

City Council Workshop
July 25, 2017
6:00 P.M.
City Hall

Council Members Present:

Mayor Michael J. Heitzler; Mayor Pro Tem Mark Phillips; Councilmember Gregory Habib; Councilmember Kevin Condon; Councilmember Brandon Cox; Councilmember James (Kimo) Esarey

Council Members Absent:

Councilmember Debra Green-Fletcher

Staff Present:

City Administrator Jake Broom; City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette; Economic Development Director Matt Brady; Director of Recreation Gary Stuber; Director of Planning Kara Browder

Staff Absent:

Press Present:

Guests:

I. Call to Order:

Mayor Heitzler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Comments from the Audience:

Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Joel Arenson who stated he was on the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and had never seen an application for truck signage. Mr. Arenson stated he felt this was because these types of signs are not covered by an ordinance and stated there was a need for these types of signs to be clarified under an ordinance.

III. Business:

Tattoo Zoning (Kara Browder, Director of Planning & Zoning) – Mr. Broom stated the City’s current ordinance prohibits tattoo facilities within the City, however it is unconstitutional. He stated the Planning Commission discussed this matter at their meeting in June and recommended permitting tattoo facilities in General Commercial, Commercial Industrial, Light Industrial and General Industrial Zoning Districts. He stated the Planning Commission was proposing tattoo facilities be treated as a Special Use. He stated if tattoo facilities are treated as Special Use this would require them to be a distance of 1,500 feet from the property line of a church, public or private school, public or private recreation area, properties zoned to allow residential uses, or properties with existing residential structure. Mr. Broom stated Mrs. Browder and Mr. Craig Linn, the City’s Geographic Information System Coordinator created a map to show a 1,500 foot buffer; however, due to the shape of the City, a 1,500 foot buffer would continue to ban tattoo facilities as we do not have any eligible properties. He stated City staff was recommending a 1,000 foot buffer from church, school, playground or recreational facilities. Mr. Broom suggested City Council also consider adding residential use as a large portion of neighborhoods back up to major highways. Mr. Broom stated Summerville and Mt. Pleasant have identical ordinances to this proposal and DHEC also uses a 1,000 foot buffer; however, they do not include residential property. After discussion amongst City Council, they agreed to move forward with the use of the map that included the 1,000 foot buffer with residential.

Vehicles as Signs (Kara Browder, Director of Planning & Zoning) – Mr. Broom stated the topic of vehicle signs was brought before City Council at a meeting in April 2017, as part of a larger sign ordinance that would prohibit vehicles from being used as signs. He stated this section of the ordinance was removed at the April City Council Meeting and has been added that evening’s agenda for discussion. Mayor Heitzler stated these signs should meet the same criteria as the larger sign ordinances. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated the current ordinances were unenforceable and judgmental. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if La Petit Daycare would be in violation if this proposed ordinance was passed. He stated they own a bus with their logo; however, they must park it by the road due to the size of their

parking lot. Mr. Broom stated La Petit would not be violation as the proposed ordinance states the apparent purpose is to advertise a product or business, or direct people to a product or business by considering the location of the parked vehicle in relation to availability of alternative parking spaces onsite. Councilmember Cox suggested to mandate wrapped vehicles park in parking lots they must run, be registered, and be maintained. Councilmember Cox stated vehicles cannot be purchased and towed to a parking lot with advertisement and left, it is then considered a sign. Councilmember Cox offered his opinion and stated it was his opinion the proposed ordinance was unenforceable. Mayor Heitzler suggested if someone wants a sign on their vehicle, they could apply for a sign permit. Councilmember Cox stated as a business owner, if he had a wrapped vehicle, he would not bring his business in the City of Goose Creek if he must apply for a permit sign on the wrapped vehicle he drives to Charleston, Mt. Pleasant, Columbia and Summerville. Councilmember Esarey and Councilmember Cox both stated the City should be business friendly. Mayor Heitzler stated due to modern technology, modern means of communication, and the overload of information onto our senses he thinks this issue would be a losing battle. Mayor Heitzler stated he was in favor of the proposed ordinance up until their discussions that evening. City Council agreed not to pursue the topic any further.

Incentives Ordinance (Matt Brady, Director of Economic Development) – Mr. Broom stated earlier in June this item was discussed and had been written in response to the 2017 Goals and Objectives. He stated the proposed incentives ordinance aims to incentivize redevelopment and development within specific areas by rebating City fees. He stated the rebates were being proposed as follows: Up to 100% development impact fees; up to 50% building permit fees; up to 50% of business license fees for up to 5 years; and up to 50% of hospitality taxes if the business can comply with State law. Mr. Broom stated the properties must meet investment thresholds to be eligible for the following, \$1,000,000, in the incentive area and \$750,000, in the super incentive area. Mr. Broom stated the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) met Friday, June 30, 2017, and voted unanimously to support passing the proposed ordinance with one suggested amendment, the phrase “full service restaurant” be added to the list of business purposes. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated this was at complete discretion. Councilmember Habib stated part of what he would like to see would be beautification. Mr. Esarey and Habib stated they believe it is a great idea. Mr. Broom stated he would bring this before City Council at the next City Council meeting.

Vacant Commercial Property Map (Matt Brady, Director of Economic Development) – Mr. Brady stated he collaborated with Mr. Linn to create a map that shows available commercial properties within the City’s limits. This information was populated using commercial multiple listing services such as Zillow and Loopnet. He stated the idea was to have this information on the City’s website so it could be easily found by a potential developer, broker or restaurant owner. Mr. Brady stated most economical development organizations have an application like this and asked City Council for their permission and input to include this on the City’s website. Mayor Heitzler stated he thought it was a great idea and inquired if the mapping program was available to City Council if it was to be made public. Mr. Broom stated City staff could make a public application not designated for City Council. City Council agree to both.

Pool Bubble (Gary Stuber, Director of Recreation) – Mr. Broom stated this was brought up at the regular City Council meeting earlier in the month and that he was directed to put it on the workshop agenda. Councilmember Cox inquired how operating this would be funded. Mr. Broom stated it would be part of the Recreation Enterprise Fund, any additional money the City were to lose operating the pool would have to be cut from somewhere else. Mayor Heitzler inquired from Mr. Stuber as to the cost to purchase and install a bubble. Mr. Stuber stated the question would be the type of bubble you want. Mr. Stuber stated he personally would like a mechanical one that folds out and it cost between \$600,000 and \$700,000. Mayor Heitzler inquired if the City was breaking even on the pool. Mr. Stuber stated they lost under \$20,000 last year. Mayor Heitzler inquired if the City left it open all year we would lose \$60,000. Mayor Heitzler stated we would have to come up with a way to buy the cover and come up with a way to pay the operating cost of the pool. Mayor Heitzler stated he felt this was a legitimate issue to discuss in strategic planning. Councilmember Esarey stated if the City added this to the City’s Strategic Plan, he wanted Mr. Stuber to come up with revenue generating opportunities that may turn that \$20,000, loss in four (4) months into the positive. Councilmember Habib stated he felt this was something the City could probably do soon by starting with a conversation with the swim community about what those revenue possibilities might be.

Boulder Bluff Park (Jake Broom, City Administrator) – Mr. Broom stated since the last workshop, the landscape architect had revised the preferred concept by City Council, known as concept three (3). Mr. Broom stated the revisions included a dog park to the north of the main parking area, workout stations along the walking trail that would use the walkers own body weight, additional buffering at the southern border of the neighboring houses and an outdoor classroom along the walking trail for the boulder bluff elementary students to use. He stated the park as depicted in the drawing, was estimated to cost almost 2.9 million dollars. He stated the wetlands boardwalk could be

cut which would save \$362,500, estimated cost with this elimination is a little over 2.5 million dollars. Mr. Broom stated the project could be phased over two or three years or it could be bonded in the full amount. Mr. Broom stated the bond would be tax exempt like the one that was used to finance the construction of Phase II of the Community Center. He stated City staff's recommendation was to bond the project and do it all at once. Mr. Broom stated making that neighborhood a construction zone for three (3) years would not be worth the interest that would be paid if we bonded. He stated he wished to present this to City Council because it incorporates the ideas that was brought up at the last workshop. Mayor Heitzler stated the City has a moral responsibility to move forward with the project since the school district gave fifty (50) acres to the City with the promise to build a park within five (5) years, and are currently two (2) years behind. Mayor Heitzler stated the City should move ahead with this project. Councilmember Habib stated he did not like the idea of another bond right now. Councilmember Esarey stated he liked the plan, but inquired if they could see the cost of a three (3) phase project and the cost of a one (1) phase project. City Council agreed to further discuss this subject in the future.

Sick Leave Cap Reward (Jake Broom, City Administrator) – Mr. Broom stated currently city policy caps the approval of sick leave for its employees at seven hundred and twenty (720) hours, which is ninety (90) days. Sick leave is accrued at a rate of eight (8) hours a month. Employees must be working for the City for seven and a half (7 ½) years to reach the cap. Currently there are nineteen (19) employees that are capped. He stated this has become a reoccurring topic as part of his mobile office hours. Mr. Broom stated he was proposing the following: for employees that are capped at the first of the year, award them eight (8) wellness reward hours to be capped at a total of sixteen (16) hours starting in January. Mr. Broom did not want to make a change without discussing it with City Council first. City Council agreed with Mr. Broom's idea and suggestion.

City Naming Policy (Building, Park, etc.) (Jake Broom, City Administrator) – Mr. Broom stated some cities have a written policy that outlines the process for naming public facilities and that also outlines the nomination process; usually relating to historic events, a historic place or person, a major gift or person who has made a significant public service contribution. Mr. Broom inquired feedback from City Council before writing a proposed policy. Mr. Broom's initial questions to City Council were: Do you want to name buildings after people? Do you want to require them to be deceased? Do you want the public to be involved? Do you only want it to be buildings, rooms in buildings, parks or all the above? Discussion occurred regarding this topic. Mayor Heitzler suggested Mr. Broom research policies with other cities to use as a template and bring before City Council for review.

Chickens/Beekeeping (Jake Broom, City Administrator) – Mr. Broom stated the City had gotten several calls about residents wanting to raise chickens or bees. Mr. Broom stated obvious concerns were noise, odors, sanitation, neighboring pets, neighborly disputes and safety. Mr. Broom referred to City Council's packet and stated the table showed neighboring jurisdictions and their policy regarding chickens and bees. Mr. Broom stated most places do not regulate bee keeping; however, most do mention chickens. Councilmember Condon inquired as to what Berkeley County's ordinance stated. Mr. Broom stated Berkeley County's ordinance restricts the number of chicken that can be kept is up to eight (8) female domestic chickens, required minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet for anyone to have up to four (4) chickens and for an additional 15,000 square feet you can add one (1) additional chicken maxing out at eight (8). Mr. Broom further stated height is regulated and there was a minimum ground clearance. Councilmember Habib stated based on some of the ordinances Mr. Broom mentioned regarding requirements for structures, the City would have to send out a building inspector to make sure the requirements are met. Mr. Broom stated it depends on if the City would require a permit for the enclosures and he was not recommending a permit be required. Mr. Broom stated he would recommend the proposed ordinance state that if someone complains it would be considered a zoning violation to which at that point the City would send a code enforcement officer to inspect the problem. Mayor Heitzler requested Mr. Broom create a proposed ordinance for City Council to review.

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mayor Heitzler recognized Ms. Collen Shoemaker who stated she appreciated City Council addressing the pool bubble and appreciated Mr. Stuber's suggestion of meeting with the swim community; as well as having conversations with neighboring communities on how they run their year-round programs. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. John Barge of Crowfield who stated he was all about doing everything he could to help the children from the community, but he had a different feeling about the pool bubble. Mr. Barge stated his concerns about what the bubble would look like in The Hamlets, as well as the cost to heat the pool during the winter. Mr. Barge thanked City Council for their time and effort. Mayor Heitzler recognized Ms. Stephanie Holland who stated it was very important to consider the bubble structure since there were many children that go to North Charleston and West Ashley to swim. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Andy McBride who thanked City Council for the use of the pool during the swim meet and

mentioned that, seasonally, North Charleston only keeps their bubble up during November and they take it down in March. Mr. McBride stated North Charleston's bubble was a simple structure, the cost was not a lot because the pool was heated and the bubble is pressurized.

V. Adjournment:

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to adjourn. All in favor, non-opposed. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

_____ Date: August 08, 2017

Kelly J. Lovette, MMC
City Clerk

A copy of this meeting's agenda was sent to the Post and Courier and The Goose Creek Gazette; it was posted in City Hall 24 hours prior to the meeting.