

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue

June 16, 2014

Mayor Jay called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m. Council members present: Jerry DiTullio, Bud Starker, Kristi Davis, Zachary Urban, George Pond, Tim Fitzgerald, Tracy Langworthy.

Absent: Genevieve Wooden

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Treasurer, Larry Schulz; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Public Works Director, Scott Brink; other staff and interested citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Janice Hoppe (WR) gave the history of moving her business to WR and encouraged Council to continue to move forward with the plan for 38th Avenue.

Michelle DelPiccolo (WR), sponsorship chair for the Farmers 5000, encouraged Council to continue its sponsorship of the event. Over 30 years they've raised over \$1/2M for the school. All the money goes to academic and special programs. None of the money goes to athletics or small groups. All departments are included.

Rachel Hultin (WR), transition coordinator for LiveWell Wheat Ridge, spoke in favor of the 38th Avenue streetscape design and walkable communities.

Adam Wylie (WR), speaking for the Active Transportation Advisory Team, addressed the Ridge at 38th in support of a walkable, main street environment and bike-friendly designs such as robust connections and ample parking and signage.

Kelly Brooks (WR) spoke about 38th Avenue. In 2007 he participated in a citizen committee that produced conceptual thoughts and ideas that are now coming to fruition in the current plan. He encouraged Council to continue moving forward.

Britta Fisher (WR), executive director of WR2020, reminded Council how long we've all been working on this and restated 2020's support for the 38th Avenue Corridor Plan. She's glad there have been successes along the way and that progress can be seen. As she meets with property and business owners on 38th she hopes Council will continue to produce results. ~ She reminded Council that property owners along 38th, especially in the main street district, have a group that's been working on a petition for a business improvement district that will be coming to Council in July.

Jevon VanVliet (WR) said he came to show support for what's being done for the 38th Avenue redevelopment plan and encouraged Council to keep moving forward with it.

1. Staff Report(s)
 - a) Wheat Ridge Farmers 5000 Sponsorship

There was general discussion related to the sponsorship request letter Council had received. Opinions ranged about whether to use individual Councilmembers' outreach dollars or take it from the general fund or a combination of both.

Consensus by Councilmember Starker to bring forward a resolution of support at the next council meeting, leaving the details of the funding mechanism to be decided at the meeting. Before Monday night Mr. Goff will have staff email the councilmembers to find out how much of their outreach dollars they would each commit to the total amount of the sponsorship. .

2. Conceptual Streetscape Design for 38th Ave.

Scott Brink introduced Deana Swetlik of Entelechy. She gave a power point presentation on the 38th Avenue Streetscape Design Phase 2. **(See attachment)** It covered four items that were part of the contract Council approved. 1) The streetscape design, 2) the side street analysis, 3) signage/wayfinding, and 4) The Green

1) Streetscape design

- The 10 "Flexible design" points summarize Council's direction from Dec. 2013.
- The 70' ROW design is for Upham St. to just east of High Ct. It provides parallel parking on at least one side of the street (both sides in front of the school), wider amenity zones along the sidewalks (in yellow), expanded bulb out amenity zones at the intersections, unique paving at the crosswalks,
- The 60' ROW design follows eastward. Provisions are similar, minus on-street parking.
- Tables and chairs are planned for the amenity zones because some people don't want to sit next to a total stranger on a 5-6' bench. Chairs are more intimate and people will be more comfortable sitting next to a stranger.
- Intersections at High Ct. and Pierce to have specialized pavement for all four crosswalks
- The intersection at Pierce has low walls which signal the entrance to The Ridge.
- Bus stops to be unique with spaces for information, maps, pamphlet holders
- Private parking lots will be screened with low fencing and landscaping.
- Costs for Private Property Improvements are triggered by access enhancements and proposed changes that will result in modifications to private property.

Points of Council questions and discussion on the design

- The reduction of ingress/egress points is about 3 or 4.
- The parking in front of Fran's Café will remain. The sidewalk next to the building will be wider, but will still accommodate angle parking. An amenity zone will be

- between the street and the parking.
- Will the survey/design work be done in-house? Not sure yet. Depends on timing and work load of City staff.
 - Will the custom bus shelters be truly custom (i.e. expensive)? Yet to be decided.
 - New light fixtures will probably be existing fixtures available from a manufacturer.
 - The additional costs for private property improvements include mostly physical things on the parking lots – like overlay and restriping. It does not include any money for a re-do of any existing business signs. There are dollars to relocate *existing* signs, but not to provide new ones. Legally non-conforming signs will be allowed to be used.
 - How does the \$1.1M per block for eight blocks compare to similar project in the metro area? Some other places spent less, but what they did wasn't as impactful. Consider \$5.5M for the 32 & Youngfield project and almost \$3M for the Kipling trail. Staff thinks we're in the ballpark. Streetscapes in the metro area range from \$1000/ft to \$5000/ft. This is about in the middle.
 - Besides specific art pieces there are opportunities for art incorporated into the sidewalk and amenity zones.
 - In the block-by-block meetings access to businesses was the biggest concern and changes were made in some locations based on those concerns.
 - At least ½ the corridor came to the block-by-block meetings.
 - Private property trees will mostly not be impacted. The future of the existing private property trees between Upham and Teller is still to be determined.
 - Removal of back in parking at this stage would require an early action item.
 - The \$9.3M includes construction costs, 30% for contingency, 15% for engineering/design/survey, 10% for construction management, inspections, etc.
 - Numbers for the impact to private parking (gain or loss) were not available.
 - Only parallel parking in the final design. No back- in or head-in angle parking.
 - Some businesses east of Pierce are interested in redeveloping as part of the Main Street so extending the project to Marshall seems appropriate.
 - The issue of the sub-district extending to Marshall was raised. The low walls were put at Pierce due to available public right-of-way. The designer will check into working with private property owners about the possibility of walls at Marshall.
 - Can there be a turn signal at High Ct.? Signals will be redone at High Ct and Pierce. Signalization will be addressed to accommodate cars, bikes and walkers.
 - The flashing cross signal at Upham will remain, but be relocated.
 - Staff will address the possibility of including the name Wheat Ridge on the walls.

Councilmember DiTullio left at 7:43pm.

- How will this be funded?
 - 1st Choice: a ballot question in November for this and other projects
 - 2nd Choice: other revenue sources and cutting back other capital projects or general fund operating expenses – which probably won't cover the whole thing
- How does putting it on the ballot intersect with any possible protest of the street width designation?

The required public hearing for Council to set street width designation will be July 14. Following that there can be a protest which requires a certain number of signatures. Council can accept that or override it with a supermajority vote. If it is overridden the public has another opportunity to get signatures to put it on the ballot. The July 14th date was chosen with that in mind – to allow time to put it on the ballot if that becomes necessary. Waiting any longer would necessitate a special election, which adds costs and is not preferred.

Mr. Goff indicated the hearing on July 14 will be for the entire stretch of the corridor. If funding isn't approved and it has to be done in phases, they would have to bring back street the width designation in phases.

Consensus to move forward with the conceptual design, with Mr. Urban dissenting.

There was some discussion about the price tag for this project, posing the thought that this \$9.3M could be used in many other ways to promote and encourage business in Wheat Ridge – including 38th Avenue.

Mr. Goff explained that on July 14th Council will also get a 2-year report on metrics associated with this project (sales tax, vacancy rates, accidents, traffic counts, etc.)

Moving forward with final engineering construction drawings will require a supplemental budget appropriation. Mr. Goff explained the timing implications vis a vis the street width designation process. Discussion followed.

Consensus by Councilmember Pond to direct staff to move forward with RFP's for survey and design work for the entire street length. Staff will determine how much of the work can be done in-house. It will be roughly \$1M (part of the \$9.7M).

There was discussion about the timeline for appropriation of funds for the design work. Staff prefers the appropriation happen before the RFP's go out.

2) Side Street Analysis

Done to analyze pedestrian access to 38th Avenue. Includes 13 streets (Upham to Marshall, 200 feet from 38th) and prioritizes them for improving pedestrian environment.

- Priority 1 (four streets, i.e. 2 intersections) High Ct. and Pierce, north and south
- Priority 2 (four) Teller south, Reed north, Newland north and Newland south
- Priority 3 (two) Quay and Otis north
- Priority 4 (three) Upham south, Upham north, Marshall north

Potential pedestrian friendly improvements to Wadsworth were also identified.

Proposed designs for various Rights of Way

60' ROW – on-street parking, 8 ft amenity zone, 5 ft detached sidewalk

50' ROW – on-street parking, no amenity zone, 8 ft sidewalk immediate to street

40' ROW – no on-street parking or amenity zones, 7 ft sidewalk immediate to street

3) Signage/ Wayfinding

- Addresses finding Wheat Ridge, finding the Ridge, finding things within the Ridge and marketing the Ridge within the Ridge
- Defined the user groups (walkers, bikers, cars, visitors, etc.), the typologies (what kinds of signs needed for what group e.g. informational or directional), and the location plan (where to put which signs).
- Besides studying signage for the Ridge, they also looked at signage into the City.
- Design includes uniform signs to identify public parking, give directions to private parking lots, and other parking information such as time limits.
- The big question for sign purposes is: What is the identity and where are the boundaries of the various areas? Ridge at 38, the Mainstreet Sub-district, the Sheridan Sub-district, Town Center, Downtown? There are even 3 sub-districts within the 38th Corridor. Clarification is recommended.
- The walls at the Pierce intersection are low (2 feet tall) with a sandblasted logo.

4) The Green

Ms. Swetlik continued with the plan for The Green which: highlights the corner at High Ct with a bus stop, bike corrals, a plaza with furniture, and modification of the historic columns to provide some form of shelter and entrance point; creates a performance venue with seating walls on the north end near the school entrance; outlines a potential 60-person ice rink; provides onsite permanent storage; uses existing trees and adds vegetation to separate The Green from 38th Ave.; results in a venue that could accommodate 94 10'x10' booths for an event; and allows for different possibilities to cordon off the area if there are fees or alcohol is served.

Councilmembers had a few questions about the design.

There was discussion about whether the school district is OK with the City building things on their property.

- We already have an agreement with the school which allows us to use the space for specific events.
- Staff met recently with school district facilities officials; their reaction was positive.
- They see this plan as less impactful than the original plan for a retail building and a parking structure (which is not off the table).
- They see programming opportunities for the school and like being part of 38th Avenue.
- The school district's capital contribution would be little or nothing.
- There is indication they may be willing to continue being responsible for ongoing maintenance.

Mr. Goff noted that this could be a separate project.

3. Business Development Zone (BDZ) and Enhanced Sales Tax Incentive Program (ESTIP) ordinance amendments

Mr. Goff summarized the packet material giving some history of the ESTIP and BDZ programs and reasoning behind the changes staff is recommending.

Staff recommends the following changes to ESTIP:

- 1- Increase the minimum level of annual enhanced sales tax (required to be eligible for the incentive) from \$5,000 to \$10,000
- 2- Add a cap on the percentage of sales tax sharing and tie it to the amount of expected enhanced sales tax to be generated from the project..

.....and the following changes to the BDZ code:

- 1- Include a \$250,000 minimum level of private investment for the project to be eligible for the incentive.
- 2- Add a cap on the percentage of "*eligible city fees, charges and taxes*" rebate and tie it to the amount of private investment of the project.

Discussion followed.

Consensus to accept both changes to the BDZ as recommended by staff.

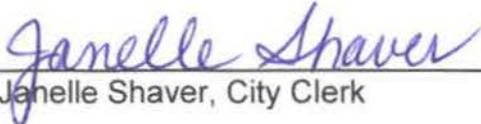
Consensus to raise the minimum level for the ESTIP as recommended and that the rate and time remain negotiable by staff and subject to Council approval.

Patrick Goff distributed the proposed agendas for the District Community Meetings on June 30. Council agreed to adjourn the Council Meeting and discuss their respective agendas after the meeting.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Clerk Shaver reminded the viewing public they can drop off their primary ballots at the 24-hour ballot drop box in the entrance lane to City Hall. ~ At his request, she read a letter from Tyler Downs of Wazee Partners encouraging Council to finalize the concept plan and begin the construction plan for 38th Avenue.

The Study Session adjourned at 9:41p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk