

MINUTES STREATOR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PROCEEDINGS OF THE STREATOR CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF MAY 17, 2016 HELD AT THE TEMPORARY CITY ADMINISTRATION LOCATION OF #15 NORTHPOINT DRIVE AT 1:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Lansford presiding.

ROLL CALL: Members present: Bedei, Brozak, Crouch, Phelan and Mayor Lansford.

OTHERS PRESENT: Scot W. Wrighton, City Manager, Linda J. Underwood, City Clerk, Kevin Lindemann, NCICOG and Kendall Cramer, Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No one from the public wished to speak.

1. DISCUSSION RE: Redistribution and Number of Liquor Licenses.

Mayor Lansford reported on the item, stating there is one (1) "B"-club license and two (2) "C" package liquor licenses that have been laying empty for a number of years and he was requesting to have them reallocated into "D" Restaurant licenses as there is a greater opportunity for them to be utilized. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to convert the unused licenses to "D" Restaurant liquor licenses. Mayor Lansford stated that this change did not result in an increase in the total amount of City liquor licenses.

Mayor Lansford, then stated that in compliance with our ordinance, as of May 1, 2016, the waiting list of persons requesting to obtain a City liquor license became null and void. Mayor Lansford stated that anyone wishing to be placed on the list to fill out a registration and pay a \$25.00 non-refundable fee for the term of one year; stating that the Liquor Commissioner shall exercise his discretion to award a license based upon the best interests of the city, without regard to the applicants position on the waiting list.

2. DISCUSSION RE: Participation in Illinois River Road Organization

Wrighton introduced Kevin Lindemann, NCICOG and Kendall Cramer of the Illinois River Road Byway.

Mr. Cramer addressed Council regarding the mission statement and presented a synopsis of the benefits to tourism within the communities they advertise and stated that there has been a considerable increase in viewers to their website.

Wrighton questioned which surrounding cities were paying members? Cramer stated that about 1/3; i.e. Spring Valley, Utica, Havana. Councilman Phelan questioned how the City would best fit into their program. Cramer stated that he thought the mobile website would be most beneficial to the City. Councilman Brozak stated that he was in favor of continuing participation in the organization, but with the money crunch Tourism would not be able to help with the contribution.

It was the Council's consensus to remain in the program, but authorize the City Manager to enter into a dialogue with Mr. Lindemann and Mr. Cramer to negotiate an amount and level of participation lower than the previous \$4,200.00 amount.

3. DISCUSSION RE: Preliminary Housing Plan.

Wrighton presented three (3) possible plans for the Council to consider in dealing with deteriorating residential housing stock. (See attached exhibit). Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to pursue the 3rd option (fill in) using one (1) whole block.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION: [65 ILCS 5/120 (c)(5)(6)] Sale, Lease or Acquisition of Real Estate.

Mayor Lansford requested a motion and second to adjourn to executive session.

MOTION: Brozak made a motion to adjourn to closed session; seconded by Phelan.

ROLL: Ayes: Bedei, Brozak, Crouch, Phelan and Mayor Lansford

TIME ADJOURNED: 2:10 p.m.

TIME RETURNED: 2:49 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

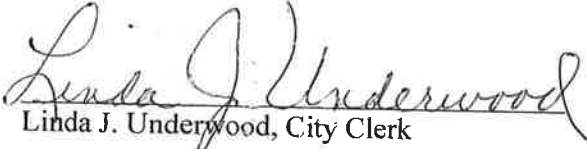
With no further items for discussion, Mayor Lansford requested a motion and second to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Brozak made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Crouch.

ROLL: Ayes: Bedei, Brozak, Crouch, Phelan and Mayor Lansford

TIME: 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda J. Underwood, City Clerk

PRELIMINARY HOUSING PLAN

The deteriorating condition of some parts of Streator's residential housing stock has been previously identified by the City Council as a policy priority. Staff proposes three categories of policies the city can pursue to upgrade housing condition, housing occupancy, and improve access to quality affordable housing. In fact, the City Council's May 18 agenda includes 3 items falling under at least one of these neighborhood improvement policy categories:

1. Rigorous Enforcement of Codes, Laws & Ordinances. This includes:
 - a. Obtain timely demolition by the city or others of structures determined to be unfit for human habitation, and structures that cannot reasonably be renovated
 - b. Dedicate sufficient resources to aggressive continuous code enforcement (by the fire and community development departments) so that accumulations of junk and debris, deteriorated siding, failed porches and roofs, broken fences, and other indications of deterioration are addressed quickly
 - c. Work directly with owners of dilapidated structures to transfer them to the city or other agencies that can rehabilitate them without the need for protracted condemnations and lien foreclosures by the city

2. Pursue Programs that Result in the Renovation of Existing Homes and the Reuse of Residential Vacant Lots. This includes:
 - a. Apply for funding through the Federal Home Loan Bank, and other governmental entities like it, to obtain grants and loans to assist property owners who want to remodel, renovate and rehabilitate existing and historic homes
 - b. Enter into agreements with community development corporations and similar entities (like Habitat for Humanity, Phoenix Project and others) that can take surplus homes and vacant lots from the city once Streator has acquired clear title and turn them into affordably priced owner occupied residences through renovation or new construction
 - c. Target municipal infrastructure projects in neighborhoods where they will have the greatest impact on decisions by private property owners to renovate, remodel and rehabilitate existing homes
 - d. Continue efforts to reduce the overall property tax burden to attract more home buyers to the community
 - e. Selectively acquire parcels through foreclosures and tax sales that can be repurposed, reused or renovated and made productive again
 - f. Incentivize the conversion of second and third floor buildings in the central business district into residences through building code and Enterprise Zone amendments.

3. Consider large-scale New "In-Fill" Owner-Occupied Affordable Housing. Acquire and clear whole blocks of real estate that are already served by roadways, storm drainage, water, sewer, power, gas and telecommunications (to reduce the upfront infrastructure cost) so that new affordable single and two-family homes can be constructed and sold. This includes:
 - a. Amend the Enterprise Zone and other local incentives so that they can be applied to this type of affordable owner-occupied housing
 - b. Make arrangements with developers willing to build affordably priced housing, and with banks to make first-time home buyers eligible for the mortgages they would need to purchase new affordable homes
 - c. Arrange for loans from government agencies and foundations that advance affordable housing policies that would be repaid from the proceeds of eventual sales
 - d. Develop one or two design models of affordable homes that can be replicated in several neighborhoods
 - e. Seek affordable housing tax credits, first-time home buyer assistance, and other programs to better facilitate the financing and sales of developed homes

Although several of these topics have been discussed before, this is the first attempt to bring together in one document all of the policies and strategies that, taken together, can eventually improve local housing conditions in distressed neighborhoods. It is requested that the City Council discuss this outline, and amend it in any way they consider appropriate.