

**STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**

January 7, 2013

Mayor DiTullio called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m. Council members present: Davis Reinhart, Bud Starker, Joyce Jay, Kristi Davis, Mike Stites, George Pond, and Tracy Langworthy.

Absent: Joseph DeMott.

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Treasurer, Larry Schulz; City Attorney, Jerry Dahl; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Police Chief, Daniel Brennan; Lieutenant Mark Cooney; Economic Development Coordinator, Steve Art; guests and interested citizens.

Public Comment

Eugene Kahng, new owner of the Valenti's restaurant building, briefly explained how the old building was so outdated that the cost to update, remodel and bring it into compliance has been almost double the original estimate. He believes his new brew pub will be a good asset for the City.

Item #4 was pulled from the evening's agenda because an application has been received for rezoning of the property in question.

1. Staff Report(s) none
2. Council Role in Emergency Response Situations

Chief Brennan introduced the current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that has been updated every year since its adoption. He also stated the goal of forming a policy group. The return to normalcy after an emergency is a challenge for the City given our size and fiscal limitations. The primary responsibility rests with the police department, but they also work with the other departments and other partners in the public and private sector. The parts of an emergency plan involve:

- 1) Assess potential risks for emergencies (natural and manmade),
- 2) Identify available public and private resources such as electricity, fuel, construction companies, and the Red Cross,
- 3) Maintain and update the policy,
- 4) Various types of ongoing training at the state, regional and local level.

The Chief can arrange for the Council to visit the joint Emergency Operations Center (EOC) we share with Lakewood if they choose to. He will also notify Council when they have a training exercise event so Council can come as observers and see them practice the craft of emergency preparedness. The Chief's final thought is that these emergencies are community-wide events and we have to work with lots of different partners, including other municipalities, the county and state emergency management people, Red Cross, schools, other city departments, FEMA, and the faith-based community. Crossroads

Church has its own teams, plans, and experienced workers who have served in Louisiana and Kansas disasters.

Lieutenant Mark Cooney, who serves as our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, addressed the Emergency Operations Plan and citizen's guide which gives guidance to citizens to be prepared on their own ahead of time. Copies of that Jefferson County Emergency Preparedness Guide were distributed. He told how the various agencies of the community meet periodically to keep plans in place. This includes the County, the cities, haz-mat teams, hospitals, schools, and a couple of churches. They have to make sure of ADA compliance and they work with assisted living places to make sure they have their own evacuation and transportation plans. Shelters have been needed during long power outages, especially for seniors and people with medical needs such as oxygen and kidney machines. We are fortunate to have several hotels in Wheat Ridge that can be used for emergency shelter.

The City of Wheat Ridge has an Emergency Management Team (EMT) which includes all city departments. The EMT meets every other month to go over the plans for various responses and make sure everyone knows their role. We've recently formed a local WR call center (a phone bank) so that consistent phone numbers and information can be given out. One main role of Council will be to make sure that information is getting out to your constituents. The primary response will be managed by an incident commander – likely at a local or unified command post in the field.

There are mainly 3 parts that come into play during an incident:

- 1) The Incident Command is responsible for responses to address life and safety issues, stabilization of property, etc.
- 2) The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) (primarily with Lakewood) serves as support for the incident commander such as arranging for resources (e.g. a bulldozer) and documenting what is being spent, what is being ordered and from whom. There are various ESF's (Emergency System Function) including documentation, law enforcement, fire, transportation, shelters, supplies for responders,
- 3) The EOC also serves as a conduit to the policy group (Council or Dept. heads). It's important to know ahead of time who will pay for what. A major concern for the policy group is finance. Where will the money come from? Realistically, the City will bear most of the cost. We've yet to have an event in Wheat Ridge that has risen to the level of qualifying for federal funds. Other issues are donations management and debris management. Sometimes these decisions get political. Mitigation in building and zoning decisions can be helpful in preventing emergency events. Example: not allowing houses to be built in a flood plain. Providing information for citizen preparedness is also something councilmembers can do.

One of the biggest issues for the Policy group is the recovery piece – getting things back to normal. The Citizens' Police Academy has added a 3 hour Emergency Preparedness class to its curriculum. Councilmembers are welcome to attend that.

We do have a small emergency management budget. Mr. Schulz reported we have probably \$2M available to be made liquid at any given time. Patrick said the city is also able to charge emergency costs if necessary.

3. ESTIP and BDZ for Colorado Plus

Steve Art summarized the financial needs for this revitalization project.

This request for incentives is for a brew pub that will be opening at the site of the former Valente's restaurant. This building is old, not upgraded, out of code compliance, has been vacant for 4 years, and has fallen into disrepair. Considerable interior reconstruction, asbestos abatement, ADA compliance and the major overhaul of the plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems have been necessary. An equity loan, considerable personal investment by the new owner, and a grant of \$60,000 from WR2020 have been used to fund the anticipated project cost of just over \$1,028,000.

The owner is applying for the BDZ and ESTIP grant and rebate programs to help fund the project. The total incentive request is for \$80,000.

- A request for \$3,800 in use-tax and other fees would be rebated through a BDZ agreement. (Total taxes and fees for this project are estimated to be \$12,000.)
- A further request for \$76,200 in sales tax increment rebate is through an ESTIP agreement. Sales tax increment is estimated at \$25,000 per year.

Staff recommends funding the full requested amount.

- The project meets 38th Avenue Corridor objectives.
- The project could be a catalyst for similar redevelopment of adjacent properties.
- The property's been vacant for 4 years and this will aide in eliminating blight along the corridor.
- The project will bring increased pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic.
- The project will bring in new sales tax and employment.

Discussion included:

- a desire to have consistent responses to similar requests
- to develop a policy (Mr. Goff stated that this project already meets a number of criteria for ESTIP and BDZ application, but when crafting a policy he cautioned to allow for flexibility because every application will be different.)
- a concern about offering financial aid to new businesses that have no track record

There was consensus to move forward with the use tax rebate in the amount requested.

There was also consensus on the ESTIP for a 50% share for up to five years or \$76,200 – whichever comes first, and then they could reapply. This applies to this project only.

4. Potential Amendments to Restrictive Commercial Zoning Not discussed
5. Elected Officials' Report(s)
 - a. Investment Policy Discussion

Treasurer Schulz reported that this is not a new policy; it's a rewrite for clarity.

The City's current investment policy was adopted in October, 2007. Since then specific policies for 1) debt, and 2) unrestricted fund balance have been created and subsequently adopted by Council. This Investment Policy is the third policy and brings the review project to a close.

City Treasurer Larry Schulz, the firm of Clifton Larsen Allen, City Manager Patrick Goff and Admin Services Director Heather Geyer have reviewed the City's Investment Policy to include the following:

- Streamlined the organization of the policy for ease in reading,
- Expanded the "Authorized Investments" section of the policy to include definitions of the City's authorized investments,
- Updates the liquidity requirement under the "Objectives" section of the policy setting a minimum threshold of 10 percent,
- Revised the composition of the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) to include the City Manager, Administrative Services Director and a community member with expertise in the banking/finance industry.

The policy is consistent with governmental finance best practices. The City's financial policies are now in a consistent and concise format.

It was suggested, and Mr. Schulz agreed, to stipulate that the Treasurer either be named as a member of the IAC or meet with the IAC quarterly.

Mrs. Jay noted that an attempt to create an art loop on 38th Avenue is in the works.

Mayor DiTullio noted that Wheat Ridge is hosting the Metro Mayor's Caucus annual retreat this Saturday from 7:30 – 1:30 AM at the Rec Center. ~ He also met with new County Commissioner Casey Tighe. They discussed the proposed cuts for the Senior Resource Center, Jefferson Center for Mental Health and the Family Tree – which are all in Wheat Ridge. Mr. Tighe will look into having some of that funding restored.

Patrick Goff reminded Council that the NLC conference is March 9-13. If councilmembers want to go they should get with Nate or Janice ASAP.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 PM.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk