

City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota

MINUTES
EXCELSIOR CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Monday, May 5, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Gaylord called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Beattie (6:17 p.m.), Caron, Fulkerson, Miller (arrived at 6:09 p.m.) and Mayor Gaylord

Absent: None

Also Present: Planning Commissioners Busch, DiLorenzo, Duyvejonck, Honzl, and Chair Craig

City Manager Luger, City Planner Richards, City Planner Smith, City Attorney Staunton (arrived at 6:15 p.m.), and City Clerk Johnson

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Caron moved, Fulkerson seconded, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 3/0.

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Mayor Gaylord discussed the Planning Commission's goals for 2014.

1) Assess Additional Parking Recommendations

a) Continue Assessing Remaining Parking Task Force Recommendations

Richards said there was a group formed a few years ago and that the only remaining item from their eight to ten recommendations was parking meters.

b) Explore Angled Parking on Water, Second, and Third Streets

Mayor Gaylord said he thought this goal was finished. Mayor Gaylord and the Commission agreed to remove this item from the list of Planning Commission (PC) goals. Miller asked how many cars can park in angled parking spots. Richards said there would be fewer cars. Mayor Gaylord said to remove this goal from the list.

c) Determine How to Value Parking and Whether to Contract with a Parking Management Company to Control Parking and Collect Fees for the City

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1) Assess Additional Parking Recommendations

- c) Determine How to Value Parking and Whether to Contract with a Parking Management Company to Control Parking and Collect Fees for the City - *Continued*

Richards said that the PC has done research on parking management and parking meters. Richards said that he and Luger will be meeting with the downtown business group tomorrow to discuss this item. Richards said this item will come back for Council review at a future date.

Luger mentioned a company located in Minnetonka that has new technology using an I-Pad type device that can scan the license plate and print a ticket. Luger said she made contact with this business this afternoon. She said this new technology also has an ability to keep residential parking free, after all residential license plate numbers are logged into it's system. Luger said there is also no up front cost and that this company would share in the revenue, similar to a lease.

Commissioner Honzl asked if this information will be available for the PC meeting on May 6th. Richards and Luger said yes.

Richards said this program has been used in Aspen, Colorado, and that it has worked well. Richards also said that a financial analysis indicates that it would take three to four years to pay off the new meters if the City just replaces the existing meters. He said another option with a cost-sharing may be more advantageous.

Mayor Gaylord said there is plenty of opportunity for the City to capture revenue around the city. He estimated there are approximately 2,000 potential spots available in both the residential and commercial areas.

Luger said that neither Hopkins nor Wayzata charge for parking. Chair Craig said that the PC discussed the free parking areas in the east and west lots.

Richards said the PC is looking to do this in a staged basis and that it wouldn't happen all at once.

Caron said it may be worth contacting other communities that have this program to see how it affected their business district.

Richards said Stillwater charges for parking, so he will contact them. Busch stated that free parking in Stillwater is much less accessible. Chair Craig said there are three-hour parking spots by the caves in Stillwater but the free parking lot is up a hill.

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1) Assess Additional Parking Recommendations

- c) Determine How to Value Parking and Whether to Contract with a Parking Management Company to Control Parking and Collect Fees for the City - *Continued*

Luger said if a lease arrangement can be done, it could be tried out on Water Street first to see how well it works and, after that, invest in capital in those that we know work. Luger also said the new technology also allows for controlling when to begin enforcing (i.e., 15 minutes after expiration).

Commissioner DiLorenzo asked if this new technology can be updated from an I-Phone. Luger said yes and stated that the system will also alert the Police Department if someone parks but does not pay.

Commissioner Busch asked if there would need to be a post for every space. Luger said a post could be placed every two spaces.

Chair Craig said the businesses will like that there is sensitivity to not making the system year-round.

- 2) Explore Modifying the Planned Unit Development Review Process (Joint Item with the Heritage Preservation Commission)
- 3) Review Design Standards (Joint Item with the Heritage Preservation Commission)
- 4) Evaluate Application Standards for Commercial Applications (Joint Item with the Heritage Preservation Commission)

Mayor Gaylord said that Items 2, 3 and 4 are all related, since they are also on the Heritage Preservation Commission's (HPC) goal list. Richards stated that these items are on the PC agenda for May 6th and that there was also a work session last July. Richards said these items will be worked on this summer.

Mayor Gaylord said he believes these items are very important. He also said that we need to address how renovations are done, in regards to downtown buildings, and how to incorporate that with the PC and HPC.

Richards said there is a step-back issue at 212 Water Street. He said they want to add a second story above their building and said that it will raise a lot of issues with HPC standards. Caron stated that Comprehensive Plan is the guidance for the PC and HPC.

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

4) Evaluate Application Standards for Commercial Applications (Joint Item with the Heritage Preservation Commission) - *Continued*

Mayor Gaylord asked for any other items on these issues. Richards said part of the language involves the HPC. He also said that the PC will hold a public hearing on it. Richards said it would be wise to have another joint work session with the HPC.

Chair Craig asked about the process for when a site alteration is denied and no progress should continue. Caron said there is a requirement to have a site alteration permit in order to proceed, but that they can appeal to the Council. Caron said the PC should look at whether that process should be changed. Richards said the PC will be discussing concept review at their May 6th meeting to allow the HPC to comment on mass and scale.

Caron said another issue is in Item 4. She said that electronic plans were not submitted for one of the largest construction projects that Excelsior has ever had and that it would have helped to understand the sketching.

Fulkerson said the City needs to be careful with meters in the downtown area, as it will push cars to park in the residential areas. Commissioner Honzl agreed. Fulkerson stated that the last marathon was not handled well and that she had to park on the street and couldn't get back home. Fulkerson said the volunteers and spectators took up all the parking, so residents couldn't park on the streets. Caron said the balance of the commercial district on residential is an issue that future councils and commissions will need to work on. Caron said the movement into the residential area is becoming more evident. Caron also said that the City needs to be aware that there are more and more days where the streets are parked with cars. Commissioner Craig said that these are issues for the PC, also. She said that it is better for the runners to end in The Commons, but that it's not better for residents.

Commissioner Duyvejonck said if we think our potential long-term solution to the parking issue is a ramp, then one potential way to fund it is with the meters. She said the parking impact fee isn't getting us there quickly.

5) Analyze Property Storage Containers to Eliminate Multiple Trailers, Cars, etc.

Mayor Gaylord said there are a lot of items parked on private property. He said that a lot of rental properties are cluttered with items stored by owners, also. Mayor Gaylord said there are a lot of residential properties with this problem.

Caron said we need to do more enforcement. Beattie said we need to do active code enforcement; however, in the past, it was restricted by funds. Beattie said we need a way to monitor and enforce things that are important to the City. Fulkerson asked if we need an official complaint first. Beattie said that's the way we operate right now but we don't have a plan for targeting a

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

5) Analyze Property Storage Containers to Eliminate Multiple Trailers, Cars, etc. -
Continued

specific category of items. Beattie suggested we target specific areas and ticket a particular item.

Chair Craig asked if the hope is to clear items that have been left and where grass is growing up around it. Beattie said there are things we should probably do to enforce clutter, rubbish and the obvious stuff. Chair Craig said she feels there needs to be a balance of what is allowed and what's not allowed. Richards said some cities have a full-time code enforcement officer.

Chair Craig said one issue is houses with newspapers covering the windows. Luger said code enforcement is about health and safety, so newspapers wouldn't be enforced. Luger said the City is looking for items that could hurt the welfare of surrounding properties (i.e., junk vehicles and other items that could promote rodents).

Commissioner DiLorenzo said there may be a way to notify people of enforcement in the future so they are aware and not surprised by it.

Luger said Smith and Richards can provide information on the typical ordinances that would be enforced. She said that if we have a system where we will be citing specific items in a specific month or quarter, it may could encourage residents to clean up their properties.

Luger said one more item to consider for the goals list is the formula businesses. Richards said that he and Staunton are looking at this and are working on a draft for the PC at a future meeting. Richards said that a couple of attorneys raised some issues on the subject.

Caron said that some people have asked her what a formula business is. Richards said it's how you define it. Staunton said there has been a variety of these ordinances around the country, mostly on the two coasts. He said that, in Florida, the regulation was struck down but that the one in California was upheld. Staunton said we need to think about what the purpose of the ordinance was originally. Staunton said that it's important to the PC to find things in this community that you can't find in other communities and to protect the character of Excelsior. Chair Craig said there was discussion on whether, if the buildings held the character but were filled with Caribou and others businesses that are seen around the country. She said the idea is more of protecting the character of Excelsior and not the national chain you find everywhere else. Staunton said the more you create exceptions, the more difficulty there is with this type of ordinance.

Mayor Gaylord asked what the origin was of the formula business topic. Richards said that the discussion came from the PC and that the Council was asked at one time whether or not they were interested in pursuing this. Commissioner Busch said it may have come from the franchises occupying the area of 470 Water Street.

3. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Mayor Gaylord asked if this is something we want to do, since this is leading edge. Commissioners DiLorenzo, Honzl and Chair Craig said they feel it's important. Caron said it's worthy of further review and discussion. Caron also said, with a very small business district, we need to be careful with the mix we have and not getting too heavy with restaurants and not enough retail and service. Caron said she also heard about disappointment from residents regarding the end of Water Street and that the businesses there aren't what they had hoped to see in Excelsior (i.e., Sportsclips, Steele Fitness, et al). Commissioner Honzl said the PC has talked about that area being the "entrance" into town and the importance of it.

Mayor Gaylord asked if there is anything else to add to the goals list.

Commissioner DiLorenzo mentioned that the Fresh Seasons grocery store closed in Victoria. He asked if there is a way to revisit comparisons as to why they should be in Excelsior rather than Victoria. Commissioner DiLorenzo said the City should look more actively at bringing a grocer into Excelsior. He said Excelsior may have an edge right now. Chair Craig questioned if it's a case of the smaller grocery store and that maybe it shows that a grocery wouldn't work in Excelsior, if it didn't work in Victoria.

Mayor Gaylord said that Oppidan, Inc., is making an effort to try and talk to other grocers. Miller said the person behind Fresh Seasons was trying to purchase Mason Motors before Oppidan, Inc., did. Beattie told the Commissioners that the Oppidan, Inc., extension request is on tonight's City Council agenda and invited the Commissioners to stay for the meeting.

Mayor Gaylord said to add Item 6, Formula Business, to the PC goal list. He said that the first priority is to figure it out, second priority is to create processes that work with the HPC, and the third priority is enforcement.

4. LEASE PROPOSAL FOR 810 EXCELSIOR BOULEVARD

Luger said that the lease proposal for the 810 Excelsior Boulevard building was not ready and that this item has been removed from the agenda.

Mayor Gaylord asked if any of the Commissioners had any questions for the Council.

Commissioner Busch asked if there has been any news on state legislatures. Luger said the bonding bill was released today but Excelsior was not in it. Mayor Gaylord said it was a good effort. Miller stated that it will help us for the next time around.

Luger said there may be a discussion on adding a referendum to the election ballot. She said that this will need to be discussed if the Council is still interested in pursuing it.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Fulkerson moved, Caron seconded, to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. Motion carried 5/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Johnson
City Clerk