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**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SPECIAL PLANNING MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF PARK RIDGE, ILLINOIS  
505 BUTLER PLACE, PARK RIDGE, ILLINOIS  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
June 18, 2007  
CALLED TO ORDER BY Mayor Howard Frimark  
at 5:00 p.m.**

Mayor Frimark announced a 20-minute recess for a dinner break. The City Council resumed their Planning Session meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Ald. Schmidt, DiPietro, Bach, Allegretti, Ryan and Wsol, Mayor Frimark and City Clerk Henneman.

Staff present: City Manager Schuenke, Deputy City Manager Maller, Assistant to the City Manager Doczekalski, Deputy Clerk Peterson, Economic Director Uhlig, Public Information Coordinator Stempniak, Finance Director Lembesis, Community Development Director Derifield, Police Chief Caudill, Fire Chief Dubowski, Public Works Director Saccomanno, Library Director Van De Carr and Human Resource Director Crotty, Information Director Nelson

## **DISCUSSION OF TOPICS**

### **TELEVISIONING OF CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Ald. Schmidt believes it would be a good public service. Furthermore, the cost was less than he had anticipated. He believes, since the city is spending \$50,000 on statues for the City/Library Commons, an expense of \$70,000 should also be considered for members of the community to view the Council meetings via cable television.

Deputy City Manager Maller commented, indicating an equipment bid was received for \$70,000, a room would be required to house the equipment and two part-time employees would be required to run the equipment.

Mayor Frimark had the opportunity to view other communities televised meetings and feels it would be beneficial to the residents of our community.

Ald. Allegretti expressed concern with the feedback of the current audio recording system.

Ald. Wsol suggested approaching the high schools to see if a broadcasting class would be interested in running the equipment.

Ald. Bach said a web cast would be less expensive and reach more households in comparison to cable television. He also indicated costs for operation expenses were missing from the *Budgetary Broadcast Video System Totals*. He inquired if this was a 2007-08 budgeted item. City Manager Schuenke indicated it was not in the current budget, and therefore, suggested the figures be provided in greater detail.

# DRAFT

Ald. Ryan suggested that televising on the committee level would also be advisable since this is where issues are discussed and initial direction given.

## **RESOLVE ZONING ISSUES WITH EXECUTIVE PLAZA**

Ald. DiPietro would like to move forward.

Ald. Ryan is concerned about traffic and density. He believes everyone supports the development-but it needs to be of the right type. He explained that to properly understand the issues of a development, you must be directly impacted and residing in the area. "It must be right for the community and right for the residents."

Ald. Schmidt said the proposed development is 32 units per acre - yet the new zoning ordinance recently approved 29 units maximum per acre. He explained the area must be looked at as two separate developments; senior housing and non-senior housing, with non-senior housing seeking 37-38 units per acre. He added, consideration must also be given to the two additional parcels of land in this area that would require development. Ald. Schmidt believes the City would be sending the wrong message to developers by approving variances and it may be misinterpreted that our zoning ordinance means nothing. Ald. Bach concurred.

Director Derifield gave an overview of the Executive Plaza Comprehensive Plan pertaining to the Neri (townhouses) and Norwood (senior housing) Developments, per the request of City Manager Schuenke.

Ald. Wsol believes the city tends to surrender to the "big guy." He feels more inclined to protect the little guy.

## **NAPLETON**

Mayor Frimark reported that City Manager Schuenke and Deputy City Manager met with Mr. Napleton. New information will be provided to the Council soon.

## **INCREASED SERVICES**

Ald. Wsol commented that citizens are interested in more infrastructure improvement services (sewers, flooding, sidewalks, streets and tree services).

Ald. Bach thinks we are passing up many economic opportunities. He suggested advertising near the tollway or on side panels of taxicabs.

City Manager Schuenke stated that he recently received comments (taken from the Joint Public Works/Public Safety Meeting) from staff that the City should consider additional police officers. He said the City would need to have a discussion regarding cuts or increasing the revenues in order for this to be accomplished. Ald. Allegretti said he understood the comments differently and did not think a request was made for more officers.

Ald. Wsol explained that adding new laws would require more police staffing and that you cannot do one without the other.

## **POLICE STATION**

# DRAFT

Mayor Frimark spoke of organizing a Citizens Advisory Task Force to help promote the new Police Station. He has heard that citizens are concerned about the size, more so than the need, to build a new Police Station. Ald. Ryan is concerned about the committee's structure and prefers to have the citizens discover the need and value.

Ald. Schmidt questioned the role of the Task Force. Mayor Frimark explained it would assist by informing the community of the Council's message and plan.

## **COMMENTS ON POLICE FORCE**

Ald. Wsol said there is a need for citizens to understand what our police force is asked to do. The police force needs to develop a positive relationship with citizens, especially the teens within our community. In addition, he suggested treating the residents with the respect they deserve. Citizens Patrol needs to be maximized. One suggestion he offered was to have a sign design contest to promote involvement.

Ald. Allegretti spoke of a recent communication (one of many received) from a citizen of a neighboring community indicating the rudeness of one of our police officer's and the officer's lack of listening skills, adding that he also had a similar incident himself. Ald. Bach concurred. In Ald. Allegretti's opinion, a positive experience would change the citizens' perception of our police department.

City Manager Schuenke agreed and said meetings have begun with City staff discussing ways in which the perception can be achieved. He said a report would be provided within the next few week demonstrating ideas.

## **COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL PRESERVATION**

Mayor Frimark suggested a Citizen Preservation Task Force.

Director Derifield requested direction from the Council after deciding if they would like a 1) citizen based strategy, or 2) adoption of an Ordinance pertaining to the issue.

Ald. Ryan suggested a Citizens Task Force and added it is a divisive issue that should be non-political. He believes preservation of character is very important and that multiple perspectives and expertise is required. "The city needs a solution the community will embrace."

Ald. Schmidt on the other hand, would like to see Procedures and Regulations develop an Ordinance based on experiences of other communities' with the expertise of Dir. Derifield. Ald. DiPietro concurred and is confident that Procedures and Regulations would act on the issue and exercise all necessary requirements to achieve its goal.

## **GRANTS**

Mayor Frimark explained he has written numerous letters and signed many grant applications submitted to state and federal legislators. The City has received a few grants but he would like to work harder to increase grant money. He believes a trip to Springfield with the City Manager would be advantageous.

Economic Director Uhlig said she receives a listing of grant notifications on a weekly basis, some requiring more creativity than others. She believes it is imperative to

# DRAFT

continually communicate and visit legislative offices so that the City is noticed and not forgotten.

City Manager Schuenke described our grants thus far. He explained that staff receives phone calls from legislator's offices, requesting the City to describe its needs, and in turn, they respond to staff at a later date informing them of what grants are available, suggesting what the City can do to improve its chances.

Ald. Schmidt requested an explanation of where the distribution of money is decided.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **1) Target Area 2**

City Manager Schuenke explained that TA2 (Target Area 2) construction is moving along as planned and should be on target for completion in 2008. Various companies have signed leases. However, more are expected to be signed 10-months to one-year out from completion of the project.

Mayor Frimark explained that Walter E. Smithe is looking into the possibility of placing another store in Park Ridge. Their approach has been conservative and they are proceeding in a cautious manner.

Ald. Schmidt spoke of three townhouse units that have been for sale located across from Trader Joes. This concerns him.

Mayor Frimark knows two of the property owners. Both are trying to sell their other home also, and they are waiting to see which will sell first.

### **2) Target Area 4**

#### **City Council Attitude in Land Assembly**

The Mayor believes if the City is serious about redevelopment, it needs to be open-minded to purchase land.

Director Uhlig said we need options on properties to attract developers to our possible plans.

Ald. Allegretti thinks it is a smart idea, but needs to be done with a plan.

Ald. Wsol is not in favor of land purchase and believes he was not re-elected to buy property and develop real estate.

### **3) Higgins Corridor**

Mayor Frimark reported that he and Kim Uhlig have met with the owner of Mr. K's who is cooperative toward corridor development and open minded about doing business with the City. They also spoke of widening Peterson Avenue and utilizing some of Mr. K's property.

Mayor spoke briefly about news he heard relating to Budget Rent-A-Car on Higgins Road.

# DRAFT

Dir. Derifield added that money was budgeted by the Council and additional funds received from the State of Illinois to assist in the planning of the Higgins Corridor. He added that a number of proposals have been sent to many companies that are due back the end of this month. The proposals would be reviewed in July with the planning process starting in September.

## **COMMITTEE MEETING STRUCTURE**

Ald. Allegretti said he currently finds it very difficult being unable to discuss issues with other members prior to the meeting, and when they do meet, they are not ready because they are not properly informed. Ald. Wsol concurred. He believes the opportunity to learn something new from another committee member is lost.

Ald. Ryan believes the current arrangement is ineffective.

Ald. DiPietro said, although the arrangement is new, he would like to continue in the same manner for at least 6 months to a year. Ald. Schmidt and Ald. Bach concurred. Ald. Schmidt fears that a Committee of the Whole meeting would last several hours. Ald. Bach suggested holding a joint meeting if a topic involved two different committees.

Attorney Hill commented that there is no guidance in the Illinois Municipal Code for an 8-person Council (Mayor + Council). The City needs to make its own rules. He spoke of voting requirements (when 4 or 5 votes are required) and recommended referring the issue to Procedures and Regulations.

## **OPEN COMMENTS**

Mayor Frimark spoke of the recent tragedy on Touhy and Aldine in which case a teenage boy was killed. Committees have held safety discussions. The City, requesting the speed limit be reduced, has contacted IDOT. Residents of specific properties have been asked to trim or remove their bushes that obstruct the view. Police have been actively enforcing the speed zone in that particular area.

Ald. Ryan asked that fellow Aldermen keep an open mind about adding experts to committee structures. He also suggested reviewing the Vision 2000 Plan and perhaps renewing the plan in the future. Ald. Schuenke requested Dir. Derifield place a copy of the Vision 2000 Plan in the Friday packet.

Ald. Wsol requested a review of the evaluation assessment process for the City Manager. He said the process must be fair and include direction and expectations for the City Manager's leadership. Mayor suggested meeting as a group, gathering input and referring this item to Procedures and Regulations, if applicable.

Ald. Schmidt commented on the need to install a transportation route for the north side of Park Ridge to gain access to the south side of the City. He suggested opening Cumberland or Elm Street to gain access to Cumberland Avenue. Currently, their (north-side residents) only option is to travel Prospect or Greenwood Avenue.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

# DRAFT

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Howard P. Frimark, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Betty Henneman, City Clerk