



## **Planning & Public Safety Committee**

April 14, 2015

Summary and Motions

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Chair Mossotti called the meeting to order at 12:59 p.m. Committee members Bledsoe, Farmer, Gibbs, Henson, Kay, Lamb, Mossotti, Scutchfield and Stinnett were in attendance. Committee member Akers was absent. Council member Fred Brown was also in attendance.

### **1. February 10, 2015 Committee Summary**

A motion was made by Kay to approve the February 15, 2015 Committee Summary, seconded by Bledsoe. The motion passed without dissent.

### **2. Versailles Road Corridor Study**

Henson gave a brief history and introduction of the Versailles Road Corridor Study.

Brad Frazier from Engineering introduced Tom Hatfield from EA Partners. Hatfield and John Carmen, with Carman & Associates, presented the findings of the studies to the Council.

Bledsoe inquired about the presented designs in the intersections, and the materials and methods used. Carmen replied it is a material with imprinted designs that is lain down in crosswalks and is therefore durable to constant traffic. Bledsoe questioned the durability and upkeep for these surfaces, to which Carmen replied they would have a 6-9 year life span, which is comparable to other enhancements.

Lamb inquired about right-of-way acquisitions, and if they will be the responsibility of state or local government. Hatfield replied it is a state maintained road. Frazier stated the right-of-way acquisitions will depend on how the project is laid out, but he suspects the state will do this given that the project is on US 60.

Kay requested more information about the rounded corners in intersections. Frasier stated they allow for the turning movements of large trucks and prevent their rear wheels from driving onto pavement or sidewalks where pedestrians would be. Frazier further explained that current regulations call for radiuses at intersections.

Farmer stated the corridor is an important part of the city that has been previously ignored. Farmer inquired if the public art and fence in the median are feasible with the state's involvement. Carmen stated there are constraints and they will need to comply with various right of way conditions set by the state. Carmen stated these applications

will be used to show that they have successfully used these means in other urban conditions, and noted there are some areas of give and take. Carmen explained the fences are used in areas of high volume pedestrian traffic to discourage crossing outside of crosswalks.

Farmer inquired if there is room for planting in the center of the viaduct, to which Carmen affirmed there is, stating three-quarters of the proposed enhancement space is currently unused. Farmer thanked Carmen for his work on the item and stated his support for the corridor enhancements.

Lamb inquired if the funding for the project has been included in the FY 2016 budget. Frazier stated the next step in the process is to provide the information to the state, which they have done. Frazier further noted they relied on the state for the document and study. Lamb shared her support for the proposed enhancements.

Henson recognized the work of the engineering department and John Carmen, and further stated that the corridor has significance for economic development. Henson stated she would move forward with getting funding for this project as well as a resolution for the Council's support to the state to complete these projects at the next committee meeting.

### **3. Design Excellence**

Vice-Mayor Kay gave an update of Design Excellence.

Gibbs inquired about economic incentives, and if the TIF applications were included in the proposal. Kay stated it was considered by the Design Excellence Taskforce, but the guidelines did not list specific incentives.

Bledsoe asked if any of the list of incentives were funded in the Mayor's Proposed Budget. In response, Kay stated the Design Excellence Officer is the only funded position, and he believes there may also be a small sum of money included for TIF applications. Commissioner Paulson stated he is not sure if there are explicit funds in the budget for TIF applications, but there is a \$1 million fund that is spread between a few items, including economic development land that would include downtown and covers bondable public infrastructure improvements.

Bledsoe inquired if existing projects would be grandfathered into the program, Kay stated they would not, and would only apply to new projects.

Lamb inquired how incentives would be presented, either through policy, or other methods, and if those will be included in the ordinance. Kay stated it would need to be specified. Lamb inquired if there had been discussion about who would administer loan funds to which Kay replied that would be a decision of the board. Lamb stated she believes the ordinance should also reference Chapter 25 of the Ethics Act. Lamb suggested the board be structured like the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustments so that it would fall under the financial interest reviews of the Ethics Act.

Lamb inquired about the intention of the passage in section 26-6, which states, if the board fails to take action in 60 days, then the application is deemed to be approved. Chris King replied the rules are identical to the Courthouse Area Design Review Board (CADRB). Lamb asked if the CADRB had any dealings with incentives, to which King replied they did not, and neither would the Design Excellence Board.

Stinnett inquired if Commissioner Paulson's intentions for the Economic Development money are tied to the Economic Development zones. Paulson replied it is not and the funds will not be for only one zone. Paulson stated that Planning will bring forth a proposal to address this. Stinnett stated this does not fulfill the goal of the committee to reserve the \$1 million fund solely for the Economic Development Zone.

In response to a question from Stinnett about the position of Design Officer Paulson stated that within the first year only one position was necessary as his office could assist with the workload in the beginning of the program. Stinnett inquired if the board has looked at merging the proposed board with the DDA, noting that he does not see how their functions will differ. Kay stated there was some discussion about this and stated they were concerned that the functions of the two boards are different enough to need separate administrative structures, and they believe the board should be within government. Kay stated that if the boards were merged, additional staff would be needed by the DDA. Stinnett stated that Council appoints the DDA anyway, and he thinks they can maintain the same authority and composition. Stinnett further stated it is easier for business owners to work with one board as opposed to several, and expressed his concern that the proposed board would add too many layers to the development process. Stinnett further inquired about other non-economic incentive pieces that have been considered and if there is a timeline for those. Kay stated that they vary and Stinnett requested a list of proposed incentives that are able to be delivered with this legislation.

King stated his belief that the function should reside within Planning to create the most seamless permitting process. Stinnett reiterated that he agrees the administrative function should reside "in house", but that the boards could be merged. King stated the board wanted specific design expertise on the board and that the DDA is not structured that way. Farmer requested clarification about any changes to the incentive package. Paulson stated the funding of the Design Officer and the \$1 million fund for Economic Development are the only changes. Farmer inquired if having some funds set aside specifically for these uses within the new Design Excellence guidelines would help for a short time, to which Paulson stated they were waiting to see how many applications are received.

Mossotti inquired about the many layers to development downtown. King stated that they are trying to guide development to fit the character of downtown. King stated most communities of a similar size have an urban design review function. King stated it would be another step to check off of a developer's list, but stated it would not be an adversarial but rather a collaborative process. Mossotti inquired if this process is more

flexible than historic district reviews. King stated that is, and they do not feel they would be adding additional requirements that would not already be in place for a developer.

Mossotti stated her concern of impeding developers. King stated they do not feel the costs for developments will be significant, but does want to encourage cohesive development. Mossotti inquired if incentives were on a case by case basis. King stated the Design Excellence board will not be making the decisions about incentives, and that incentives will be broader and involve other boards or departments, and that those funding decisions would ultimately be made by Council.

Lamb inquired of Kay about his intent of the language of the ordinance. Lamb stated she feels the Council has many more questions and she does not support this action.

Farmer stated his agreement with Lamb.

Gibbs stated he would like to see this move forward, stating that he has seen the figures for building permits and believes the legislation will be attractive to those developers.

Bledsoe stated her concern was for the budgetary implications and would like to see the questions that have been presented fleshed out before giving her support.

A motion was made by Kay to move approve to recommend to full Council, seconded by Gibbs. The motioned failed by a 3-5 vote. (Aye: Gibbs, Kay, Mossotti. Nay: Bledsoe, Farmer, Lamb, Scutchfield, Stinnett)

#### **4. Items Referred**

A motion was made by Bledsoe to adjourn, seconded by Scutchfield. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

DS 4-16-2015