

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

October 5, 2015

Mayor Pro Tem Bud Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

Absent: Mayor Joyce Jay

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Administrative Services Director, Heather Geyer; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; City Treasurer, Larry Schulz; other staff and interested citizens.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Janice Thompson (WR) is on the Housing Authority and spoke in support of the redevelopment proposal for Fruitdale School. She said it's been hard to find a good fit for the building. She thinks this proposal meets several needs for the City and preserves the historic Temple Buell building and the Fruitdale name. This project could be the beginning of renewal for a forgotten area of the City. It will require money from the City, but as a citizen she noted so much money has been spent on 38th Ave. and this area has been neglected. She encouraged Council to vote for it.

Claudia Worth (WR) spoke on behalf of the WR Historical Society. She's looked at the proposal and doesn't think it meets the criteria. A butcher shop and 12 apartments are not educational purposes -- which is required in the reverter clause. Many visitors to the museum have been aghast when hearing of this use. This isn't for seniors, as it will have no elevator. It also has only one apartment that is handicapped accessible. She does, however, like this business and would love to see this facility locate somewhere else within the City.

Tom Abbott (WR) is on the Housing Authority. He said this proposal is indicative of the hard work of the Housing Authority and the staff. Of all the proposals they have examined, this one comes the closest to being ideal for the site. He's concerned about the building sitting vacant and being lost. Tearing it down would lose one of the last historic buildings. He thinks it's more than a butcher shop. He thinks this will be an economic catalyst for the area. The Housing Authority will chip in since a portion of it is housing.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Staff Reports(s) none

2. Fruitdale School Redevelopment ~ Ken Johnstone

Mr. Johnstone gave brief background on recent efforts to redevelop the Fruitdale School. The Housing Authority acquired it in 2011. This building is one of the few left standing that was designed by Temple Buell. Last February Hartman Ely Investments presented a redevelopment proposal to the Housing Authority. The Authority approved a motion directing staff to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement with HEI.

Jim Hartman (Boulder), Susan Ely, Justin Brunson (chef) and Eric Clayman (apprentice) were present to present details of the development.

The school is to be mostly apartments and a community gathering space. There will be an orchard in front, a greenhouse in the back, and a meat packing school in the gym.

Hartman Ely has specialized in adaptive re-use. When he was a young architect Mr. Hartman met Temple Buell so he is particularly interested in preserving the building. He believes there has to be a use for historic buildings or they won't survive. He said that Hartman Ely will remain involved in this project – not pass it off. They have done a patient search to find the best solution. They've looked at lots of alternatives. He showed samples of other projects they have done to preserve and re-use historic buildings.

The benefits they see from this redevelopment:

- Revitalize vacant historic property with \$6M investment
- Economic development catalyst for the area
- Job creation (6)
- Well designed, energy efficient apartments (affordable and market-rate)
- Community education (event space, apprenticeship program, continuing education, veterans re-training, farm-to-table dinners, wedding receptions, potential Ridgefest 2017 site)
- Partnership with R-1 Schools
- Restore exterior of an National Register historic building

The plan includes a Public/Private Partnership:

- Gap funding of \$640,000 to be provided by the City
- Property tax abatement by the City; Land swap with R-1 Schools
- They will seek to have the school deed restriction removed
- Re-zoning
- Phase 1 and 2 environmental process

Redevelopment Features

- Revitalized historic site
- Up to 13 apartments; 10 in the 1920's portion of the building
- Community room for educational and public uses
- Gym, cafeteria and kitchen to house Fruitdale Artisanal Meat Company – a wholesale artisanal butchery and meat distribution facility with an apprentice program, butchery classes and a charcuterie school.
- A small retail storefront for the artisanal meat company
- An orchard and courtyard in the front of the building
- Future phase would build a greenhouse in back to be operated by Altius Farms and Operation Victory Garden.

Fruitdale Artisanal Meat Company ~ Local owners Eric Clayman and Justin Brunson
Chef Justin Brunson, owner of Masterpiece Deli and others, explained the artisanal meat
production and apprenticeship program:

- The kitchen and gym are perfect for their use. The proximity to I-70 is desirable for them.
- People are focused on eating locally raised meat; that's all they will process.
- They'll make a large variety of sausage and meats. There's no place to learn this art. Making these meats is a dying art they hope to preserve. He will love teaching these techniques and methods and likes the idea of working with the schools.
- They really want to do this school; if Wheat Ridge isn't interested they need to look elsewhere soon.

Jim Hartman showed slides of other loft residential projects they've done. The second floor apartments will be lofts – some affordable, some market rate.

There will be living space on the first floor for school staff, and indoor and outdoor community spaces. He addressed their ideas for innovative energy solutions.

Jim Hartmann went through the Pro Forma (which was not part of the Council packet):

- The meat company is the economic driver.
- Apartments are a mix of affordable and market rate.
- It's about a \$6M project; they will seek an SBA note to finance it.
- This is a 15% cash on cash return – which is modest.
- They'd like \$640,000 from the City, a property tax waiver and for the City to be a minority(<1%) owner
- There are some financial "trees" they may be able to shake.
- The schedule anticipates occupancy in late 2016.

Next steps:

1. Confirm gap funding sources
2. Execute property purchase contract
3. Implement public outreach program
4. Complete Project in Dec 2016 (design, finance, permits, construction)
5. Finalize potential gap funding repayment, preliminary commitments from Jeffco Community Development and historic tax credits

Council questions and discussion followed:

- Ken Johnstone explained the financial components for the City.
- Housing Authority would be able to provide \$170,000. City's portion would be \$470,000.
- There was discussion of waiver of property tax, since the city has not historically received any property tax on this property. Goal would be to ensure no liability for the City.
- 6-9 residential units would be affordable.
- Council would like a copy of the pro forma. It is to be present to the Housing Authority on Oct 20. CDBG grant money may be available. Mr. Goff said they would get that refined and get it to Council.

- Public space: 600 sq ft indoor space + 1,000 sq ft for exhibit space. Auditorium seating space. More outside.
- City would be a partner in the space.
- The City has never given the Housing Authority any money for their projects.
- Some of the costs are not known right now. Also the City could end up being paid back if grant money comes in.
- Loading zone to be on west side of building. Traffic would include smaller trucks (26ft).
- USDA standards are very strict regarding cleanliness, etc. That should not be a worry.
- The structure near 44th Ave will be removed.
- Ratio of affordable to market rate is unknown.

Councilmember Pond received consensus to have Council consider \$470K when the pro forma is produced and be able to see the contract language for the educational and community aspects of the proposal.

3. Ordinance Placing Restrictions on the hours of construction activity

In order to mitigate the nuisance impacts of construction (noise, dust, vibrations, etc.) to neighboring properties, Council had directed staff to draft an ordinance limiting the hours of construction activity from 7am to 9pm. Ken Johnstone went through a number of restrictions that are already placed on construction activities. Discussion followed.

Councilmember DiTullio received consensus to move forward with the ordinance with the hours 7am-7pm and a clarification of indoor activities that are not affected by this ordinance.

4. Budget Transparency Software Presentation ~ Heather Geyer

Treasurer Larry Schulz gave introductory remarks about the software system called Socrata. This was learned about from the City of Erie. The program is designed to provide budget transparency and be citizen friendly. Cost is \$7,500 a year.

Heather Geyer gave a demonstration of how the Socrata programs works and went through the handouts that were distributed.

Staff intends to make this program available to citizens this coming Thursday. It will start with the proposed FY 2016 budget. When the 2015 budget closes that information will be added. As time permits previous years will be added. An analytic component will be added.

Questions:

Subcategories of other budgets (ex: Housing Authority, Urban Renewal, WR2020) are not possible with this program at this time. Those would involve further expense.

Councilmember DiTullio excused himself from the meeting at 8:35pm.

It will be possible to track how many hits the various elements receive so we can see how many citizens we are serving with this.

5. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Mayor Pro Tem Starker requested discussion about the future meeting schedule. Tim Fitzgerald received consensus to cancel the meetings of December 21 and 28. Kristi Davis received consensus to cancel the November 2 study session.

Clerk Shaver asked if any councilors plan to attend the National League of Cities conference in November in Nashville; she has had an inquiry about who we may have for a voting delegate. Mayor Pro Tem Starker inquired and no one plans to attend. ~ She encouraged Board and Commission member to please RSVP for the Appreciation Dinner on October 13.

Genevieve Wooden reminded folks of the meeting tomorrow night at 7pm the Rec Center with a representative from CDOT who will be present to update the public about projects for I-70.

Tracy Langworthy thanked everyone for the questions about Fruitdale School.

Tim Fitzgerald reminded everyone of the debate this coming Wednesday in Council Chambers at 7pm on Questions 300.

ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 8:46 p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON October 26, 2015



Bud Starker, Mayor Pro Tem