

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

March 2, 2015

Mayor Jay called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

Council members present: Bud Starker, Zachary Urban, Tim Fitzgerald, George Pond, Kristi Davis, Genevieve Wooden, Tracy Langworthy, and Jerry DiTullio.

Absent:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Jesse Hill (WR) referenced an email he sent to Council about set-backs in east Wheat Ridge. He noted two addresses where the owners sought to upgrade their houses, but met with so many hassles with our code that they gave up in frustration and moved away. He feels it's unfortunate when good folks who want to upgrade our housing stock move away. He asked Council to please have the staff look at this. ~ He also encouraged Council to give attention to accessory dwellings. We have a good opportunity to do that here and people are interested in it.

Councilmember DiTullio inquired when this would be on a future agenda. Councilmember Starker, as Mayor pro tem, said he will give staff time to look at the issues and then bring something to Council.

Charlie Myers (WR) spoke in support of the proposed bicycle projects. He's secretary of Bike Jeffco and they want 32nd widened from Wadsworth to Kipling because it's a major route from Golden to Denver. They also want improved access and connectivity to the Gold Line, so they want to work with Public Works on that. He's on the ATAT too and they're pleased with the plans to improve the crosswalk on 44th in front of the Montessori School. The ATAT supports all nine projects.

Adam Wilie (WR) spoke on behalf of the ATAT (Active Transportation Advisory Team) in support of the projects proposed in Item 3. He suggested one alteration: improving the connectivity with Denver to be via 35th Ave instead of 32nd Ave on the eastern section between Sheridan and Pierce or Teller. Moving it to 35th will help connect to the Bicycle Boulevard going in next year from Denver. The plan overall improves safety and creates five more miles of dedicated facilities. One of the top 4 things from the community survey was bike lanes on 35th between Sheridan and High Ct.

Rachel Hultin (WR) from the ATAT is happy the proposed bike projects are spread around town. She sees it as investing in the community's health, being responsive to their survey they conducted last summer, and demonstrating the importance of regional connectivity. ~ She feels it's important to make the connection from 35th to 32nd and Wadsworth. ~ She thinks way-finding signage is a great way to connect cyclists and pedestrians with our commercial, community and cultural centers. ~ From her experience doing a Walking School Bus, she thinks improving the signal on 44th is important and that it should be a school zone.

Melissa Saynourath (WR) does the Walking School Bus with her kids to Compass Montessori. She said when you hit the button on the signal nothing happens to slow traffic down. They raise their hands and walk into traffic to stop the cars so the kids can cross. She agrees it should be a school zone.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Senior's Resource Center BDZ Agreement Extension

Mr. Goff explained the issue. The Seniors' Resource Center (SRC) is ready to proceed with Phase II of their renovation at 3227 Chase.

Background:

- A Business District Zone (BDZ) was created in 2010 for Phase I and \$101,000 was rebated to the SRC for that project (100%).
- A BDZ was created in June, 2013 for Phase II (remodel older section of facility), but as construction costs rose not all the funds could be raised and the BDZ expired on Dec. 31, 2013. The rebate would've been 100%, or about \$22,000.
- The SRC is now requesting the creation of a new BDZ to refund 100% of their building permit fees and use tax. Due to increased costs for construction the amount would now be \$38,568.
- Following the creation of the Phase II BDZ, Council amended the BDZ program to cap the rebate of eligible fees. The rebates now range from 25% to 50% to 75% based on the amount of investment in the project (i.e. project cost).
- If the 75% rate was used the rebate would be \$28,500.

The lengthy discussion that followed centered on whether or not this project qualifies for the BDZ because it does not generate sales tax. All agreed the SRC is a worthy organization and support of it serves the public good, but there was not agreement that the BDZ is an appropriate tool to support them.

A variety of options were offered and debated.

Councilmember Starker received consensus to deny the BDZ. The vote was not unanimous.

Councilmember Fitzgerald received consensus for an outright donation of \$15K to SRC. It was not unanimous. Per Mr. Goff this can be done at the March 9th Council meeting.

2. Staff Report(s)

a. Update on 2015 Proposed Zoning Code Amendments

Ken Johnstone went through the five areas proposed for update.

Accessory Dwelling Units (usually smaller, self-contained residential units built on the same lots as an existing house) are currently not allowed. Times have changed and there is interest in this. It is recommended that they be allowed.

Microbreweries are currently not addressed in our code. Since they have become a more prevalent type of business it is recommended that they be clearly defined and that it be decided which zone districts will allow them.

Exterior Lighting Standards We need more specific quantitative standards.

Sign Code Our sign code has not kept up with changes in the sign industry and advancements in sign technology. Public input is recommended.

Commercial Mobile Radio Service (CMRS) Facilities Our cell tower regulations were adopted in 2000. They are outdated and do not reflect current technology and nomenclature. The approval process should be reviewed to consider potential impacts. Staff suggests many approvals could be reviewed administratively.

Discussion followed on the various areas.

Councilmember Starker received consensus to direct staff to move forward with changes in the five areas.

b. Application process for Neighborhood street light requests

Scott Brink made the staff presentation.

Some years ago there was a process for neighborhood requests for street light. The program was ended due to budget concerns. Council budgeted \$10,000 this year for street light requests. Mr. Brink quickly reviewed what staff did to draft a policy for this. There was brief discussion

Starker received consensus to move forward with program.

3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Priorities ~ Scott Brink & Mark Westberg

\$100,000 has been budgeted for this. Scott Brink explained the process that was used to identify the nine proposed bike/ped projects for 2015. This included input from Public Works on upcoming projects, Public Safety data, input from ATAT, and available funds.

1. 38th & Tabor – sidewalks south side of 38th, east and west of Tabor.....\$34,286
2. 44th & Miller – improve existing x-walk on 44th east of Miller St.....\$8,700
3. 32nd Ave West – bike lanes between Xenon and Kipling.....\$14,896
4. 32nd Ave Mid – bike lanes between Kipling and Wadsworth.....\$31,000
5. 32nd Ave East – bike lanes between Wadsworth & Sheridan.....\$42,447
6. Miller St between 44th Pl and Sheridan – shoulder.....\$3,060
7. 35th Ave – sharrows between Teller and Sheridan.....\$ 24,600
8. Oak St bridge – new ped bridge between Morningside and Twilight Dr...\$105,700
9. 48th & Marshal – bike lanes between I-76 and Harlan.....\$10,100 or \$23,960

Project 1-6 are ranked as High priority; Project 7 is Medium priority; Project 9 is Low Priority and has two options.

Discussion followed.

There was consensus to move forward with projects 1-7 (all High and Medium priorities) for a cost of \$158,989. Staff will refine the project costs and return to Council

4. Entryway Signage and Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP)

Scott Brink reported that several traffic calming requests have come in. Public information meetings have been held on a number of them. As education is done sometimes the requests fade, but some streets do have petitions circulating. He noted packet attachments with previous neighborhood monument locations. \$100,000 has been budgeted for these two efforts.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Starker presented a handout with a design for neighborhood entryway signs. It resembles the new Parks signs. Price range is \$4-5,000 per sign.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Wooden received consensus to move forward with the design Mr. Starker presented and have staff prepare a budget with possible locations.

5. Elected Officials Reports

Tracy Langworthy reported on Fruitdale School. It will not be purchased by Mountain Phoenix School. A man who has experience in building renovation and converting old, unusual buildings has expressed interest.

Genevieve Wooden reported the Winter Percussion Group from WRHS, a small group of 7, won 1st Place in their division in their first competition on Saturday.

Kristi Davis asked if the urban renewal attorney could be present at the upcoming town meeting Councilmembers DiTullio and Urban are hosting – since TIF's, PIF's and urban

renewal will be the topics. She thinks it would be helpful for providing accurate answers to citizen questions. Mr. Goff will see if he is available.

Bud Starker attended the presentation made by the Urban Land Institute – Technical Advisory Panel (ULI-TAP) on the Ward Road Station. The technical panel (developers, realtors, leasing brokers, architects, etc.) determined that it will be an employment – driven development scheme (primary employment).

Tim Fitzgerald congratulated the WRHS theater department on their performance of "Oklahoma." It was fantastic!

Jerry DiTullio received a communication at the high school today that the school district will be implementing the Sobesky /7-12 plan, with no mention of the ultimate plan. **Genevieve Wooden** offered additional details. The School Board will vote on the plan this Thursday. 1) As part of the Jefferson Plan they will redo the boundary between WR and Edgewater: If you live in WR you will go to Stevens, then Everitt, then WRHS. Edgewater residents would go to Edgewater elementary schools and then the Jefferson 7-12. 2) The Gifted/Talented program will move to Everitt. Other parts of Plan B will not be considered. Sobesky (grades 1-12) will move into Stevens; those students are bussed in. Stevens PreK-6 would move to WR 5-8.

Zach Urban noted from the Urban Land Institute presentation it was presented that Ward Road isn't the end of the line; it's a base camp between down town and "ski town". Consequently we need to craft our vision for that area. ~ He also noted there will be a hearing March 5 in our Court about a dilapidated property in the 4500 block of Yarrow. It has been a source of neighborhood frustration for several years.

Joyce Jay said, regarding the construction defects bill, she signed the resolution and contacted Sen. Jahn and Rep. Danielson. ~ She's working with the Metro Mayors talking to County Commissioners regarding the handling of TIF monies. ~ She also contacted Jefferson County on TIF issue. ~This Saturday she's having "Coffee with the Mayor" from 9-10am at Karebear. ~ She encouraged businesses to shovel their walks.

ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON



Bud Starker, Mayor Pro Tem