

Committee of the Whole
September 27, 2016

Present: Mayor Vulich, Council Members Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, Determann, O'Neill, Connell, Allesee, City Administrator, City Attorney, City Clerk, Press and interested citizens.

1. Convention and Visitor's Bureau Update – Carrie Donaire

Ms. Carrie Donaire, Clinton Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB), provided the Council with a quarterly update. She stated that Arts at the Arb was a success, the American Queen had made two successful stops, the FAB Project was also a success with 15 volunteer groups planting the flower beds on Riverfront. The CVB Board held a strategic planning meeting and came up with a five year plan. They will continue to work with hotels and events. The Wayfinding Project continues as well as the Celebrate Clinton Campaign. Upcoming events include hosting the Department of Cultural Affairs for Eastern Iowa Tourism, also Hospitality Training, Parks to People Project, Iowa Bass Nation, C-Dory Boat Group and the Women's State Bowling Tournament. She stated that Fly Iowa was a success with 2,000 people attending. She further stated that the Quarterly Financials include miscellaneous income from the American Queen and Hotel/Motel tax. She proceeded to state that there is nothing out of the ordinary for personnel and overhead.

2. Sidewalk Variance Request for 6th Avenue North

Councilmember O'Neill stated that since the last meeting no notification has been made to the neighbors and now there is a request for an alley to be vacated. He continued in stating that the City has not made changes to the ordinance regarding variance for sidewalks. He further stated that he is not in favor of the sidewalk variance.

Clinton Police Chief Kevin Gyrion advised the Council that in the interest of public safety and the safety of the officers he would recommend no sidewalks near the sally port. Councilmember Connell stated that notices have gone out to neighbors and if the City uses the sally port most of the time it will have the most liability.

Councilmember McGraw stated that the original plan is not what is being shown today. She continued in stating that until it goes through the Zoning Board of Adjustment she would not agree with it. Councilmember Seeley stated that the City recently granted a variance to Alliant Energy. Councilmember O'Neill stated that it was a different scenario.

Dan Srp, County Board of Supervisors, advised that discussion relating to the variance of the sidewalk has been going on for more than four weeks. They just formally came to the Council to request it. He stated that there are other variances for parking and setback. Mayor Vulich inquired regarding what will happen if the sidewalk variance is does not move forward. Supervisor Srp stated that access to the loading dock becomes steeper. He continued in stating that safety concerns were behind the request.

Councilmember Allesee stated that the Chief of Police is an expert and the Council should listen to his recommendations.

M/S, Seeley-Connell moved to forward the sidewalk variance to the next City Council meeting agenda. On roll call, Seeley, Connell, Allesee – Yes; Gassman, McGraw, Determann, O’Neill – No. Motion failed.

3. Referrals from the Planning Commission – Jason Craft

Alley Vacation at 315 Ruth Place

City Engineer Jason Craft advised the Council that there is an existing retaining wall which encroaches on the alley right-of-way and the petitioners would like to do maintenance work on it. There are utilities located in this right-of-way and an easement will be necessary across this entire right-of-way. No vertical construction will be allowed on this alley. Also, there is no public interest in this alley.

M/S, Gassman-McGraw moved to forward the Alley Vacation at 315 Ruth Place to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

Final Plat of 4th Avenue Lofts Subdivision

City Administrator Kinser advised that the proposed multi-family complex would be taking all of the lots and creating one.

M/S, O’Neill-Seeley moved to forward the Final Plat of 4th Avenue Lofts Subdivision to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

Alley Vacation at 612 North 2nd Street

City Administrator Kinser advised that the 2 platted alleys were shown on city maps, but were not shown on maps dated 1947 to the present, and there has not been any official action taken to vacate these alleys. She stated that they are of no use to the City or its residents. Councilmember O’Neill inquired regarding who owns the alleys. City Administrator Kinser stated that the County owns the alleys.

M/S, Gassman-Seeley moved to forward the Alley Vacation at 612 North 2nd Street to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

4. Referral from the Traffic Safety Commission – Jason Craft

Installation of a stop sign at 1100 16th Avenue N.W.

City Engineer Jason Craft advised the Council that he received a letter from property owners complaining of vehicles speeding through the subdivision. He stated that there is a Yield sign there now. He continued in stating that he is not in favor of placing another Yield sign there and would rather see a stop sign at the intersection if necessary.

M/S, Gassman-Connell moved to forward a resolution placing a stop at the intersection to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, Gassman, Seeley, McGraw, Connell, Allesee – Yes; Determann, O’Neill – No. Motion carried.

5. Vacant and Abandoned Building Ordinance – Jeff Chapman

Councilmember Gassman suggested that “B” under Nuisances be struck from the ordinance. He stated that an attractive nuisance should be determined by the Building and Neighborhood Services Department or by a Council Member since neighbors will continuously call. He continued in stating that “E” under Vacant Buildings should also be taken out since the City does not have a Property Management Code. City Attorney Patrick O’Connell stated that an attractive nuisance is something which is ignored by an adult; however, is something a child finds interesting and could be injured by.

Battalion Chief Jeff Chapman stated that the proposed ordinance is a good compromise. It does not penalize persons who are maintaining vacant properties. He continued in stating the BNS is trying to address properties which must be cleaned up.

M/S, Gassman-Allesee moved to strike “B” and “R” from the ordinance. On roll call, carried unanimously.

M/S, Gassman-O’Neill moved to forward the ordinance as amended to the next City Council agenda. On roll call, carried unanimously.

6. Strategic Plan Prioritization Follow-up – Jessica Kinser

City Administrator Kinser advised that the Strategic Plan before the Council has been prioritized by things that need to be completed.

Mayor Vulich suggested that a plan for rehab of homes should be ongoing. Administrator Kinser stated that the Neighborhood Improvement Committee will work on various matters to bring back to the Council.

Mayor Vulich inquired regarding the Communication Plan. Administrator Kinser stated that it is helpful for how people receive communications from the City. Councilmember McGraw stated that the City puts out its communications via the newspaper, Facebook, radio and the lighthouse. She continued in stating that she did not see how we could communicate better. City Administrator Kinser stated that we are not consistent with press releases. Mayor Vulich stated that all departments should sent their press releases to one person for distribution. Administrator Kinser stated that no one has time to take on the task at this time.

Mayor Vulich stated that the City should formulate a plan for the future of the Railpark in the first half of 2017. City Administrator Kinser stated that Council has met annually to discuss the Railpark, such as the Broker discussion. She continued in stating that this is something which can be ongoing.

City Administrator Kinser stated that she would add in solid waste and yard waste. Councilmember O’Neill stated that he would have information toward the end of October.

Administrator Kinser stated that this would be staff doing a cost benefit analysis. She continued in stating that she would add “staff will investigate options for solid waste and yard waste”. Councilmember O’Neill suggested the Mayor appoint an ad hoc committee to do this.

Mayor Vulich inquired regarding the County Assessor. City Administrator Kinser stated that if it is not decided by the end of the year, it could be continued. Mayor Vulich suggested that this item be placed on a Committee of the Whole agenda in October or November.

7. Mayor & Council Updates

Councilmember O’Neill stated that his public forum would take place on October 1, 2016 from 9:30 to 11:00 at the Ericksen Center and would meet on the first Saturday of the month for the remainder of the year.

Councilmember Determann thanked the Fire Chief and Staff for their service during his emergency and the staff at University of Iowa Hospitals.

Councilmember Connell congratulated City Administrator Kinser on her new appointment as City Administrator in Marshalltown. He stated that it will be sad to see her leave.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Van Loo
City Clerk