

**City Council Workshop Meeting
October 17, 2017
Council Chambers
7:09 PM**

COUNCILORS PRESENT

Councilor Abbott
Councilor Barnett
Councilor Bogan
Councilor Gates
Councilor Gray
Councilor Hamann
Councilor Keans
Councilor Lachapelle
Councilor Lauterborn
Councilor Torr
Councilor Varney
Councilor Willis
Mayor McCarley

OTHERS PRESENT

Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager
Terence O'Rourke, City Attorney
Gregg DeNobile, Resident
Lou Archambault, Resident
human, Resident
Paul Martin, Resident

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCarley called the City Council workshop meeting to order at 7:09. Deputy City Clerk Cassie Givara took a silent roll call. All councilors were present. City Manager Daniel Fitzpatrick was absent; Deputy City Manager Blaine Cox was present in his place.

2. Public Input

Mayor McCarley opened the floor for public input at 7:10 PM inviting members of the public to come forward and speak.

Gregg DeNobile, resident, thanked Kelley-Jaye Cleland from the NH Lottery Commission for her candor in addressing residents' concerns regarding Keno. Mr. DeNobile brought up an announcement made by the chairman at the previous night's planning board meeting that props would no longer be allowed during meetings and questioned whether this decision would be extended to other City Meetings. Mr. DeNobile questioned the constitutionality of such a decision.

Mr. DeNobile also inquired about an amendment to chapter 42 of the general ordinance of the City of Rochester regarding variances. It states

that variances will not be contrary to the public interest. Mr. Denobile inquired what constitutes public interest.

Finally, Mr. DeNobile inquired about an accepted application for a development on Chesley Hill Road from a recent Planning Board meeting and what constitutes a “complete” application.

Lou Archambault, resident, questioned the disallowance of props at city meetings. Mr. Archambault spoke about safety concerns for the citizens of Rochester. Mr. Archambault also spoke of Rochester students leaving the city after graduation and spoke about Amazon Campground.

human, resident, addressed the use of props at public meetings and the legality of not allowing such props. human also voiced his support for the works of Straight Street Outreach and made a suggestion that they be included on next year’s CDBG budget.

Paul Martin, resident, addressed the City’s sidewalk ordinances and how these ordinances are approved.

3. Communications from the City Manager

3.1 AB 42 Adopt-A-Spots

a. Certificate of Appreciation [*for participants attending the meeting*]

Mayor McCarley presented certificates of appreciation to the following volunteers:

- Becky Warburton for her work on the Adopt-A-Spot at the Rochester Police Station.
- Brian and Jenny Brown and Fred Glidden for Adopt-A-Spots at the Wellsweep Flagpole and Fountain
- Daughters of the American Revolution for the General Wolfe Tavern Barrels Adopt-A-Spot
- Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains Troop 10515 for the Adopt-A-Spot at the Rochester Community Center Flagpole

b. Certificate of Appreciation List [*for any participants unable to attend the meeting*]

Deputy City Manager Blaine Cox recognized the Adopt-A-Spot volunteers who were unable to attend and receive their certificates.

Mayor MCarley recognized Laura Hainey of the Rochester Democratic Committee for the Adopt-A-Spot at Gonic Center Square.

4. Communications from the Mayor

Prior to addressing agenda items, Mayor McCarley announced that the next Regular City Council Meeting would take place on Wednesday November 8th 2017 at 7:00 PM due to the Municipal Election taking place on Tuesday November 7, 2017.

Mayor McCarley also invited council members to Mel Flanagan's on Tuesday October 24th at 6:00 PM. The pub is hosting an event for visiting Irish students interested in becoming involved in their own local governments. The mayor encouraged council members to attend the event to share ideas and experiences with the students.

4.1 Presentation: Straight Street Outreach

Eric Hopkins, Sheryl Huckins, Yves Lavoie, Peter Smith and Renee Lavoie each shared their experiences working with SSO, helping those in need and providing support for members of the community who were struggling. The volunteers expressed the need for the services of Straight Street Outreach to be visible and located in an easily accessible area.

The Straight Street representatives spoke of the success stories of residents in need who had been assisted by Straight Street Outreach as well as the willingness of community members to help with their efforts. They talked about the program recently becoming incorporated and looking to expand and do some fundraising. The volunteers spoke of how much time and personal finances have gone into the operation of the program and expressed the need for the City's support and involvement. Interest was expressed in information on having Straight Street Outreach included in the CDBG budget.

5. Presentation: **AB 39 Wayfinding by BETA Group**

Randy Collins presented a power point outlining how BETA group intends to implement a wayfinding signage system in Rochester for pedestrians and travelers. The goal of the signage system is to establish a design identity for the city of Rochester and give a sense of branding to the City. The new signage would work in conjunction with the existing DOT signs. The signs would serve multiple purposes. Gateway signs welcoming travelers to the city; destination signs marking City buildings and schools; directional signs directing people to particular points of interest, regions of

the City or major roadways.

The BETA group would develop a map of the overall community including downtown Rochester, Gonic and East Rochester to determine where signage would be placed and to identify specific areas they'd like to highlight with the signage system.

Councilor Varney suggested that when BETA group brings the Master Signage plan to the council, that they present it in stages. If the entire project is presented at once, the financial scope of the project might cause it to stall in council.

Councilor Varney also surmised that the logo on the signage was to take the place of the City Seal. Councilor Varney suggested that if this were the case, the citizens of Rochester should have an opportunity to weigh in on the issue.

Mr. Collins reported that the reason signage systems don't typically utilize City seals are because they are very busy and don't translate into a readable format onto signs. Mr. Collins says BETA group is looking to finalize the master plan by early next year. They will touch base with council at least once before that time to determine prioritization of plan items, so they can implement the system in stages.

Councilor Willis added that he believes the City is lacking in consistency in ability to navigate through the city with the current state DOT signs. Councilor Willis would like to see signs indicating where particular routes lead as well as distance for easier navigation for outsiders to the city.

Mr. Collins said that this signage system is meant as another layer on top of the DOT signs to simplify navigation through the City, including getting in and out of downtown.

6. Discussion: AB 43 NH DOT's Ten Year Plan

Mayor McCarley asked if there were any questions from council regarding the 10-year plan before the presentation began. No questions were posed.

Seth Creighton, Chief Planner, introduced Colin Lentz of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission whose area of expertise is traffic and transportation within the state. Mr. Lentz explained the process of the 10-year plan, which is designed based on state law and updated by NH DOT every two years. The Planning Commission's role in that process is to work with communities to develop projects which are then ranked by importance

through a system and agreed upon by the participants in the program. Mr. Lentz discussed how the budgeting and funding works, the application process, and deadlines for project requests and criteria used to determine order of projects.

Mr. Lentz reports that his goal is to improve the capacity for developing larger projects which are more appropriate for this 10-year plan which would require federal subsidies.

Councilor Varney asked Mr. Lentz if the City still had an opportunity to comment and inquired when the deadline occurs for commenting in writing. Per Mr. Lentz, the deadline is sometime in December. Council Varney remarked that the project spreadsheet included in the 10-year-plan packet is too difficult to read due to the small font and he would prefer if it were sorted so the Rochester projects were all listed together. The council could then review the City's projects and prioritize them.

Councilor Willis inquired if the TA program includes sidewalks. Councilor Willis expressed the need for sidewalks to connect East Rochester to downtown Rochester where there is a 4,000-foot gap on Portland Street. This issue has been brought up in the past and Councilor Willis believes it needs to be reprioritized.

Councilor Torr talked about focusing on more reasonable projects such as a sidewalk to the mall on Route 11 as opposed to having the Exit 10 project included in the 10-year-plan. Both Councilor Torr and Mayor McCarley agreed that the Exit 10 project has been revisited multiple times over the past 25 years and is not likely to happen.

7. Department Reports

Councilor Varney questioned an excerpt in the recent Economic Development report from the RKG plan currently in progress. The report indicated in a section titled "incoming values" that housing values in the City of Rochester were projected to decline between 2010 and 2021. Councilor Varney noted that property values are not going down currently and he would like some clarification on this item as well as some other data in the report. Requested that council have someone associated with the report explain this.

8. Other

Councilor Keans reiterated that the next Regular Council Meeting would be Wednesday November 8th as opposed to the usual Tuesday meeting, due to the Municipal election.

Councilor Varney asked City Attorney O'Rourke for clarification on the City's sidewalks ordinance. Council Varney said his understanding is that it is not in the council's purview to install or not install sidewalks but rather the purview of the planning board. Attorney O'Rourke verified that whether or not sidewalks are required is up to the planning board; it's the City's responsibility to maintain said sidewalks.

Councilor Varney said we should reexamine how the City adheres to right-to-know requests in respect to committee and board meeting minutes. The Councilor believes we should set as a goal to have all meeting minutes available not only in person within 5 working days of a meeting but also available in a draft form online within 5 days.

Councilor Gates asked Councilor Torr when the next ZBA meeting is scheduled to take place. At this time the meeting is on the calendar for Wednesday November 8, 2017 which is also the scheduled date for the Regular City Council meeting due to the election the previous day. Councilor Torr concurred that the meeting would need to be rescheduled. The new meeting date will be forthcoming.

Councilor Hamann reported that the Safety Committee Meeting is at DPW at 7:00 PM tomorrow, Wednesday October 18. The public is welcome to attend

Councilor Varney inquired about the earlier discussion regarding disallowing the use of props at planning board meetings. Councilor Varney asked where this decision came from and said that he doesn't believe the city can make such an assertion. Attorney O'Rourke clarified that planning board meetings are not a full service public forum and restrictions can be placed on time. Councilor Varney asserted that he believes use of props would not affect time limits and if it was stated that props would not be allowed it may have been said in error. Attorney O'Rourke said he would look into the reasoning behind disallowance of prop use and if it was due to time limits.

9. Non-Meeting/Non-Public

Mayor McCarley requested a motion to adjourn into non-public. Councilor Lachapelle moved to enter a non-public session at 8:29 PM. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion. The motion carried by a majority roll call vote. All Councilors voted yes except for Councilor Torr who was momentarily absent.

Mayor McCarley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting as council would not be coming out with any other actions following the non-public session. Councilor Lachapelle moved to adjourn. Councilor Bogan seconded the motion.

9.1 Non-Public, Labor Negotiations, RSA 91-A:3,II(a)

10. Adjournment

Mayor McCarley invoked Robert's Rules and adjourned the meeting without taking a vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM.

**[Per Deputy City Manager Blaine Cox, Non-Public meeting
adjourned at 9:02 PM]**

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Givara
Deputy City Clerk