

City of Gahanna

*200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 14, 2008

6:30 PM

Council Committee Rooms

Committee of the Whole

*Thomas C. Evers, Chair
Beryl D. Anderson
Shane Ewald
Thomas R. Kneeland
John McAlister
Nancy R. McGregor
David L. Samuel*

Members Absent: Shane W. Ewald and John McAlister

Members Present: Thomas C. Evers, Thomas R. Kneeland, Nancy R. McGregor, Beryl D. Anderson and David L. Samuel

Additional Attendees:

Tom Weber, Mayor Stinchcomb, Isobel Sherwood, Sadicka White, Matt Huffman, Jerry Isler, Robin Rupp-Mondak, General Williams, Dottie Franey, Chief Murphy, Terry Emery, Karl Wetherholt, Mike Andrako, Angel Mumma, Mike Musser, Troy Euton, Tony Collins, Kevin Marchese, Greg Dunn, Ben Hale, Kim Manley, Chris Brinbrich, Press

PENDING LEGISLATION:

ORD-0092-2008

TO REZONE 1.895+/- ACRES AS CC-2, COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL-2; FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1245 NORTH HAMILTON ROAD; 4-M PARTNERS, LTD., BY BEN HALE, APPLICANT.

McGregor called the meeting to order; first item is Ord-0092-2008 for rezoning on Hamilton Road; Mr. Hale is here to answer any questions. Kneeland said he had a comment from Ewald who had heard that the back room will not be available, or does not meet code, so the client is not interested in this location. Hale said he had a meeting with the business owner and determined the back room generates 20% of the business with the walk through gift shop; if it did not have back room, he would not open the store. Maddy will get a letter from Gard and we will put the space back on the market; no other questions.

Recommended for Adoption

ISSUES - Carried Over From Previous Committees:

Gahanna Swim Club

Collins said at the last meeting we brought forth the agreement to purchase the Gahanna Swim Club; over the last 2 weeks we have compiled the numbers you were looking for; I attended the members' meeting where they authorized the board to enter into such an agreement; the Vice President and Treasurer of the Club are here for questions; the other critical issue that came up previously was the need to move forward quickly because of their swim season; we have learned since then that the Swim Club Board can file a 90 day extension on their mortgage so we would be able to close the deal at the end of pool season to be better prepared; the potential to move forward with this action at the end of pool season gives us a great opportunity to learn more about the facility. Kneeland said I see the City's and management's side of this; learning the operation from the facility's perspective is of great value for the potential purchase; but is it in our interest to work with them now or to not touch it until sold? Collins said our staff and the employees of the pool would meet once a week; we would get to know the operation, maintenance and facilities over the summer; a great learning opportunity. Kneeland said to clarify, a lot of work is necessary to properly put together a package and then to get it voted on; we haven't seen any numbers yet. Collins said I have sent out an RCA (Request for Council Action) in the amount of \$645,000 for the purchase price.

Mayor said the pool board needs to understand our intent; if they are getting an

extension on their mortgage and we decide to take a different path after your due diligence, we can't let them know in September; it would be a courtesy to let them know if our plans are to proceed to buy it. Kneeland said we won't delay until September, but we are not in any position to look at a quick turn around as there is so much here to consider; for example, is there funding we can't do elsewhere because of this purchase. Collins said the RCA is only to purchase the pool; no operating budget yet; we have numbers from the past 2 years, and projections for the 2009 operating budget from the pool board.

Weber asked if the board has gone ahead and voted on extending the mortgage; I have a concern with timing and them being able to acquire it. Manley said we can do that; according to our bank it would take only 2 weeks and is an easy process; if we call in June should give us to October 1; we are going forward with business as usual. Weber said so they are ok with getting the extension while the City goes through the process.

McGregor asked if we can use the extra bond money we have. Mayor said yes, that makes sense.

Samuel asked if this price includes projected costs for fixing the front pool and rest rooms. Collins said the front pool is operative; it may fail tomorrow or last 10 years. McGregor said this pool would provide a nice service to residents. Collins said he is just asking for first reading so Council may ask questions; no waiver or emergency; do a first reading and then bring it back to committee in 2 weeks. Kneeland said he had another question on the numbers that came from the pool folks; not assuming a small amount of minor capital for this. Collins said that would be to get the pool systems like registration up to date. Kneeland said so the plan is to continue programs as they are today. Collins said it will be the same set up; could change eventually with items like membership at both pools; right now just stick to a one year plan.

Anderson asked about liability issues. Collins said we have insurance on our current pool and it is on the budget as an estimate.

McGregor asked why the property taxes go down. Isler said they will be eliminated after one year if we own it; first year we are still paying 1/2 of a year tax; sales tax applies only on concessions.

RECOMMENDATION: 1st Reading, Back to Committee

ISSUES - From Director of Development:

Fiscal Impact Analysis

White said she would briefly recap before Huffman does his power point presentation; a year ago we embarked on a Fiscal Impact and Economic Development Plan; the purpose is to help us understand the cost of goods and services and produce a model to determine costs for future development where we derive our income; the model is based on 2006 figures; when we get 2007 costs we will plug those in; this will aid us when we want to look at the community impact and particularly the costs for rezonings and mergers overall; we have not had a plan that would provide this before; for example, TIFs can now be analyzed for the effect of their incentive and may allow us to develop a strategy for areas like TechCenter Drive; our consultant is not able to be here tonight but would be available at a later meeting if necessary; Huffman will give a summary of the contents; we tried to get it down to a few slides; I did not receive any comments prior to tonight; the presentation does includes some next steps.

Huffman's slide presentation is available in the Council Office.

White said she wanted to thank the group of Kneeland, Evers, Payne, Murdock, and Huffman for their participation; the project involved a lot of reading and market data analysis; done with 2006 information; no one could predict our current economic conditions; still believe the content of the plan is valid; Emery is going to have our City on the cutting edge with fiber and wireless, and economic development will benefit from that connectivity; but the competition is such that as soon as we make a move, they make a better one; other communities are growing but our growth potential is limited beyond our boundaries; we can only go one direction and that would be with great challenges; this model allows us to look at various areas and determine service costs; will it pay for itself? this gives us the information to maintain and grow revenue streams; local funds and grants aren't as plentiful anymore so we need to grow our tax base so we don't have to grow our rates; this contains a formula; when we grow the base and the cost of growing that base is less than what we grew there is a profit; certain developments do that like high rise office space; warehousing does not return much; job development hit an all time high in 1999 with jobs created; in 2007 we are down about 200 jobs but we are maximizing job creation on the land we have; that is a challenge for the City over the next 10 years since things will be so much more competitive.

Samuel said they broke the City into 8 or 9 parts; growth areas for infilling; how did they get this information? White said they looked at market areas and did field counts; then used other data and studies available to do a market analysis for what we could have and already have. Huffman said the amount of land determined a lot; we achieve maximum benefits with mixed uses. White said they show several mixed use areas; area of Granville Street going west down to Mill Street where the properties there are little houses; if we would add levels there, that same property would produce 3 times the revenue. Samuel said so that would be curb-to-curb builds. White said those are right on the street and they are pedestrian friendly; this area was developed over time and is less dense so it produces less revenue per square foot; redeveloped we would look at it as what it has the potential to bring in; if we would have had this tool when we did the Manor Homes assessment, we would have looked at it differently; this would have shown the density does not pay the cost of services; it was not just a fiscal decision of course.

McGregor said she had a concern with this; seems to cram a lot of stuff in everywhere; is that what the residents and the City want? White said this will help us determine the areas to develop and help us make these decisions; we have to generate more revenue as a priority criteria; is the revenue worth it? in the past we have not made decisions based on that; we always viewed other criteria such as less dense with open spaces and arches as important; now we can continue to look at it that way; or we can go forward and not stagnate and refresh ourselves; we don't have new areas to add to the City so we need to think refresh for redevelopment to keep the community vital; remember people vote with their feet; they will move on to the next community. McGregor said originally Manor Homes was to be much more dense. Mayor said we still might make the same decision; it's just now we can look at the costs and have a tool; density may be important, but we make a conscious decision about what it costs; additionally when we plan the refresh of the community we preserve green space; make some trade offs; we can better maintain green corridors; we can still have green space and have density in our commercial areas. McGregor said we have already said we want to preserve the residential area of Hamilton Road and Johnstown Road; and part of what is used here is not even in Gahanna so we don't get any financial benefit.

Kneeland said this just gives us pros and cons of commercial development; shows areas they identified in 2006 and provides the tool where we can get real data for evaluation; I saw this used for annexation to the east for example; can we afford to annex and I saw how this exceeded expectations; this is not a land use plan; we just use the numbers and it gives us examples; we may not want to do anything; but we know the outcome; use as a tool for future growth to show redevelopment benefits; we may have land but put too much on it; shows economic shortfalls: we have the problem that we can't keep college students here; need to focus on these outcomes like great jobs.

Evers said even though it is based on property from 2006, it is still a major product and I feel very good with what was done; infill development is a key; even if it would have recommended a higher density on Manor Homes we would have still left like it is; Hamilton Road is a growth opportunity; we say residential; they had the obligation to point out the opportunity that is there; commercial development there could give us benefits; and it is just saying it is possible and given us a good evaluation tool for that prospect; it provides hard numbers for evaluations; good criteria to use; we have a mind set for annexation of any property; that may be good strategy but now we have a tool to let us know for sure; see this as a valuable tool. Mayor said a highlight is the point of looking at our community through the eyes of the investor; seeing where developers see potential and making decisions based on facts.

Anderson asked how the high-end apartments are defined. Huffman said in the report a 1 bedroom for \$650 or \$750 a month; depends on the amenities; phase 2 is a guide and tool; not controlling. Anderson said I am a proponent of plans, but do you think anything is missing even though it is good. White said they indicated the strategies to use; I wanted them to narrow them down and talk about them but we didn't pay for that; we will have to do that additional work; for example one of the strategies was to review tax abatement policies; maybe not give tax abatements as much; they did not take it any further.

Weber said the demographics are important; we don't have a young population; we are an aging community; under 40 people don't live in Gahanna and can't afford to live in Gahanna; young people like to live in dense communities.

Kneeland said beyond this plan we need to address land use; this goes hand-in-glove with land use; does our current plan for land use need updated? White said she is out of funds for this year; we have no new land so I would like to keep the same plan and go to area plans; revisit those plans as overlays; reinvigorate those plans.

Kneeland asked if there is anything else we need. White said it meets the test. Collins said it looked at both the environmental and economic issues; to grow differently may be ok; look at the impact that would have been at Creekside if work there was done flat; we can look at a different brand of development that meets the residential needs but also provides the economic outcomes. Huffman said the Olde Gahanna Partnership creates a pattern for growing like the Short North for retirees.

McGregor said what concerns me is the commercial development in the middle of residential. White said the Urban Land Institute is saying we need to relook at things like transportation; you have to get in a car to go get some milk; if there were stores in mid-block people could walk; traditional development was always mixed use and it may not be so bad; not asking for immediate action; I just wanted you to read it and get it on the radar.

RECOMMENDATION: 1st Reading, back to committee

PENDING LEGISLATION:**ORD-0089-2008**

TO ACCEPT MONIES SEIZED MARCH 4, 2008 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$314 AND AWARDED TO THE GAHANNA POLICE PURSUANT TO COURT ORDER; CASE #07CHV-4741; AND TO SUPPLEMENTALLY APPROPRIATE \$204 TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST FUND.

Chief said this Ordinance was returned to committee at McAlister's request; no other Council questions.

Recommended for Adoption**ORD-0084-2008**

TO CREATE THE FULL-TIME UNCLASSIFIED POSITION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER; TO ESTABLISH DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES; TO AMEND ORD-0294-2007, SALARIES AND BENEFITS FOR UNCLASSIFIED PERSONNEL TO ALLOW FOR THE CHANGE IN PAY GRADE FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE IN TITLE AND PAY GRADE FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

Rupp-Mondak said she wanted to again highlight the personnel changes requested for the Development Department; the first change is an upgrade in pay grade for the position of Deputy Director; next the Community Development Manager position would now include the responsibilities of the current Environmental and Community Planner, and the creation of the Economic Development Manager position without funding. Anderson asked when the funding will be seen. Mayor said we need to get the new Deputy Director on board, then see how the economy goes before we fund it; I know that White wants it now; additionally since this came up the last time; I have been advised that one Deputy Director would be left behind at a pay grade of 38 while all others are a 39; this inequity is a concern; I know that not all have to be at the same level, but having only one lower is not a fair practice. Kneeland asked when you will come back for that funding. Mayor said I don't really know what to do but it is a serious internal inequity and a concern. White said she needed to talk about her department's operation; we just received a \$1,000,000 Grant and it will take a lot of work to get this project moving forward; it is a huge asset for the City, but we will essentially be loaning this money back out so it has to be administered according to strict guidelines; on each loan request we have to work with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to create documents; as of Friday we had a number of job applications already; I have to know how much we are going to pay before I talk to these people; I need closure on this issue; if they are asking for a certain amount I need to know if I can afford them; but I really need the help for revenue generation. Evers said we looked at this earlier, but now after our discussion on economic development and all of the things about refreshing the community, it is apparent how much more complex Development has become for our City; the fact we just got this loan to administer is a mixed blessing; it is a drain on resources; and I have been struggling with this; but when I look at all they need to be doing I feel it is something truly needed; in order to keep this community vital I will support this. Mayor said she appreciated that; she had tried to run the City lean and mean, but we are not the same city we were and the demands have changed; it will be a struggle for me to continue Parks and Recreation with their current staff; my challenge is to balance pay and not burn out current employees without adding costs; the additional job needed for economic development is critical if we are to grow our tax base. McGregor said why not fund it for a couple of years and see how it goes. Mayor said yes Council has the prerogative to do it that way. White said the Mayor has asked the Directors a difficult question for staff meeting tomorrow; if we had to reorganize to eliminate some positions, what would we eliminate; if I don't continue this operation and if in fact we don't grow, then we don't need these positions; but I am getting closer

to retirement; so we need to work with a new Deputy Director and get it set up and running while I am still here to help with transitioning.

Recommended for Adoption

ISSUES - From Director of Finance:

Harward Cleaners - Name Change

Isler said due to the cleaning services they provide the Police Department, we need to change the name of Harward Cleaners to Noah, Inc. DBA Rockwood Dry Cleaners. McGregor asked if this was a new owner. Isler said it is not a new owner; same personnel just a name change.

RECOMMENDATION: Motion Resolution on Consent Agenda

ISSUES - From Council:

Community Improvement Corporation (Evers - Carried Over From last Committees)

Evers said the CIC (Community Improvement Corporation) was returned to Committee as a follow up to determine if we need any clean-up legislation. Weber said he has determined no new legislation is needed; this body was not dismantled and was dormant but not dead, so from a legal standpoint they are ok.

Federal Legislative Alert (Kneeland McGregor - Carried over from last committees)

Sherwood said the Legislative Alert form was distributed in packets. Kneeland said this concerns our ability to collect income tax. Sherwood said the facts were put on the document from a letter that Steele provided that was distributed throughout the tax community. Isler said this would have a serious fiscal impact on Gahanna. Kneeland said this uses the cities of Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Toledo, but not us. Sherwood said she used only what was in the material provided. Isler said this is the information that was taken to Washington D.C. Anderson said she talked to Cindy Steele, Tax Administrator and was told Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati representatives were not allowed to testify but did speak with staff on Capitol Hill. McGregor said we need to add something relevant to Gahanna. Mayor said to make our voices heard we need to add a whereas clause by Friday. McGregor said we are ok with it to go to regular agenda; it is not on a fast track; but the sooner done the better. Isler is to provide additional information to the Clerk's office for final preparation.

RECOMMENDATION: Resolution, Regular Agenda.

Additional Agenda Items:

Sherwood said there is an additional agenda item from Samuel on citizen communications. Samuel said it is his goal to create a community task force; he and Council member Anderson would work on it along with members of the Mayor's staff and representatives of various departments; goal would be to find more ways to communicate with the public; on projects we could have front line personnel there to answer questions. Mayor asked what the planned structure of the group is. Sherwood said it could take 2 forms; a Special Committee of Council or a Mayor's Task Force. Mayor said this is something we will have to meet and talk some more about.

McGregor said we had been asked to do a Resolution in support of the Governor's Bond Package; they have changed it so it is less money now so we can do that or let it drop. Collins said it includes the Clean Ohio Program that we have benefited from.

McGregor said my concern previously was the amount of borrowed money; now I will support it as it is a Bi-Partisan Economic Stimulus Package. Evers said he still has mixed thoughts on it; asked for it to come back to committee after being developed. White said she will send the details for it.

RECOMMENDATION: Resolution, back to committee

Sherwood announced that Ed Corbett's dad passed away; also Council office will be short staffed this week as there is a clerks' conference for Jernigan and her; if legislation is needed, please submit right away.

White reminded everyone of the Creekside Grand Opening for May 1, at 11:30 A.M. There will be a formal event Saturday night for the Parks Foundation Benefit. Huffman will be going to Detroit on May 5 to receive an award for the Brownfields project.

Meeting adjourned.

MONITOR:

2007-0060

Monitor Items:

- 1) Wireless Communication Legislation

Della Brandenberger, Reporting