

CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
November 15, 2010
4:30 PM

Elected Officials Present:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Tamara Cornwell, Vice Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Alan Zirkelbach, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Mary Lancaster, Commissioner, Ward 1
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3 (Entered at 4:42 p.m.)

Staff Present:

James R. Freeman, City Clerk
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director
Chief Rick Wells
Lorraine Lyn, City Planner
Scott Rudacille, City Attorney
Deanna Roberts, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

1. MPO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING UPDATE

Mike Maholtz, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, transportation planner and Nick Lepp, Renaissance Planning Group, senior transportation planner, will present the MPO's 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Mr. Lepp explained that the MPO was making a presentation of the options and the draft financially feasible plan to all of the municipalities and counties prior to adoption of the long range plan. He gave a PowerPoint presentation with an update on the MPO's 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan is to be adopted at the December 13th meeting of the MPO.

The plan is revised to measure year-of-expenditure estimates, a roadway and multimodal emphasis has been added to the plan as well as transit and bicycle and pedestrian enhancements. The MPO made sure the plan was consistent with local Comp Plans and with what the public was looking for. The plan looks at long-term mobility and regional and local needs. There will be a focus on the US 41 corridor and multimodal projects. I75 is projected to be widened to ten lanes to accommodate future growth. Rapid transit between Sarasota and Manatee Counties, a Port connector to I75 and a Manatee River crossing are part of the long range plan.

New to this plan is that the costs and revenues must be developed in year-of-expenditure. Projects must be matched within each five year increment to revenues within those five years. Project costs are estimated based on future costs. A project cost of \$6.5 million today might be \$11 million in the future. The MPO looked at federal and state funds available to the MPO and impact fee funds through the counties.

Funding the needs plan of 2035 will be upwards of \$6 billion. Unfunded needs in Manatee County include the construction of a new bridge.

Mayor's Bryant asked about funds to be expended on 8th Avenue. Mr. Lepp said that will be part of the multimodal emphasis of the 41 corridor. The City can come forward with some plans for CMS funds and multimodal emphasis funds.

Part of the financially feasible plan includes the widening of the pedestrian section of the Green Bridge for a wider multi use trail. This is projected for 2015.

Commissioner Cornwell asked for the location of a proposed bridge crossing. Mr. Lepp said somewhere between Canal and Ellenton-Gillette, but a PD&E update of a study done in the '90s has been funded to determine a location.

Commissioner Varnadore asked about the DeSoto Bridge widening. In peak hours there is major gridlock on the bridge and she wondered how an ambulance would get to the hospital. Mr. Lepp commented there is no plan for bridge improvements at this time. They are trying to optimize the 301/41 corridor for evacuations, emergency response, etc. A new bridge is the preferred option, but there are no funds for a new bridge at this time.

Commissioner Zirkelbach said he sees the potential for the City of Palmetto to capitalize on the opportunities the Port can offer. When the Panama Canal improvements are done in approximately 2014 the Port will be different. He doesn't see anything being done on the connector. Port growth helps the City. Mr. Lepp commented the study is being done now, and the alignment is still being worked out. They are planning for it to be completed by 2030 based on the FDOT Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Zirkelbach expressed concern that the Manatee County Port, paid for by County taxpayers, might have a connector road that will run along the Hillsborough County line. Hillsborough could see it as their port. Mr. Lepp said the alignment is still being worked out.

Commissioner Cornwell asked to see the master plan for mass transit for rail and bus. She asked about river mobility. Mr. Lepp said it is not in the long range plan. He hopes more funds are available in the future to enhance transit.

2. DISCUSSION: PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 2010-19 (L. Lyn)

City Planner Lorraine Lyn will discuss a proposed ordinance to initiate an amendment to revise the shared or joint parking provision in the current Zoning Code.

Ms. Lyn said this issue arose because of a private shared parking agreement that exists between two businesses where they are not able to agree. It came to the Planning and Zoning Board on September 16 and P&Z made its recommendations. She referenced a map that shows potential areas for shared parking.

Commissioner Zirkelbach asked Ms. Lyn her philosophical view about planning in an urban corridor. She responded that shared parking should be in the code. Commission needs to determine what it wants to come before them and what can be approved administratively.

Mr. Rudacille said there will be a requirement for a long-term agreement which runs with the property. If the principal use is changed it must come to the City, either the Commission or the City Planner, for approval.

Mr. Tusing said the ordinance would establish parking requirements.

Mr. Rudacille said if the ordinance is approved, the City will have a recorded document which puts the parties on notice as to their rights.

Ms. Lyn explained that if Hungry Howie's and the Movie Gallery had a shared parking agreement under this proposed ordinance, and not their private agreement, they would have to have a site plan approved, which would be recorded. Any changes would have to be approved.

Commissioner Varnadore wanted to make sure steps were in place to prevent any conflicts like this from occurring again.

Mr. Rudacille commented that a new business use or an expansion would trigger a review of a property's parking requirements.

Mayor Bryant asked to review the forms currently in place, saying they must be clearly signed off on and strictly adhered to. She commented that a decision needs to be reached about at what point shared parking agreements need to come back to Commission for approval. Mrs. Varnadore remarked that Zoning should be on the forms checklist.

Mr. Williams said the Palmetto Guest Home has shared parking with the City. If the use changes, what happens to that agreement? His point was, has the arrangement ever been documented. All such agreements should be recorded.

There was a consensus to move this forward to the 7:00 p.m. meeting with a stipulation in the ordinance that if the total parking is being reduced by 20% or more it must come back to Commission for approval.

Mr. Zirkelbach stated that if any changes are made by either party, Movie Gallery or Hungry Howie's, it must go to the Planner and then there would be a recorded document.

Mr. Williams asked to have the revised forms emailed to Commission.

3. DISCUSSION: FINANCE DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION (J. Freeman)

Deputy Clerk-Finance Karen Simpson will discuss a proposed reorganization strategy for the Finance Department.

This item was pulled from the November 1 workshop due to time constraints. Mr. Freeman summarized the proposed changes to the Finance Department:

- Replace one full-time position lost through attrition with two part-time positions.
- Reclassify the current account clerk to purchasing clerk.
- A couple of title changes.
- Net result would be a reduction in the current budget of \$18,000+

Finance Director Karen Simpson stated the November 1 presentation is still the desired goal. Tonight's presentation is just Phase I of the reorganization. The vacant account position would be downgraded to a part-time 30 hour per week payroll clerk. If the part-time payroll clerk position works out as anticipated, then she would move towards adding a part-time accounting clerk.

Title changes would include Sr. Accounting Analyst to Sr. Accountant and Warehouse Operator to Warehouse/Data Entry Clerk.

In answer to Commissioner Williams' question, Mrs. Simpson said this plan removes raises for additional responsibilities and puts that in Phase II. The only difference between the two phases is the dollar amount.

Commissioner Varnadore asked to review the personnel policy as far as raises for employees who further their education while that policy is undergoing review.

Commissioner Lancaster commented that other departments have taken on extra duties due to layoffs with no reorganization and no raises. Mrs. Simpson commented that this phase does not include raises except for a raise for the accounting clerk reclassified to purchasing clerk.

Commissioner Varnadore said she was in favor of the reorganization in Phase I to see how it works, but she is not in favor of any raises in this current environment. She stated she has received multiple letters from other employees in opposition. It could create a morale problem.

Mayor Bryant asked to see the comp time being accrued. She wants the Commission to have access to that information.

Discussion of the item will be continued at the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Minutes approved: December 6, 2010

James R. Freeman

James R. Freeman, City Clerk