

City Council Workshop

July 6, 2010

Council member Reed called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

Attendees: Mayor Pat Johnson, Council members Reed, Montgomery, McNally, Boyle Barrett, Twardoski and Patson. Also in attendance was City Administrator Dave Schmidt. Council member Harple was on vacation and absent.

AGENDA

Impact Fees

The issue of impact fees came up last March when a request was made to convert the old Chevron Station into a laundry mat, and the impact fees required for that conversion were considered to be exceptionally high. Council member McNally argued that the City's impact fees should accurately reflect the actual cost impact of that business unit on the City and he asked the Council if they would like to study this in an effort to be more business friendly. He feels that our impact fees are too high, not for new buildings or homes, but for redevelopment of an existing structure. All Council members agreed that we need to be more business friendly in order to attract new business to the City. Council member Reed said he believes there should be a redevelopment credit. Council member Patson asked if impact fees can be paid in installments. City Administrator Schmidt said that in most municipalities impact fees are tied to the building permit and are due at the same time. City Administrator Schmidt cautioned the Council that impact fees are directly tied to the Capital Improvement Schedule, and our code at this time does not have any flexibility for credits for current uses. General facility charges are already set and for those you would need to rewrite your Comp Plans. City Administrator Schmidt advised the Council to look at different scenarios regarding what they want to do to be more business friendly, and look at what they want to consider, and he will run those ideas past our attorney to see if they're feasible. After a very lengthy discussion it was agreed that the Community & Economic Development Committee will look at the issue of a redevelopment credit, and the Streets & Utilities Committee will study our Utility Comp Plans and take up the issue of reducing impact fees.

Taylor Property

Council member Reed reported on his meeting with Helping Hands House and stated that it would be several months before this house could work for their program because the house is not in turnkey condition at this time, and the home is larger than what their funders normally allow. A long discussion ensued regarding vandalism and security at the property, clean up,

work necessary to make the home livable, speculation regarding the presence of asbestos and its removal and how much money will be required to make necessary improvements. Council member Reed requested that we (1) get an appraisal; and (2) get a contractor to provide real numbers of what it is going to cost to make it livable. City Administrator Schmidt will talk to City Engineer Miller regarding this. He said we will have to have some site assessments done in order to get a good appraisal. He also asked the Council how far they want to go with respect to splitting the property. He said we don't need a survey for the appraisal, but we might need conceptual drawings. Council member Reed stressed the importance of keeping activity at the property until it's sold.

Criteria for Memorials

Council member Reed said this could be a very long discussion. Council needs to do a number of things, including developing categories of memorials and determining what is an appropriate memorial, as well as where memorials can be located. In response to the most recent request to plant a circle of trees on the railroad right-of-way property, City Administrator Schmidt reminded the Council that we already have a complete Planting Plan for this property. Mayor Johnson reminded the Council that the City of Tacoma has a water line and utilities running through the railroad right-of-way property and we can't plant trees over that. City Administrator Schmidt suggested a memorial wall someplace in town, and said that the planting mound near the Post Office might be a good place for plantings; the area that is covered with bark right now. Council members Patson and Twardoski both agreed that we need to be very strict about trees. Mayor Johnson stated that the City of Auburn has a list of things that can be donated to the city, including light poles, water fountains and things of that nature. Council member Boyle Barrett stressed that the City needs to keep a record of donations/memorials and people should be required to sign a form stating that they understand the terms and conditions regarding memorial donations. Mayor Johnson said that the form needs to state that the City reserves the right to move, modify or remove memorial donations if necessary. The Community Services & Recreation Committee will continue working on this issue.

E-Mails & Social Media

Council member Reed raised this issue and reminded the Council that we need to have an E-mail/Social Media policy at the City. He suggested that Council members could copy City Hall on all e-mails to insure that City Hall always has a copy of every transaction; however, the issue was raised that the City currently does not have a way to back up all the e-mails at the City. Council member Reed also gave a brief review of the various types of social media in use today, including Twitter, Facebook and My Space. He stated that every Council member and staff member's Facebook page should state something to the effect that this is a personal page and nothing said here has anything to do with the City or its policies. Council member Reed stated

that the advantage of social media is the rapid dissemination of information and he encouraged the City to develop guidelines for using it and dealing with it. Council member Reed also stated that no Council member should ever "friend" another Council member's Facebook page.

With nothing further, the City Council Workshop was adjourned at 9:20 PM.



City Administrator



Mayor