

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue
July 11, 2016

Mayor Joyce Jay called the Special Study Session to order at 7:50 p.m.

Council members present: Janeece Hoppe, Monica Duran, Tim Fitzgerald, Zachary Urban, Genevieve Wooden, George Pond and Larry Mathews

Absent: Kristi Davis

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Attorney, Jerry Dahl; City Manager, Patrick Goff; other staff and interested citizens

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

[These comments were given earlier in the evening at beginning of the Regular Council Meeting. Audio located in that recording.]

Janenne Allen (WR) asked the question how well do individual citizens know how they complement the whole. Her greatest concern is neighbors who have stress and financial problems due to our lack of sewer and storm drain system. She supports 38th Ave Main Street; she frequents it and thinks it's safer. She liked the collaboration of Cre8 Your 38. She'd like everyone to consider the greater good and to take a deeper look at what's in front of us. She encouraged Council to move forward with 3 lanes and consider the recommendations of the DIRT task force.

Michael Illo (WR) believes the 18-month trial road diet is still there after four years because of political posturing. He reminded Council the 2015 citizen survey overwhelmingly rejected 3 lanes and suggested no plans should move forward until it's put back to 4 lanes. ~ He noted citizens were promised in January the road width would not change and that Cre8 Your 38 would respect the 2B vote. The moderator said a 4-lane plan would be included throughout – and that all designs should stay out of the 60 ft ROW. That's been ignored. He thinks it's unfair that \$100,000 of taxpayer money has been spent for a lobbying effort (Cre8 Your 38), and he doesn't think it's right for councilmembers to tell citizens what he sees at lies, when they have political affiliations and contributed money to WR Wants 2B. He believes councilmembers should act as representatives and stop lobbying for special interests.

Joylyn Godinez (WR) thanked the Council for the time they put in and for supporting the various activities and events Local Works sponsors – including the Wheaties Academy she attended. She elaborated on why she thinks they are important. She asked Council to support a three lane main street with gathering spaces and to respect the time that was spent with Cre8 Your 38.

Gene Shirley (WR) feels government is not listening to the people and not spending money as they should. All the departments have lists of projects. He asked that money be spent for things that are needed - not things that are wanted by special interests. He encouraged more effective work in taxes and more time spent improving businesses. He thinks high rises are not the answer to helping the city.

Vivian Vos (WR) had several comments on the draft ballot language for 38th. 1) She thinks if money is collected above the \$4.5 M it should not go in the Capitol Improvement Fund, but should go back into 38th Ave. 2) She questioned adding a community plaza to a project that is for a street. 3) #6 in the consensus design says more money will be needed to "maintain" – hence, the overage should be used for maintenance. 4) She asked what it means that "the City is not party to shared access agreements".

Lloyd Rogers (business owner on 38th Ave) expressed concerns about the streetscape plan. The current parking area in front of his business is shown as an outdoor eating area. He doesn't want his customers to have to walk through an eating area. This is private property he's paid taxes on for over 40 years and he'd like his parking to remain.

Rachel Hultin (WR) talked about WR as her home. She believes we need: a center point, a welcoming place for everyone, to encourage businesses, to demonstrate a vision, a unified commitment showing we value a main street. She doesn't believe we should be questioning our commitment to a main street. She supports 3 lanes; the data shows it's safe; it's economically viable; it services cars, people who can't drive, and the businesses. She also believes we need additional tax revenue to serve the rest of the community beyond our main street. She asked Council to look seriously at tax funding. If this is not the year to do 38th because we don't have clarity yet, we can defer it.

Kim Calomino (WR) appreciates the effort that's gone into this, but can't support the plan Council is considering for the ballot. It's cobbled together and doesn't represent citizens' preferences; it appears to be crafted for a Council who wishes to put the matter behind them rather than setting the best course for a main street. It's not a cohesive plan or a thoughtful approach to an evolving larger picture. She asked Council to *not* move this plan forward or ask for a tax to build it. ~ Cost and construction disturbances aren't the only issues. Council isn't required to move forward hastily in a wrong direction because a citizen-envisioned direction is not immediately attainable. Council knows the citizen preferences from the Cre8 process and should now do the homework necessary to find out how to come closest to that plan -- surveying, engineering, conversations with businesses, other resources, phasing possibilities, studying traffic impacts from the West End project and the Wadsworth changes. If we stick with the main street we have and chart a path forward, citizens can accept that if they know it's coming. ~ She urged the Council to instead pursue a sales tax for larger issues across the entire city.

1. 38th Avenue Streetscape Project

Mark Westberg presented the conceptual design that reflects the Council consensus of June 6. It advances one ballot question that addresses street design and funding.

1. Repave & restripe 38th, Sheridan to Wadsworth – due soon for an overlay, new striping for the corridor, same configuration that is there now
2. Redevelop the green in front of Stevens Elem to include amphitheater and gathering space; school approves; we have 1st right of refusal
3. Retrofit amenities strategically spaced to best utilize the 250-ft allowance of the Charter

4. Add amenities – build out sidewalk on the south side, High Ct to Upham, fill parallel parking bays to gutter pan; add trees; replace old lights; colored concrete crosswalks
 5. Sidewalks – repair and add sidewalks, enhanced corners, raised crosswalks, and planters, Pierce to Upham
 6. Add new lighting, matching benches, trash cans, and public art, Pierce to Upham
 7. Consolidate curb cuts – Harlan to Wadsworth, 37 down to 28 cuts
 8. Add lighting, benches, trashcans, corner enhancements and planters for traffic buffers – Pierce to Harlan
 9. Finance project with one-quarter of one cent sales tax increase for three years, not to exceed \$4.5M. Additional funds to go into the CIP
- High Ct to Pierce – 3 lanes; 6 ft bike lanes on both sides; trees in retrofit islands which are butted out into street to shorten travel distance for pedestrians
 - Pierce to Harlan -- 3 lanes; new pedestrian lights; on-street parking on south side; 5 ft sidewalks; hanging baskets to be tended by Parks Dep
 - Plan to use the same features we're using all over town right now
 - Funding recommendation: .25% sales tax increase for 3 years; expected to generate \$4.5 Million; overage to go into the CIP budget
 - Conceptual cost projection pending.
 - Staff recommends hiring Muller Engineering (traffic consultant) to determine actual vehicular capacity of the street
 - With consensus on this plan, staff will continue to refine the scope, prepare cost estimates and draft ballot language for July 25th meeting.
 - The timeline for hearings and ballot language was given.

Discussion followed.

- Mr. Dahl advised that the bubbled out curb corners only affect the width at the corners, and do not affect the width of the street between the corners.
- The parking area and driveways in front of Fran's Café and Bizarre Hair would remain.
- Shared access is between businesses.

Councilmember Duran distributed proposed wording which reflects the consensus agreed upon by Council a few weeks ago. The consensus is to direct the City Attorney to include a second section in the ordinance stating that if the ballot issue fails at the election, on or before March 31st, 217 the entirety of 38th Ave (Wadsworth to Sheridan) shall be repaved and striped to a four-lane configuration, which includes two lanes of traffic in each direction and a continuous turn lane where permissible.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Pond received confirmation from Mr. Dahl that there is time to discuss and add this wording to the ballot language. It does follow the "single subject rule". Mr. Goff noted a special study session is tentative for July 25th.

Councilmembers Wooden, Fitzgerald and Hoppe explained why they can't support any 4-lane wording.

- Out of respect for the Cre8 process; they want three lanes.
- It's not about the number of lanes; it's about creating a center point.
- Adding this language would motivate those who have been single-mindedly concentrating on 4 lanes and assure the failure of this measure.
- The proposed design is a good compromise with reasonable timeline and price; it preserves bike lanes and meets core values of the Cre8 process.
- This new wording opens the door for confusion about semantics

Councilmember Urban believes voters deserve some action; this consensus assures that. 2B voters already rejected this vision; prudent to clarify the choice so we don't end up back at square one. This wording would not cause it to fail.

Councilmember Mathews described how the proposed consensus is needed to offer closure for the issue; without it we may keep kicking the can down the road.

Mayor Jay handed the gavel to Councilmember Pond and expressed that she doesn't think the proposed consensus provides closure. It's a big issue that will take time. We have to keep massaging this until we get something passed.

Councilmember Duran was questioned about how to have amenities with 4-lanes. Councilmember Pond doesn't support the consensus as written.

There was unanimous consent to waive the Council rules to allow Mr. Shirley to speak. [There was some misunderstanding about the sign-up sheets and the new process for public comment on special study session items.]

Gene Shirley (WR) related how it was stated at a District 1 meeting prior to 2B that businesses weren't consulted. After 2B failed, Council wouldn't accept it and wasted thousands more dollars. He estimates 90% of Districts 1 and 2 voted against 3 lanes; even adding Districts 3 and 4 it still was defeated. He believes the Cre8 process was rigged toward 3 lanes and Council's not listening to the people. He predicted this will go down and they will have wasted a lot of time and taxpayer money. More councilmember opinions followed.

Mr. Westberg asked that the consensus be amended to allow inclusion in the 2017 CIP budget, rather than March 31, so that bulk bidding can be utilized. Ms. Duran had no objection.

Councilmember Duran read the consensus again, amending the timeline for repaving/restriping to be by fall 2017. This consensus would add wording to the ballot language effecting a return to four lanes if the ballot issue fails. Consensus failed 3-4.

Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to hire Muller Engineering to do the traffic analysis to determine the actual vehicle capacity. The vote was 5-2.

Mr. Goff clarified for Mr. Mathews that since there will be no bonding, the project would be phased as the money comes in. Construction likely to happen in 2018. Councilmember Hoppe received consensus to move forward with the design as presented. The vote was 4-3.

Councilmember Hoppe received consensus of 4-3 to proceed with draft ballot language as presented by staff, with the City Attorney to review for TABOR compliance and to be presented for approval on July 25th.

2. Funding Considerations for DIRT Task Force Recommendations

Mr. Goff outlined the packet material. Council can fund any or all of the projects.

- The top 10 priorities of the DIRT task force.
 1. Gold Line Station Area infrastructure -- \$8-12M
 2. 38th Avenue streetscape improvements (Harlan to Wads) - \$4.5M
 3. Clear Creek trail reconstruction (replace trail Kip to Yngfld and drainage repairs Wads to Marshall) - \$600,000; connect east and west sides of Clear Creek Trail at 41st & Kip -- \$100,000
 4. Kipling Corridor land banking (44th & Kipling) for positioning for redevelopment, economic enhancement opportunities, and mitigating traffic congestion -- \$5M
 5. Parks: Anderson Park/Bldg (\$11-12M), Prospect/Berbert (\$5m), Rec Center expansion (\$17-20M), relocate Parks Maintenance to Public Works Shops (\$7M)
 6. Wadsworth Reconstruction (36th to 46th) -- \$7M
 7. 32nd Avenue Reconstruction (Wadsworth to Kipling) -- \$10M
 8. Clear Creek Crossing (I-70 hook ramps) -- \$10M
 9. School site upgrades (paths, picnic shelters and tables) -- \$1M
 10. 38th Ave reconstruction (Kipling to Youngfield) -- \$19M
- A set of options for sales tax increases and how much they would raise: tax rates of .25, .50, .75, 1.0 cents for either 5, 10, 15 or 20 years.

Discussion followed. Councilmembers and the Mayor offered their preferences for rates, priorities for projects, and whether or not to bond. Mr. Goff noted the figures for projected revenue don't include the cost of bonding.

Councilmember Urban received unanimous consent for a ½ cent sales tax for ten years, with the top three projects to be the Gold Line, Clear Creek Crossing, and the Wadsworth project and some other specific projects yet to be determined.

The Special Study Session was adjourned at 10:43pm.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON July 25th, 2016



George Pond, Mayor Pro Tem