

STUDY SESSION NOTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

7500 W. 29th Ave.
Wheat Ridge CO

August 20, 2012

6:30 p.m.

Mayor DiTullio called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Davis Reinhart; Bud Starker; Joyce Jay; Kristi Davis; Mike Stites; George Pond; Tracy Langworthy; Janelle Shaver, City Clerk; Larry Schulz, Treasurer; Patrick Goff, City Manager; Police Chief Brennan; Ken Johnstone, Community Development Director; other staff and interested parties

Absent: Councilmember Joe DeMott

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS none

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Elected Officials' Report(s)

WR Business District Report (WRBD) – John Marriott

John reviewed the various revitalization grants available to businesses.

- Signs – dollar for dollar up to \$3,000
- Facades --dollar for dollar up to \$6,000
- Architectural designs – dollar for dollar up to \$2,000
- Painting -- dollar for dollar up to \$500
- Pilot ADA accessibility upgrade grants up to \$5,000 (New in May.)
They've done one of these so far and learned a lot from it.

Historically WRBD has been given \$40,000 from the City. It hasn't been enough the last 3 years and they've come back for \$30,000.

He referenced photos in the packet of some recent projects. Right Coast Pizza (\$9,000 grant) and T-Bird Roadhouse (\$8,645) were bigger projects involving multiple grants.

Four simpler projects were

- Avenue Consignment 7777 W 38th Ave (\$1,000 sign grant),

- Designers' Loft Hair Design 7110 W 44th (\$290 sign grant),
- Payday Loans 5310 W 38th (\$7,840 façade and design grant),
- Wheat Ridge Auto Partners 9491 W 44th Ave (\$3,500 sign and paint grant)

Current projects include the spa next to Cress Tile on 38th Avenue and Mr. Starker's business on 29th Avenue. Look for big changes to those buildings.

John presented the financial reports of the WRBD. They'd like to know if Council will give them more funds or should they put projects off until next year? Included is a list of grants payable that don't have accompanying photos. No grant money is ever paid out until the project is completed.

They've been granting \$70 – 75,000 a year so far. This year they got a total of \$60,000 from the City (\$40,000, plus a supplemental addition of \$20,000 for ADA upgrades). Some of the ADA money is still unused. In the future the WRBD would prefer to have one large sum of money that they can use for *any* project (to provide flexibility), rather than having amounts that have to be earmarked for certain types of grants (e.g. ADA accessibility only).

The \$70,000 amount is manageable for them, plus the \$20,000 for ADA projects. They'd like have \$90,000 -- \$95,000 in 2013 so they can do more projects.

Last year the City was their sole source of funding. The year prior they got some CDBG money, and they will try again for that grant in 2013. That CDBG money allowed for some larger projects like Mod Mood and Retro for which WRBD provided \$60,000 towards a \$90,000 project.

Larry Schulz: While Jerry Dahl's office was working on an opinion whether negotiable CD's were a legal investment, the State Division of Securities ruled that they are legal. Unfortunately they are called CD's but they aren't managed like CD's. They are more like securities but they emanate from a bank. Typically they pay 1 to 1½ % more than conventional CD's and are limited to 3 years. He will continue to look at them as an investment option for the City.

Joyce Jay reported good news from DRCOG. We are one decision away from receiving a Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) study grant for the widening of Wadsworth from 35th to 46th Avenues. The DRCOG board has awarded the \$636,000 grant to Wheat Ridge and has only to be approved by the Regional Transportation Committee. The PEL study will create a planning process that defines the need, purpose, goals and objectives, and alternatives both in structure and multi-travel methods. Environmental impact and potential mitigation are key elements. This study is critical for the future of Wadsworth.

We need to brace our budgeting for this study as the match is slightly over \$500K. Such a study precedes and enables future federal funding and is close to necessary before any developer will look seriously at our city.

She noted that the Regional Transportation Committee includes DRCOG board members, members of the Transportation Commission, Regional Air Quality Council, and RTD (4), and they usually support DRCOG board funding recommendations.

Davis Reinhart reported that RTD has changed the bus services and restored fundamental services to all the areas we were concerned about. He has maps if anyone is interested.

Mr. Reinhart also reported being contacted by the Jeffco School Board to see if Council plans to pass a resolution in support of the tax increases that will be on the ballot in November. There was considerable discussion. Everyone expressed support for the schools, but some were not comfortable taking a stand supporting the tax increase. All agreed that if anyone voted against such a resolution they would be perceived as being against the schools – which isn't the case. In the end there was enough agreement to bring forward a resolution in support of the "goals" of the bond issues.

2. Staff Report(s) -- All presented by Chief Brennan

a) Revision to Section 26-238 Family Occupancy

The proposed ordinance would add a separate section to Chapter 26 which defines occupancy limits. Police have a problem citing people for having too many people living in a residence. Currently it takes citing three different sections of the code to arrive at a decision about these situations. It will be helpful to clarify the definition of a family and a dwelling unit. No substantive changes occur with this ordinance – only the enforcement mechanism.

Council was agreeable to having this ordinance move forward.

b) Ordinance amending 4-34 Kennel Variance

Chapter 4 of our Code requires a person who wants to harbor more than three dogs or four cats, or wishes to operate a kennel, to get a kennel license by variance from the Chief of Police. The Code currently doesn't authorize the Chief to consider whether a requested variance is in conflict with Chapter 26, the zoning regulations. The proposed ordinance would bring consistency to the provisions of Chapter 4 and Chapter 26 and clarify the City zoning regulations as they relate to the approval of variances by the Chief of Police.

The Animal Welfare and Control Commission has reviewed this ordinance and understands it.

c) Ordinance amending 24-51 Vegetation

This ordinance deals with weed cutting requirements and would:

- provide property owners the opportunity to appeal and request a hearing, and
- bring the time requirements into alignment with the requirements found in Article V of Chapter 2.

Staff agreed to adjust some language so that it is clear that an appeal process is available to the property owner.

d) Muffler noise ordinance

This issue was raised under public comment at the recent hearing on the noise ordinance. Chief Brennan wanted some direction from Council whether or not to pursue a muffler noise ordinance. Our current regulations are hard to enforce, so if Council does want to address this issue an ordinance is necessary to facilitate enforcement. There was consensus for staff to begin working on an ordinance for this issue.

Mayor DiTullio left the meeting at the conclusion of the staff reports.

3. Housing Diversification Strategy -- Ken Johnstone and Sally Payne, Senior Planner

Why? This was discussed at the spring retreat. The goal is to have a strong, attractive housing stock and \$15,000 was budgeted for this project.

The data staff used was provided by WR 2020. Between 2000 and 2010 Colorado grew by 17%. National trends signal Gen Y and Baby Boomers as the largest groups and make up 50% of the population. Only 1/3 of these would like to live in walkable areas with smaller dwellings. Nationally the percent of renters is increasing, including Gen Y, while home ownership is declining. The recession has slowed the expansion of suburban development. We have 20% senior population, higher than the regional or national averages. We also have a higher median age, a 55% higher owner occupancy rate and 45% higher rental rate.

Issues and challenges:

- The majority of our housing stock was built between 1940 and 1960.
- The upgrade of an existing house averages approximately \$70,000
- Multi-family housing is old and not upgraded.
- We're an inner ring suburb, built out and land locked, with few vacant parcels.

- From 2005 – 2011 we only had only 15 new house permits.

Home sales:

- Resale of single family is stable and priced lower than other areas.
- Younger people are moving into WR due to lower prices relative to Arvada and Lakewood.

Next Steps recommended by staff:

- Meet with housing partners to review scope -- September
- Solicit consultant proposals for development of Housing Diversification Strategy -- September
- Select consultant -- October
- Negotiate contract /City Council approval – November
- Kick off work with consultant – December

Staff agreed that a lot of the research has already been done so a consultant wouldn't be starting from scratch, but thinks it will be beneficial to hire a consultant and have another set of eyes look at our issues and challenges, and offer solutions. It's also a resource issue. Our staff doesn't have the time to do this entire task.

There was sufficient support from Council to have staff proceed with the next steps.

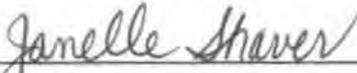
2nd Quarter Budget Report

Patrick passed out the 2nd Quarter budget report for the six months ending June 30, 2012. Council can read it at their leisure and call him if they have questions.

Highlights noted: Revenues are on track and sales tax is up 3 % over last year. Use taxes are up 30% and the total general fund revenue is up about 4.6%.

Also, expenses are lower than expected so far by about \$800,000. A quick peek at July found sales tax still up about 3%.

The Study Session adjourned at 8:20 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk