

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

I. PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Members Present: Chairman Kurt Keesecker and Commissioners Genevieve Keller, Jody Lahendro, John Santoski and Lisa Green

Staff Present: Missy Creasy, Lisa Robertson and, Ryan Davidson

Call to Order: by Chair Keesecker at 5:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Capital Improvement Program

An overview of the 2018-2023 Proposed Capital Improvement Program was presented by Ryan Davidson.

Commissioner Keller asked about the Comcast agreement and if it was related to the CIP. Mr. Davidson noted that the only fee included in the CIP would be the fee for public access channels. He was not certain about the communications agreements.

Commissioner Keller asked about the sizing of fire trucks in light of the current streets initiatives. Mr. Davidson noted that this is taken into account with fire truck purchases and the last purchases have been for narrower apparatus.

Clarity was provided to Commission concerning what is included in the adaptive signal request.

Commissioner Lahendro asked about projects where there is an existing fund balance. For example, there is funding already in underground utilities, is more needed. It was explained by staff that some funds need to build up over time before enough is accumulated for a project. The current undergrounding funds will be spent on a project on Water Street.

Commissioner Santoski asked about the status of a Small Area Plan in the Hydraulic Road area and if that affects the CIP. Commissioner Green shared what she heard on this from the CHART meeting. It was noted that the PDC is working with VDOT on whether remaining transportation funds could support long range planning efforts in this area.

Commissioner Keller further noted that maybe consideration should be given to contracting small area plans to the PDC so they can be completed. Ms. Creasy noted that a number of projects are underway that will be discussed further at the joint work session next week. Commissioners Keller and Lahendro wondered if consideration should be given to the next three years allocation for small area planning into 2018.

Commissioner Keesecker noted that part of the theory that the Commission has worked under for recommendations is when an increase is noted for one area that a decrease is provided for another. The CIP should be a tool for planning and it is not being used solely as a way to provide funding for the future. There are maintenance items on this list. The Planning Commission would like a more aspirational list and more funds moved to these projects. He also asked if CIP funds can be used for staff (it cannot).

Commissioner Keller feels like we should have small area plans in place so the needs of neighborhoods are outlined when projects come in for review.

Commissioner Keesecker noted that perhaps we need to get the neighborhoods to assist in the work.

Commissioner Lahendro noted that we have work performed by the Cherry Avenue area and they can likely provide some insight on a process.

Commissioner Keesecker noted the importance of planning going across neighborhood boundaries.

Commissioner Santoski stated that all of this comes back to zoning. If we don't have the zoning in place to match community vision, the plans will not be implemented.

Commissioner Keesecker asked how we communicate that the CIP be used for planning processes. He noted that the CIP breaks down into 3 categories: maintenance, operational and aspirational. There should be more conversation on the aspirational.

Commissioner Santoski noted that consideration must be taken for staff resources to implement projects. He also noted his experience with the CIP committee and how there are many initiatives which are not funded.

Commissioner Lahendro noted that this should be discussed further following the November 30th meeting.

Commissioner Keller asked where funding will come from to address the Blue Ribbon Commission initiatives. Mr. Davidson noted that there are a few sources that will be considered for projects resulting from that process.

Mr. Davidson provided background on the parking structure item included in the materials noting that the first year of the CIP is what is adopted and the remaining years are subject to change.

Commissioner Santoski asked what happens if matching funding from the state is not received. Mr. Davidson noted that for most projects they would not get completed. In the case of the Belmont Bridge, the level of enhancements would likely be reduced.

Commissioner Keller asked for clarification that the funding provided for tree planting was for trees on City property. That was confirmed. Mr. Davidson also noted the operational costs involved with CIP projects outlining the additional staff needed to maintain the plantings at the Interchange.

Commissioner Santoski noted that in the case of the West Main project that the increased revenue from the housing projects there should pay for the project and for the maintenance.

Concerning the amount of funds provided to the Housing Fund, Commission Keller asked if oversight was provided to the recipient of those funds. It was noted that it is provided.

Commission Keller, Santoski and Keesecker objected to allocating City funding for a senior center at Belvedere.

Commissioner Santoski asked about the school reconfiguring project. Mr. Davidson noted that is on hold to allow for evaluation of the increase in enrollment and other projects.

Commissioner Keller asked if funding for the Home energy grant could be available to properties in the ADC to assist financially in maintaining historic windows. Is there a way to rewrite the regulations to allow for this?

Commissioner Keesecker noted that on December 13th the Commission will provide recommendations that will move forward to Council. He suggested that the Commission write a letter ahead of time and have that available to assist in the comments. He would use staff notes to put this together. Also, there was discussion about asking for additional planning staff to support implementation of CIP projects.

Ms. Creasy provided a brief overview of the bylaws and operating procedures. She noted the addition of proposed language concerning Election Day meetings.

Commissioner Green was interested in the operational procedures and providing an update to those. She also was interested in having a retreat.

Commissioner Keesecker was reminded that the Commission can forward letters to Council for actions we feel should be taken. He thought a retreat in January or February would be helpful and should be discussed following the November 30th meeting. He also noted that additional joint meetings can be set up with Council and it was noted that Kurt and John met with the Mayor and Ms. Galvin to have that discussion. He further noted that any letters crafted would need to tie directly to the Comprehensive Plan and include a summary statement so the Commission's recommendation is clear.

Ms. Robertson noted the importance of outlining actionable items as being important for any of these discussions.

Staff will include the bylaws for review on the next regular meeting agenda.

Adjourn: 7:20 p.m.