

Minutes

DVD No. 415

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M., on Monday, May 7, 2018. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: Chuck Sipple, Jim Rawlings, Julie Cain, Andrew Osman, James Azeltine, Debra Filla, Mary Larson and Lisa Harrison

Councilmembers Absent: None

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| Staff Present: | Scott Lambers, City Administrator | Patty Bennett, City Attorney |
| | Mark Klein, Planning Office | Chris Claxton, Parks & Rec. Director |
| | Chief Dave Williams, Fire Department | David Ley, Public Works Director and City Engineer |
| | Brian Anderson, Parks Superintendent | Mark Tepesch, Info. Serv. Specialist III |
| | Chief Troy Rettig, Police Department | Richard Coleman, Comm. Dev. Director |
| | Ross Kurz, Info. Services Director | April Bishop, Cultural Arts Coordinator |
| | Dustin Branick, Arborist/Forester | Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk |
| | Debra Harper, City Clerk | |

Others Present: None

**Public Meeting for Residents' Comments on Park Improvement
Located at 96th & Lee Boulevard**

Mayor Dunn called the public meeting to order at 6:03 P.M. Introductions of the Governing Body with Ward affiliation were made.

Mayor Dunn stated the purpose of the meeting was to hear from attendees starting in order of sign-in. The public hearing would need to adjourn at 7:00 P.M. No plan has been developed at this time, but a few items discussed at Council Work Sessions, one being a new Fire Station to be built on the site, just south of the existing Fire Station which will eventually be removed. Old City Hall will remain on the site, but might be relocated on the tract. Mr. Lambers stated the existing cell tower will be removed in 2019.

Ms. Claxton stated a letter had been distributed on April 12, 2018 to residents for input on park amenities they would like to see at the site. Construction of the new Fire Station will begin after cell tower removal. Old City Hall is approximately 1,120 sq. ft. and location on the site is yet to be determined. The space remaining for park amenities is approximately 1.72 acres, which is not a large space, but it is additional land park land that is of great interest to residents of north Leawood.

Ms. Claxton introduced Park & Recreation Advisory Board member Ms. Lorrie Hamilton, and Parks & Recreation Staff members Mr. Anderson, Parks Superintendent; Mr. Branick, Arborist and Forester; and Ms. Bishop, Cultural Arts Coordinator. Ms. Bishop is also the Parks & Recreation Staff Liaison to the Historic Commission.

Mayor Dunn noted Fire Chief Dave Williams was present. There were no members of Historic Commission in attendance. Ms. Claxton stated she would stand for questions.

Mr. Dennis Merghetti, 9618 Lee Boulevard, stated his home was located on the west side of Lee Boulevard directly across from the site. He would like to see the area developed similar to Brook Beatty Park, having green space to enjoy nature with some swings. Late night use basketball courts should be avoided. Overall, the place should have a sedate passive atmosphere. A sidewalk should be installed on the east side of Lee Boulevard for access. There is currently a sidewalk on the west side of Lee Boulevard.

Mr. Rob Leach, 9606 Lee Boulevard, stated he lives on the west side of Lee Boulevard, two doors up from Mr. Merghetti. A passive park is wanted with minimal parking. The park should not be a big destination park or have much night time activity. To facilitate street crossing by pedestrians from the west side sidewalk, a crosswalk with signal light is probably needed. He thanked the City for the opportunity to present, stating the City has done a great job on parks and he would be glad to have a park to call his own.

Ms. Cora Bruce, 9627 Sagamore Road, addressed the Council with Mr. Rob Bruce. She would like to see wheelchair accessible playground equipment and a front fence. The area is very busy and need to prevent accidents. Seating for parents watching children play and a bathroom is needed. There should be a playset with slides and swings, and a lot of space to run around and stretch legs.

Mayor Dunn complimented and thanked Ms. Bruce for her excellent presentation. Councilmember Cain asked Ms. Bruce if she would share her age and if she would be able to walk to the park unescorted. Ms. Bruce stated she was 9 years old and would walk to the park only with a parent. Councilmember Cain stated playgrounds are designed with equipment to be able to be used by children of certain age groups, from very young to older youths. She asked Ms. Bruce for preference on the age of the group of children that would use the park, and where she goes when she wants to swing. Ms. Bruce stated the park should be for her age and younger children, and she uses the new Franklin Park [Prairie Village].

Ms. Charlotte Shaw, 9618 High Drive, agreed with the comments made.

Ms. Ellen Brown (Rick) 9614 High Drive, stated her home backs up to the current Fire Station. Lighting, plantings, and privacy, with privacy being the most important. She expressed concern about the current lighting. She inquired what type of plantings and barriers would be built between the Fire Station and her home.

Mayor Dunn stated Ms. Brown's request for plantings and concerns about lighting are recorded. Specific site details are yet to be determined. The Fire Station would need lighting and there would be plantings.

Mr. Jim Mitchum (Terry), 9525 Lee Boulevard, stated the comments made were very good. A place for animals to be walked on-leash with pet waste stations should be considered, rather than animals allowed to use resident lawns.

Mayor Dunn asked Mr. Mitchum about his association with Heart-to-Heart International. Mr. Mitchum stated Heart-to-Heart International that provides disaster medical relief. The agency just had their 25th anniversary. Heart-to-Heart would not be going to Hawaii to assist in regard to erupting volcano, but does help with earthquakes. Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. Mitchum for all that he does.

Mayor Dunn stated comments had been made by all those who had signed in to speak; she inquired if there were any other comments.

Ms. Jolynn Hobbs, 8309 Lee Boulevard, stated she was honored to serve residents of the Leawood Home Owners Association [HOA]. She thanked the Council and Parks & Recreation Department for a fantastic job on Brook Beatty Park, which her HOA residents and area community use. Mayor Dunn thanked Ms. Hobbs and her son for their advocacy of Brook Beatty Park. She viewed Brook Beatty Park today and agrees it looks beautiful, with landscaping starting to bloom.

Ms. Katy Cahl, 10311 Manor, expressed pleasure that the Old City Hall would be kept and inquired how it would be used. Mayor Dunn stated the Historic Commission has been doing strategic planning in this regard, but the fashion of use has not been determined. The building would likely be used to display historic artifacts, similar to a museum, with displays changing periodically. Not all artifacts can be displayed at the same time as there are many items and space in the Old and New City Hall is limited. Many artifacts are in storage. It is planned the Old City Hall would be open to the public. Parks & Recreation would likely utilize the building for some yet-to-be-determined future programming. If the public has historic items they would like to donate, please contact the Historic Commission.

Mr. Cecil Hammonds, 9820 Pembroke Lane, stated improvements that have been made to Lee Boulevard and marked bicycle paths must be taken into consideration. Bicycle routes are a path of safety to parks. First suggestion would be to install sidewalks on the east side of Lee Boulevard and crossings at intersection corners rather than mid-block crosswalk, for safety and access to the park from the two busiest streets, 95th and 103rd. A sidewalk on the east side of Lee Boulevard would also help control weed growth along the creek south of 98th Street and Lee Boulevard. He served on the Leawood Estates HOA Board for many years and controlling the growth was an ongoing issue. The HOA does not take responsibility, as deed restrictions indicate the property owner is responsible. A sidewalk would help prevent weed encroachment and obstruction of the view of vehicle drivers at 98th Street. Second suggestion would be to control bicycle paths and ensure users are responsible. Signage should include safety warnings such as "SLOW" and not necessarily speed limit signs. The signs should be placed at all major street intersections such as 103rd and Sagamore and 103rd and Belinder, and at park access. The park is a wonderful idea and has been talked about many years since his move to Leawood in 1971.

Mr. Ley stated bicycle lanes would be added to Lee Boulevard in phases. In 2019, Phase I would be from 103rd Street to 95th Street and in 2020 from 95th Street to Somerset. There are no plans at this time to add a sidewalk on the east side of Lee Boulevard. This would need to be reviewed in regard to tree and roadway ditches.

Mr. Drew Alingh, 9629 Lee Boulevard, asked if artist renderings of the new Fire Station were available and if the new station would house only one fire engine along with the historic fire truck. Mayor Dunn stated there were no renderings at this time, only a general size and scope. Fire Chief Dave Williams stated the new Fire Station would be three-bay building with a 4,000 sq. ft. footprint, which is larger than the current Fire Station. The station would be two-stories, with a narrow footprint to allow as much space as possible for park land. There would be one fire engine, but the building was planned for 50 to 75-year use and a bit of service expansion. There may be a future need to house an ambulance squad.

Councilmember Azeltine pointed out the City must follow the planning process for City-owned buildings. Public notice will be provided.

Mayor Dunn stated the existing Fire Station would not be demolished until the new Fire Station was in operation. Chief Williams confirmed to Mayor Dunn there will be no lapse in coverage.

Mr. Brian Maher, 9634 Lee Boulevard, requested more information about the phased bicycle lane additions. He stated he was not a cyclist. Mayor Dunn stated the lanes were already approved. Mr. Ley stated an engineer would be hired in the next two months for design. The road would be widened by 2 ft. and vehicle lanes slightly narrowed to allow for 4 ft. wide bicycle lanes. Storm sewer improvements would be made to just north of 98th Street. Phase I is planned for 2019.

Mayor Dunn closed the public hearing, but any additional public comments would be taken until the meeting adjourned.

Councilmember Osman stated the site has been under discussion for several years. The City has learned projects must not be done hastily or improperly, and residents should be consulted. Although the City does not have master paper plan at this time, there must be short and long term vision, and planning and the project must be done in stages. For example, once the Justice Center was constructed to house the Police, the Police Station located at this site was taken down. Cell tower service providers at the site have been notified leases would not be renewed. The tower will be removed to make room for more park land. The City has been assured there will be cell coverage. In comparison to area metro stations, the existing Fire Station is significantly undersized for overnight accommodations. The heating and air conditioning system and roof require continual repair. Input was sought from the Historic Commission in regard to Old City Hall. Like Brook Beatty Park, the site is not a large tract, so amenities for the greater good of the community need to be well-planned. Incorporation of public input must be considered as the plans for the new Fire Station are finalized over the next one to two years. A county-wide sales tax was approved for financing the new Johnson County Courthouse and Coroner Facility, and cities receive a portion of the taxes collected by the County, which could be utilized at this site and other projects.

Mr. Lambers stated Johnson County is obligated to use their voter-approved sales tax proceeds for construction of the new County Courthouse and Coroner Facility, but the City's share of that tax, approximately \$1 Million annually, has no use restrictions. The money is placed in a Special Project Fund and can be transferred to funds with a specific name or to the General Fund.

Mayor Dunn expressed appreciation for attendance. Ms. Claxton stated she had received emails from six residents as well as one telephone call. She will ensure these communications are provided to the City Clerk for the record.

Councilmember Filla thanked Councilmember Osman for the great overview and Ms. Hobbs for her comments on Brook Beatty Park. The Park & Recreation Advisory Board met several times about recommendations such as a splash/sprinkle water amenity and park shelter. With the removal of the Police Station, the cell tower is far more visible. Removal of the cell tower has determined when the project can start. The Parks & Recreation Department has done an amazing job throughout the City, despite loss of equipment and their Maintenance Facility at 103rd Street due to two major floods last year. She gave assurance the residents would be proud of the project and there will be future meetings. The Historic Commission supports keeping Old City Hall on the site and there has been some discussion of repurposing a portion of the footprint of the existing Fire Station. Starting with the donation of a table and a car lease, the original two-bay Fire Station functioned as a City Hall, Police Station and Fire Station.

Councilmember Cain has served on the Park & Recreation Advisory Board for many years and the site has been discussed numerous times. The existing Fire Station must remain operable during the construction of the new Fire Station. Because of the turn radius of trucks, it is certain the Old City Hall will need to move prior to construction. She pointed out the City moved the historic one-room Oxford School House from 135th Street and Mission Road to Ironwoods Park. Planning is not easy or quick, and planning must be coordinated for the Fire Station and other amenities. She inquired if construction of the new Fire Station and other amenities would be simultaneous and requested a construction timeline. Mr. Lambers stated timing would depend on approval of the Fire Station Preliminary and Final Plans. It is uncertain if the parks portion of the site would be ready at that time. It is likely a Preliminary Plan for the site and a Final Plan for the Fire Station would be submitted. Seasonality will also impact when construction can begin. Mayor Dunn noted the Oxford School House is amazing place to visit. It is staffed by docents and often used for Parks & Recreation programming.

Ms. Charlotte Shaw, 9618 High, asked if the Old City Hall would be removed from the site, if the temporary Community Garden would remain and if all structures associated with the cell tower would be removed.

Mayor Dunn stated Old City Hall would remain somewhere on the site and all cell tower structures would be removed. Councilmember Filla advised this would be the last year for the temporary garden at the site.

Ms. Barbara Leach, 9606 Lee Boulevard, stated she agreed with the suggestions made by Mr. Hammond. She teaches small children. A sidewalk on the east side of Lee Boulevard is needed from 95th Street to 103rd Street as part of a park that is a safe place to play. A sidewalk would be beneficial to parents using strollers. She inquired if Lee Boulevard would remain as a two-lane roadway with ditches or be widened to two lanes each direction with bicycle lanes.

Mayor Dunn stated Lee Boulevard would remain a two-lane roadway, but vehicle lanes would be narrowed. Mr. Ley confirmed the roadway would have ditches. Mayor Dunn pointed out that if a sidewalk is analyzed, a number of things could happen.

Mr. Scott Swift, 9626 Lee Boulevard, expressed appreciation for the City's letter announcing the public meeting and stated information presented at the meeting was helpful. He asked what type of future communication could be anticipated.

Ms. Claxton referred to Councilmember Osman's comments on process, and added a Request for Proposal [RFP] had been distributed in regard to site plan. She encourages continued resident input which helps the City determine what might be included at the site, and thanked Ms. Bruce for her comments. The City would work with a consultant to ascertain what options are feasible, keeping the maximum amount of green space. Construction documents would not be created for quite some time.

Mr. Lambers confirmed to Councilmember Osman that additional Governing Body Work Sessions would be scheduled. The next Work Session would be used for presentation and discussion of the new Fire Station layout and design, and obtain consensus to move forward with that project. Another Work Session would be needed to narrow down the list of other use ideas to present to a consultant. With the small size of the tract every decision on use made precludes another decision. Comments made at tonight's meeting are revealing of the desire for a passive open space. Lighting will be focused on the tract, away from homes, and extensive landscaping will be used for buffering.

Mr. Swift reiterated his request regarding future individualized communication. Mr. Lambers stated that as part of the City's formal planning process, letters providing the schedule of Planning Commission and Governing Body meetings would be sent to residents and HOAs. HOA Presidents would be asked to keep residents informed. A Citizen Interact Meeting would be held to review plan details. There will be considerable notification and pre-review by residents before the start of the planning process and also throughout the process. Plans could change as the project moves through the planning process.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 P.M.

Debra Harper, CMC, City Clerk

Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk