. Mansionization – Neighborhood Preservation – update.

Mr. Stevens hopes to have a draft program and examples on Neighborhood preservation on Tuesday, November 28, 2007.

Councilmember Ebner suggested contacting other cities to see what they have done.

G. 'Green Lawn' standards – overview and direction.

Assistant City Manager Stevens presented a draft ordinance from Pomona on green lawn standards for Council discussion and whether or not to consider such an ordinance, which establishes more specific standards to make the code less subjective.

Mr. Stevens responded to Council that the City of San Dimas does not have a standard on how much a resident could pave their front yard, and there are other types of front yard landscaping than having a lawn; however, a completely dead lawn would be pursued under the existing standards.

Dennis Phillips said one person's expectations could be completely different than the neighbor's.

Alline Kranzer suggested sending a letter for non-maintenance of front yards.

Councilmember Ebner suggested removal of "having the potential to depreciate the property values of other properties in the neighborhood."

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman, Councilmember Bertone stated that he gets calls complaining about lack of maintenance on front yards. Mayor Morris stated he gets calls on "Ask the Mayor" as well.

Councilmember Bertone moved to direct staff to come back to discuss Councilmember Ebner's concern with the depreciation of property values.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested an article be placed in the Newsletter, website, to communicate to the public and get their feedback.

Councilmember Bertone withdrew his motion. Councilmember Ebner moved to place this item on the "To Do" list with no priority.

Councilmember McHenry suggested adopting the ordinance deleting the reference to reducing property values and not placing this item on the list.

Mr. Stevens mentioned that Pomona also has a side program to use CDBD funds if they find residents with problems. He said minor tweaking to the ordinance would not be difficult.

Councilmember McHenry moved to direct Mr. Stevens to consider comments appropriate to changes and bring back a final version of the Ordinance for adoption. Councilmember Bertone seconded the motion and the vote carried 4:1, with Mayor Pro Tem Templeman opposed.

H. Annual Housing Element Report – discussion on adjustments and future plans.
Preliminary discussion on RHNA requirements.

Mr. Stevens reported that staff submitted a report to HCD on progress of goals identified in the adopted Housing Element. Preliminary comments from HCD indicate that significant or immediate additional progress is needed. It is necessary for staff to re-evaluate the identified housing sites and/or consider additional sites to satisfy their concerns. Staff is securing a proposal in the amount of \$5,000-\$10,000 from Kathy Head of Katz Hollis Kaiser Marsten for assistance in preparing an evaluation to identify and address HCD's concerns. The evaluation should be available in 90 days or less.

In response to Councilmember Bertone, Mr. Stevens said Kathy Head is also assisting and making adequate progress in the next round of RHNA requirements. He said there are set aside funds that if not spent by July, would be taken away and hiring Kathy Head puts the City in the best position to be better informed on how funds could be spent.

Mr. Stevens responded to Council that the expansion of a mobile home park was not financially feasible, and the noise ordinance would need to be amended to permit residential development along the freeway, but both matters could be revisited. He added that not much could be done with another site located off Gladstone, zoned residential, because mitigation requirements come out of the noise ordinance.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman suggested creating another opportunity to put in twelve more houses by creating an entrance, installing a traffic light, and adding a new community room and pool.

In response to Councilmember McHenry, Director Patel said there are water and gas lines on Amelia Avenue.

Mr. Stevens further reported that the next topic is the 2008 Housing Element cycle. He said the next obligation is to update the Housing Element by June 2008, and in response, SCAG has begun efforts in developing growth forecasts/RHNA targets for the June 2008 Housing Element cycle. Staff attended a workshop on October 30 for a recent SGVCOG discussion on this subject. He reported that they projected a tremendous growth population explosion driven by the transportation model. He felt some corrections could be made by meeting with them.

Mayor Pro Tem Templeman said staff should be communicating with residents that the State is looking at a population of 65,000 by the year 2035.

Mr. Stevens stated that he is working to individually address the relevancy of the RHNA numbers and in the end, the numbers might not be based on total growth forecast; they

might be based on the difference between two types of growth forecasts, and may not be as onerous as they appear when looking at the gross forecast numbers.

Councilmember McHenry expressed concern with creating more density and traffic issues, and said with current land values, twice as much density of moderate level dwellings would require a subsidy of some form.

In response to Council, Mr. Stevens said the City of San Dimas could join with other SGV cities to file a joint appeal. He added that punitive action includes threatening to decertify the San Dimas Housing Element. He explained that the SGVCOG boosts the numbers for the Gold Line which increases the implications to potential housing requirements, and until the growth forecasts are completed, and RHNA numbers calculated, staff won't know what those numbers are.

I. Direction – sub committee to initially explore the possibility of a joint use project or Community – Performing Arts Center with Bonita Unified School District.

This item was continued to the November 28, 2006 meeting.

J. Oral Communications

a. Members of the Audience

There were no comments.

b. Staff members

There were no comments.

c. Members of the City Council

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Templeman's inquiry about the timeline to widen Amelia, Director Patel said staff is looking at January for a study session. Staff was directed to notify homeowners.

K. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:03: p.m. There will be a special meeting of the City Council on November 28, 2006, 6:00 p.m. to continue items not discussed.

Curtis W. Morris, Mayor of the City of San Dimas

ATTEST:

Ina Rios, City Clerk