

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

JULY 16, 2019

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Chris Nelson at 6:00 p.m. on the 16th day of July, 2019, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue. Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, and David Martin were present. Mayor Haila and *ex officio* Member Devyn Leeson were absent.

CONSENT AGENDA: Moved by Betcher, seconded by Martin, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

1. Resolution setting July 23, 2019, as date of public hearing on conveyance of a portion of City-owned property generally located at 734 E. Lincoln Way.
2. Resolution approving Change Order No. 4 in the amount of \$761,733 (inclusive of sales tax) to Helfrich Brothers Boiler Works, Inc., of Lawrence, Massachusetts, for Unit 7 Boiler Repair Project.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Resolutions declared adopted unanimously, signed by the Mayor, and hereby made a portion of these Minutes.

PLAN 2040 UPDATE: Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann introduced Marty Shukert of RDG. Mr. Diekmann gave background on the Ames Plan 2040 so far, and told the Council that possible scenarios for growth will be described while taking into account land use, transportation, and utilities. He said the meeting is informational for City Council, and next steps will be discussed. Mr. Diekmann noted that evaluation of infill scenarios will occur in August.

Council Member Gartin asked how Council should be thinking about infill before thinking about adding to the footprint. Mr. Shukert said infill has to be thought about as small scale areas and larger scale areas. He said of the projected population increase of 15,000 people, 20-25% could be accommodated in the infill areas. He said infill is a given and is common to any growth scenario, but the capability of certain areas to accommodate growth will be evaluated.

Council Member Betcher asked about emerging themes and how they were used to develop scenarios. Mr. Shukert said the emerging themes were used to evaluate each scenario, and noted all scenarios achieve a higher overall density than current Ames. Ms. Betcher asked about policy discussions involved in the scenarios. Mr. Diekmann said that will be reviewed at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Shukert told the Council a 1.5% annual growth rate was assumed, and the group was tasked with addressing a projected population increase of 15,000 people and distributing them in different growth areas, of which the final choice could be one scenario or a combination of some or all scenarios. He said a development concept to house 15,000 is the goal, but the future beyond twenty years must be kept in mind.

Mr. Shukert said Iowa State University (ISU) land, land in the 100-year flood plain, and steep slopes were not considered in the scenarios, and they worked to design around environmentally sensitive

areas. Mr. Martin asked about the availability of property. Mr. Diekmann said reaching out to property owners has not been done as this is the first presentation of scenarios.

Mr. Shukert described Low-intensity urban residential as 3-4 units per acre, Medium-intensity urban residential as 6-10 units per acre, High urban residential as 10-20 units per acre, and Mixed use/High-density urban residential as 16 or more units per acre. He said town homes are currently the most popular home of choice nationally. Council Member Martin asked about the difference between gross and net units. Mr. Shukert said the gross figure takes the number of people per square mile divided by 640 and net density only looks at the residential area. Mr. Diekmann said the current Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) has a general goal of an average of five units per acre over many projects and minimum density requirements for every project of 3.75 net units per acre for single family homes or 10 net units per acre for medium density. He said gross density works well for long term planning. Density examples were shown. It was noted that Northridge neighborhood is about two gross units per acre, Northridge Heights neighborhood is about 4 units per acre, and Edwards neighborhood is about 6 units per acre.

The options were reviewed: North Expansion, East Expansion, South Expansion A, South Expansion B, West Expansion A, an West Expansion B.

Joe Spradling of HDR said the North Expansion option does not have connectivity to Interstate 35 (I-35) so there could be increased pressure south of the area. He said if growth goes north of 190th Street that would drive the need for a new interchange at East Riverside Road. Mr. Spradling noted that the planned growth south of 190th Street can be served by existing infrastructure, but if development goes north it will require a major sewer investment. Council Member Gartin said Council is sensitive to the existing pressure on Grant and Hyde Avenues. Mr. Diekmann said the scenarios will be looked at through a traffic model which will help Council make decisions. Council Council Member Nelson noted that if Ames doesn't go north, Gilbert could come south with the same mission. Mr. Shukert said one of the points of the diagram is trying to push traffic to the east toward Highway 69, which is easier to widen. Discussion ensued. Mr. Nelson said Council may want more answers about Gilbert before proceeding.

Mr. Shukert said the East Expansion option has limited geographic constraints and assumes significant commercial development along the I-35 corridor. He said a new I-35 interchange at East Riverside Road would be essential. Mr. Diekmann said regional commercial is unique to this scenario. Council Member Nelson noted the potential to expand more to the east in the future. Mr. Shukert concurred. Council Member Gartin asked about Ketelsen Marsh. Mr. Diekmann said it is recognized as an environmental resource currently. This scenario would be housing the majority of people in higher density housing. The area was compared to Delaware Avenue in Ankeny. It was noted a major investment for utilities would be needed. Council Member Gartin asked if the investment would be added for the commercial area anyway. Mr. Diekmann said the full East Industrial area cannot be served without another trunk line. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said it seems natural to pair the North Expansion and East Expansion growth areas because of the needed interchange and sewer investments.

The South A Expansion option was reviewed. A new interchange at 260th Street was discussed to reduce additional impact on Duff Avenue. This option was discussed as being close to ISU Research Park. Mr. Diekmann said this would be a village scenario like Somerset, but about four times larger than Somerset. City Manager Steve Schainker asked about expansion of the runway. Mr. Shukert said that was taken into consideration. Mr. Diekmann said the draft plan for runway expansion is being discussed. Council Member Martin asked about the state nursery. Mr. Diekmann said a few years ago the state was looking to sell it. Mr. Shukert said this option would have a good connection to a solid neighborhood. Mr. Spradling said this option would be the easiest sewer connection. Mr. Shukert said this is an area the development community doesn't tend to think about. Council Member Gartin said if public transportation is valued, there could be an argument for higher density. Mr. Shukert discussed affordability and areas where exclusive single family zoning could be eliminated. Mr. Diekmann said there is a push for attached single family homes currently. Mr. Shukert said the conventional single family lot is less popular. Ms. Betcher said the aging population wants the same amenities as the millennial population.

Mr. Shukert reviewed the West B Expansion option and said it's village-like in form, and suggests two pedestrian bridges. Council Member Nelson asked about school districts. It was noted Y Avenue is County Line Road and divides Ames Community School District (ACSD) and United Community School District. The pipeline was noted. Council Member Gartin asked about the buffer around the area. Mr. Shukert said a drainage corridor is on the south, and a green way is on the west. The area would have a gross density of 6.15 units per acre and be predominantly urban density. Mr. Spradling said Highway 30 is the connector but can also be a barrier, so pedestrian bridges would be helpful. He said the area will need incremental sewer improvements. Discussion ensued about development in Boone County. Mr. Diekmann said this option would have more annexations of property than the others.

The West A Expansion option was discussed. It was noted that some negative input has been received about going north of the railroad tracks. Mr. Spradling said there are currently two viaducts so there is a transportation impediment. Mr. Diekmann said east of County Line Road is ACSD and west is United Community School District.

Infrastructure comparisons were observed. Council Member Beatty-Hansen asked about climate change and resiliency used during evaluating the options. Mr. Diekmann said sensitivity was used regarding flooding, and said resilience of the plans will be discussed.

Mr. Diekmann asked if the Council has feedback as the team moves into the next task. Mr. Schainker asked if the parkway in the South A Expansion option is imperative in the event the state nursery does not sell. Mr. Diekmann said the parkway or the interchange would be needed for that option.

Ms. Betcher asked if it can be determined how the scenarios meet Council's goals. Mr. Diekmann said new parameters for the plan will be established in the next steps that can be used to evaluate land use plans. Council Member Betcher wondered about the possibility of collaboration with

Nevada for the trunk line needed for the East Expansion option. The Burke expansion was noted. She said there are many inter-jurisdictional conversations with the different options. Mr. Shukert said it is being assumed those things can be solved. Council Member Martin wondered which options would be more of a net benefit for existing neighborhoods whose residents must travel to other areas of Ames for most amenities. Council Member Gartin said many residents want more commercial on the north side of Ames. Council Member Betcher asked how realistic it is to discuss new interchanges and pedestrian bridges. Mr. Diekmann said there won't be state funding to build an interchange before it's needed, so building into a traffic problem would be needed to justify federal funding. Discussion ensued. Council Member Gartin said he appreciates attention to green space. Council Member Nelson said he appreciates the effort put into this process.

Mr. Diekmann said next steps include public input received over the next weeks on the City website via an interactive tool, an RDG working design studio with public drop-in for questions and comments in late August, discussions on emerging policies and plan elements continuing through the fall, and in September and October emerging policies and draft sections will be discussed and public comment will be received on the complete project. Council Member Gartin said he would like to see a link to this meeting on the web page. Council Member Gartin said tensions exist over infill projects and gentrification as a priority. He said he wants to consider the human aspect and ways to evaluate gentrification. Mr. Shukert said that is a critical issue and it's important to recognize housing affordability and attainability.

Council Member Betcher asked about studentification related to infill. She said studentification involves one population displacing a previous population. Mr. Diekmann said he is not sure if those assumptions will be revisited. Ms. Betcher asked if the working design studio in August will be held after students are back. Mr. Diekmann said it will be toward the end of August.

Mr. Shukert said he appreciates the rich environment and exchange with Council.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL:

Council Member Gartin asked about the memo regarding Ada Hayden Water Quality Monitoring. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said the information is on the website.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Betcher, to request a memo from staff on the request from Steven Cannon dated July 6, 2019 regarding parking and visibility at the north end of Brookridge Avenue.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Council Member Gartin asked about tools available for residential property maintenance. Mr. Schainker said tools in place could secure a dangerous building but may be unsightly. Council Member Betcher said the document developed a few years ago on minimum property maintenance could be distributed again.

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to re-circulate the document created regarding

residential property maintenance.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Betcher noted the anniversary of employment for City Manager Steve Schainker, who has been with the City of Ames for 40 years.

Council Member Gartin said a high school student in the community took her life recently. He urged people in the community struggling with mental health issues to reach out for help.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor

Erin Thompson, Recording Secretary