

REGULAR MEETING DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

July 17, 2008

The regular meeting of the Des Moines City Council was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Mayor Sheckler in the Council Chambers, 21630 11th Avenue South, #B.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE to the Flag was led by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman.

ROLL CALL - Present: Mayor Bob Sheckler, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Sherman, Councilmembers Dave Kaplan, Ed Pina (left meeting at 9:05 p.m.), Carmen Scott and Susan White. Absent: Councilmember Scott Thomasson. Also in attendance were City Manager Tony Piasecki, City Attorney Pat Bosmans, Parks and Recreation Director Patrice Thorell, Planning Manager Denise Lathrop and City Clerk Denis Staab.

MOTION was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Pina and passed unanimously, to excuse Councilmember Thomasson.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Nancy Stephan, 23641 7th Avenue South #1

As a member of the Arts Commission, Ms. Stephan informed Council that she was impressed with the work of the Storefront Studio's architects for the fresh ideas reflecting the character of the City. She noted she personally feels public art is important to communicate with residents and visitors, and welcomes this as supporting a thriving small business community. She recommended Council find a permanent funding mechanism for public art within the annual City budget.

Jane Ipsen, Landmark on the Sound

Ms. Ipsen advised she is delighted with the ideas generated by the Storefront Studio, especially the signage. She encouraged the Council and business leaders to take advantage of the opportunities presented and represented in the students work.

Leslie Newman, 21001 3rd Avenue South

As a member of the Waterfront Tourism Committee, a Des Moines resident and small business owner, Ms. Newman applauded the ideas generated by the Storefront Studio as a great way to get people out of their cars to shop and visit Des Moines.

Shirley Baker, 22028 Cliff Avenue

Ms. Baker informed Council that everyone she has spoken to has had positive comments about the work produced by the Storefront Studio and urged Councilmembers to consider their ideas.

Florence McMullin, Huntington Park Resident

Ms. McMullin spoke about the exciting events in the City, and especially loves visiting the Marina with the Farmer's Market and the new Art Mural recently installed. She spoke in support of the ideas presented by the Storefront Studio.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Storefront Studio Presentation

Parks and Recreation Director Thorell remarked that the primary goal for the Storefront Studio was to integrate and connect the historic downtown with the Marina/waterfront areas of the City to promote economic development and an enhanced pedestrian experience. This area, known as the "Marina District" is located between Marine View Drive South and the Des Moines Marina/Beach Park, and Kent-Des Moines Road/South 227th Street and South 216th Street. She advised that key stakeholders consisting of Councilmembers, city staff, property owners and business leaders met with the University of Washington architecture students to share knowledge regarding the strengths, opportunities and impediments of the Marina District and to challenge them to find creative design solutions contributing to the economic revitalization and improved connectivity of the Marina District. She advised that the Storefront Studio operated from April to June and held three open houses throughout the process. Following that, the students put all of the materials together and provided a Marina District Enhancement Plan. The key to the plan is to provide the connections from Marine View Drive down to the waterfront from South 216th, South 223rd and South 227th to enhance the pedestrian experience. She noted the plan also has a very extensive public art component which is a tool to be used to create points of interest and gathering areas, as well as connecting the areas within the Marina District. She noted Council is being asked to provide feedback on which of the concepts should be carried forward into the future planning processes such as the downtown element of the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Design Standards, along with being intergraded into the Beach Park and the Marina future Capital Improvement plans. She concluded by introducing University of Washington Professor Jim Nicholls and two of the Architectural Students, Natasha Servo and Jack DeBlauw, who proceeded to review in detail the Marina District Enhancement Plan. Some items mentioned were:

ENHANCE

- Existing natural waterfront location with additional greenscape and waterscape improvements to the street and pedestrian environment;
- Pedestrian generating activities at the Marina and Waterfront Park with diverse commercial and public amenities;
- Existing Main Street commercial and retail activities, such as theater and restaurants, with improved storefronts and sidewalk;
- Existing urban village scale with two and three story mixed-use infill and reuse projects with commercial ground floors;
- Waterfront amenity with improved pedestrian and vehicle east-west connections between Marine View Drive and the waterfront;
- Local and regional connections to pedestrian and bike paths, public transportation and ferries;
- Community identify with gateway markers, consistent streetscape, public art and historical markers.

They displayed details for improvements to the QFC Block, Big Catch Plaza, corner of S 219th Street and Marine View Drive, various facade enhancements, Des Moines Square building, and the theater block. Other items mentioned were north and south gateway murals, and bus stop shelter design improvements. Also noted for the key streets:

SOUTH 227TH STREET:

- Continuous greenscape on both sides from the entrance to the waterfront celebrating a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- Public space with art installations at both ends reinforcing the axial connection
- Populate the north and south (227th) of the City with 3 story condominium/office buildings with ground floor commercial/retail.
- Structured parking.
- Des Moines History Interpretive Center at the end of S 227th marking the entry into waterfront while opening up the formal passage and allowing unobstructed views from 6th Avenue S.
- Parking lot enhancement in front of Anthony's.
- Additional commercial complex framing the south end.
- Covered benches punctuate the waterfront.

SOUTH 223RD STREET:

- Sea monster public art sculpture, leading towards the Marina
- Mixed use development - retail below, with offices on upper floors and apartments with views
- New "seawall" parking screen/patio with southern sun exposure and views to the Marina
- Restaurants with additional outdoor seating to liven up the street
- Added greenery along continuous sidewalks to enhance pedestrian realm
- "Hillclimb" building incorporating additional parking, accessible circulation and commercial/retail space.

Enhancements for the Marina included:

- Provide new decking and more flexible seating for the pier
- Move Farmer's Market to the north end, connecting activity to the park
- Remove 'blue' house, replacing it with a stepped decking structure running along the south end of the Beach Park and into the Marina docks
- Redevelopment of boat storage sheds providing alternative retail and community uses
- Sea serpent public art piece extending along jetty paired and interacting with sea serpent extending down S 223rd Street

Public art included:

- Gateway murals at QFC & Kent-Des Moines Road
- Des Moines Beach Park History Trail
- S 227th Brick road
- Bicycle rack
- Interpretive display railing at Marina
- Sea serpent on 223rd Street & Sea Jetty
- Mosquito fleet bus Stop and stairway
- Sailboat Water Fountain
- Lighthouse bench
- Endpoint sculpture
- Road Panels
- Street banners

Councilmember Kaplan expressed agreement with South 223rd and 227th as important access points guiding folks to the waterfront area. He also voiced support and encouragement of public art.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman noted Council will need to focus on ideas within the City's financial means. He noted he is warming to the sea serpent idea, especially along the breakwater. He felt some of the ideas are relatively simple steps to undertake. He also felt it was clear that the students listened to the citizens which means their ideas will be more likely to be adopted.

Councilmember Pina felt it will be important for Council, business leaders and developers to work together to bring about the ideas presented.

Councilmember Scott expressed support for the enthusiasm of the students and thanked them for the wonderful efforts and results.

Mayor Sheckler thanked the Professor and students for their hard work. He encouraged citizens, business owners, and community groups and clubs to step-up and help incorporate the ideas.

9:05 p.m. Mayor Sheckler called for a 10 minute break. Councilmember Pina left the meeting.

Midway Planning Project Update

Planning Manager Lathrop noted that Envision Midway Stakeholder Committee meetings were held May 21st and June 18th, and a public open house and workshop was held on May 28th and July 9th. She reported good feedback was received at the open house noting things people like about Midway include Highline Community College, newer development such as Lowes, Fred Meyer and Starbucks, views, and the location halfway between Tacoma and Seattle. Things that people would like in Midway included increased building height relative to distance from Pacific Highway, Highline Community College to be a place that brings the community together, a park with a stage, picnic tables and BBQ, up scale shops, movie theater/arts center, sidewalks that go east/west, more crosswalks on Pacific Highway and provisions for bicycles such as bike lanes, bike racks, etc. She continued by noting issues of concern in the area included gangs, crime, drug dealing and prostitution along Pacific Highway and poorly maintained property. She advised that some people expressed concern that Midway would not change until these issues are taken care, while others felt that a clear plan for the future would generate a sense of pride that would in turn prompt investment in the area. She proceeded to review results of the 2nd Stakeholder meeting on June 18th noting the following observations:

- Zoning that allows high rises up to 20 stories, to take advantage of views, provide flexibility for mix of uses and activities and provide key areas for auto-oriented uses.
- General land use focused on 3 key areas - 1) North of Kent-Des Moines Road as predominantly high density residential mixed use; 2) South of Kent-Des Moines Road as high density/mixed use, small store fronts, services for students, and 3) South of 240th as auto oriented services on larger parcels with visual corridor to connect to landfills.

In regards to transportation, she noted that Metro's Bus Rapid Transit was seen as providing reliability until the future of light rail is determined. The area around Highline Community College was seen as a logical location/terminus for a light rail station with a parking facility. She stated there was discussion about the need for east-west feeder transit to support the light rail and that connectivity for pedestrians and vehicles within Midway was a recurring topic. She

concluded by advising there is a developers forum scheduled for July 30th at Highline Community College from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Councilmember Kaplan reported attending the meeting last week and felt most of the focus is on the Kent side of Pacific Highway South, with the exception of Highline Community College. He stated it is not clear to him what sort of things are being discussed concerning Des Moines' interests. He felt the Des Moines community needs to provide more input and that the City itself needs to be more engaged with the Community College to provide better coordination and communications.

Councilmember White expressed agreement with Councilmember Kaplan, remarking that the College is a huge asset to the community and has been very helpful with the small business development center.

Mayor Pro Tem Sherman informed Council that at the Suburban Cities meeting last night Joni Earl of Sound Transit made a presentation referring to a station as "Kent-Des Moines Road Highline Community College Station". He noted he spoke with her and was advised that no commitment has been made as to where exactly a station will be located in Des Moines.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Mayor Sheckler noted the next regular meeting will be July 24, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:52 p.m. **MOTION** was made by Mayor Pro Tem Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Kaplan and passed unanimously, to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Denis Staab
City Clerk