

**SPECIAL  
CITY OF PALMETTO  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
June 6, 2018  
5:30 PM**

Elected Officials Present:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor  
Jonathan Davis, Vice Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 1  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1  
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2  
Brian Williams, Commissioner Ward 3

Staff Present:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney  
Jeff Burton, CRA Director  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Amber LaRowe, Assistant City Clerk

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. PRESENTATION: POLICE DEPARTMENT SPATIAL NEEDS AND SITE ASSESSMENT

Ian Reeves, President of Architects Design Group (ADG) and Fred Rambo, Senior Associate/Project Manager ADG, made a presentation to the City Commission regarding the site evaluation and selection for the City of Palmetto Police Department. A copy of the presentation is attached to and made a part of the minutes.

Mr. Freeman reminded the Commission that a new police facility was approved for \$6M in funding from the use of half-cent sales tax revenue. ADG has estimated the cost of building at \$8.2M; this does not include the purchase of any additional land, if required. ADG is recommending a one-story building, this saves on the cost of elevators, stairs, and additional requirements when having a multi-story building.

Commissioner Smith questioned the size of the building as estimated at 22,567 square feet as identified in the presentation. He would like to see a blueprint of the layout of the building and opined that the size of the building was too big. Chief Tyler does not have a blueprint at this time; however, he has estimated the area size for the different departments within the Police Department. Commissioner Smith would like to see these plans and estimates.

Mr. Rambo identified three sites that were chosen for the new Police Department. Option A is the old elementary school parcel located on 7<sup>th</sup> Street West and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, Option B is the existing Police Department location, and Option C is 10<sup>th</sup> Street West Parking Lot near the railroad tracks. Option A is currently under contract for purchase by the City from the Manatee County School Board, Options B and C are currently owned by the City. Due to the size of the facility, parking needed, possible storage, ADG is recommending that the site to build the Police Department be approximately 3 acres. The following is the criteria that ADG used to evaluate the three options:

- ✓ Appropriate surrounding land use
- ✓ Proximity to pertinent government functions (City Hall, Public Works, CRA, Commission Chambers)
- ✓ Site size and ease of future expansion
- ✓ Zoning
- ✓ Site development considerations
- ✓ Vehicular, pedestrian and public transportation
- ✓ Impact on downtown redevelopment
- ✓ Proximity to potential hazards
- ✓ Ease of acquisition
- ✓ Adequacy of infrastructure

According to ADG's site selection criteria, the following was established for each site:

- Option A:
  - 8.75 acres-room for the Police Department and future growth
  - Compatible with adjacent land use
  - Close to main street and primary commercial strip
  - Close to government functions
  - Primarily ready to develop
  - Flexible ingress/egress
  - On City fiber loop
  - Place building to the east of the property preserves frontage to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue
  - Positive contribution to Downtown District Development
  - Site is optimal for a public safety facility
- Option B:
  - 3.9 acres-room for Police Department but not future growth
  - Incompatible with adjacent land use
  - Limited options for ingress/egress on site
  - On City fiber loop
  - Not ready to develop
    - Requires relocation of existing Police Department, demolition of building and site development prior to construction
    - Moving management is an issue requiring an investment in temporary facilities that is lost when the construction is completed
- Option C:
  - .96 acres-insufficient for proposed Police Department
  - Multi-story would not be economical or functional with the small footprint of the site
  - Incompatible with adjacent land use
  - No room for future growth
  - Potential hazardous adjacencies
    - Railroad
  - Requires additional infrastructure to connect to City fiber ring
  - Not ready to develop
    - Requires additional site acquisition

Commissioner Williams questioned a public/private partnership for the building of the Police Department. Mr. Reeves stated that it is a possibility, but from his experience those partnerships usually occur on large facilities,

not smaller projects like this one. Commissioner Williams asked ADG their opinion of which site would be the better choice from their years of experience in this line of work. Mr. Reeves stated that Option A seems the most feasible, the least amount of cost, it is basically ready to be built upon, it allows for future growth of the Police Department and/or the addition of a City administrative building, and it is compatible with the surrounding land.

Commissioner Cornwell expressed her opinion regarding building a Police Department in an area that could help reduce blight, reduce crime, and create businesses; she prefers to look at an area that has the greatest need. In regards to Option A, she questioned what other types of businesses could go on the property and cohabitate with the Police Department. Mayor Bryant informed the Commission that there have been discussions amongst staff regarding the Police Department at the Option A site and reserving space on there for a new City Hall to create municipal complex; she opined future planning for the City Police Department to expand and for City Hall expansion is necessary.

Commissioner Cornwell indicated that if the Police Department does get a boat, there will need to be storage for the boat on site with a trailer as well. It was noted that all three sites are located in the Community Redevelopment Agency. She questioned if building a Police Department on Option A would reduce blight. Mr. Burton stated that the only site that meets the Plan is Option C because it is in a "high crime" area. He noted that it is in the Plan that the CRA can help fund the Police Department but it has to be in a "high crime" area and he said the last time he checked the area located by the packing house is the area with the highest crime. Chief Tyler stated that there is very little crime data in Option A and Option B areas. He indicated that if the Commission seeks to use CRA funding, then the funding would have to go towards Option C.

Commissioner Varnadore expressed her concerns regarding building on Option C. She agrees placing the Police Department in a higher crime area is a good idea; however, this location is too small. She is concerned with the cost of land acquisition, the attorney fees to go along with acquiring the land, and if all the owners will sell. Even with the land to the north of the City owned piece, Mrs. Varnadore was concerned that it still would not be the right size for the building, parking, and growth of the Police Department itself in the future. She does not see spending money on land acquisition, attorney fees, and the building of the Police Department. Commissioner Varnadore opined that this option seems to be more problematic and costly and will take a lot longer to build on this site as opposed to Option A.

Commissioner Smith expressed his opinions regarding the Police Department being built upon Option C due to the crime. He indicated that building a Police Department there will reduce crime by 50 percent and change the face of the entire City of Palmetto. It was discussed about the size of the current City owned parcel of .96 acres and the estimated 3 acres necessary; Commissioner Smith stated that he knows the property owners and they are willing and able to sell quickly and for a fair price to the City. With the acquisition of the residential pieces on the north side of Option C (the City owned piece) the property would still be less than the necessary size for the size of the Police Department, parking, and future expansion. Commissioner Smith stated that the Police Department can be multiple stories tall which would mean it would not need the 3 acres as desired.

Discussion ensued regarding a multi-story Police Department and the cost which will be significantly more than the estimated \$8M. ADG reminded the Commission to think about the cost of going vertical which includes further piping for utilities like plumbing, electrical, and secure computer network, along with elevators, a larger elevator to accommodate property and evidence, the ongoing maintenance of the elevators, stairs, and security on multiple levels. Commissioner Smith and Mr. Burton stated that cost is not an issue because the CRA can fund a Police Department in this area.

Discussion ensued regarding the next steps on selecting a site. Mayor Bryant would like this on a future agenda for a public meeting to allow public comment on the Plan and the locations. It was determined that Option B is not a viable option due to the costs for moving and relocating staff to a new location while the existing Police Department is demolished and a new Police Department is rebuilt and then the cost to move the staff back. ADG was asked to provide an estimated cost, without land acquisition, for the construction of a multi-story Police Department along with parking to be fit on Option C site.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Minutes approved: July 16, 2018

*James R. Freeman*

James R. Freeman  
City Clerk