

Elmhurst City Council Meeting

13 present; 1 Absent, Gutenkauf

Public: 54; Staff: 2; Police/Fire:2;

Press: 2

Observer: N. Talluto

May 19, 2014

7:32 pm – 9:20 pm

Mayor Morley called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing – For special service area number 16 (Comstock Ave.)

- Called to order at 7:34pm, per procedure, roll call called again.
- The SSA is to install sidewalks on Comstock Ave.
- Lee Freitag, 543 Comstock, suggested that a better job needs to be done to educate the residents about what the SSA will entail regarding the financial impact to them for building the sidewalks.
- John Belluttek, Mike Rudolf and two others spoke as a group. They are looking at a 4.5% increase in taxes to pay for a sidewalk that he knew wasn't there when he bought the house and do not feel are needed. They also submitted a petition representing others that feel this way.
- Cassandra Huffman, also pointed out that the calculation is unfair as it relates to the assessed value of the house, not the square footage of the house.
- Michael Cremerie, 567 W. Crockett, asked that the city should put water retention under the sidewalks since they are impervious.

Presentation: Proclamation: 1st Place statewide science Olympiad Bryan Middle School

- 12 Students were present to receive the city's recognition for the Science Olympiad award.
- Mayor Morley congratulated them and shared the plaque with them.

Public Forum

- Lisa Gerhold, of Cool Cities Coalition, asked the city council to approve increased amounts of clean energy in the City's Electrical Aggregation program.
- Claude Pagash, 566 W. Gladys, spoke about the report for water storage under residents yards and how that won't help the situation but all the other things that the city could do they are not doing. Also, he spoke about the request from Nitty for the street approval and Mr. Pagash indicated that he felt they were trying to get it for less money. He "thanked" the DuPage Mayors and Managers Council for their letter supporting the 5% tax increase.
- Michael Cremerie, 567 W. Crockett, came with a easel with the words "city hall" written on it. He spoke about the last meeting and his comments that aldermen are not listening and called out a person that he spoke to after the meeting saying that they are not able to multi-task. He suggests that a higher number of people are needed to participate in the city meetings. He suggested that since the ordinance for street easels will not be enforced, he had an idea for a sign with city hall on one side and a dartboard on the other. (This was a sarcastic joke.)
- Tamara Brenner, 137 N. Caroline, brought up that tonight is the last vote on the Addison parking garage. She also asked if the council was going to explain why businesses are

failing in Elmhurst. She brought up the subsidies/incentives for local businesses, stating that they were too much for the city to pay.

Announcements

- None

The **Consent Agenda** was passed (13 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent) with no items removed.

Committee Reports

- 1) 8.1 – Request for Vacation of Avon Rd.
 - a) Ald. Kennedy summarized the majority report. The Nitty Development group has committed to two things that will increase the permeable surface of the properties they are developing – permeable pavers on the driveways and water storage tanks on all the houses. The commitment for this financially is about \$500,000 from Nitty. Additionally, the EAV of the Avon street that Nitty needs to make the development is about \$178,000. Given the over-investment the committee felt that it would be appropriate to offer them the street for \$1.00.
 - b) Ald. Bram summarized the minority report. He stated that he is pleased that Nitty is investing in the water mitigation items. He also discovered that Nitty feels it is a selling point for the properties – increasing the appeal or the direct value of the properties. He feels that the city is leaving money on the table. Alderman Bram made a motion to replace the minority report with the majority report. There was no second to the motion so the motion does not carry.
 - c) Ald. Healy clarified that underground tanks are not required in the ordinance. Brick paver driveways are also another option to meet the requirement in the ordinance.
 - d) Report passes: 12 Ayes, 1 Nay, 1 Absent
- 2) 8.2 – Report – Sales Tax Incentive request from Larry Roesch Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram
 - a) Ald. York summarized that this incentive will help a dilapidated property to begin to generate new sales tax revenue of \$4MM.
 - b) Ald. Deuter suggested that status quo is not an option as this project will not happen without the incentive and we are competing with other municipalities for this business. She suggested that the exact amount of the incentive is difficult to arrive at. She looked at other municipalities and compared them to here. She feels that \$1.5 MM is aggressive but is not sure what lower amount would get the project done and is concerned that the project will be lost if the City does nothing.
 - c) Ald. Dunn is also concerned about the level of investment and feels that it is too high to win the project. He did not sign the report for this reason. He also felt the 15 year time-frame was too long to recoup the investment.
 - d) Ald. Bram reminded his colleagues about the sales tax incentive policy and that it speaks of the city investing to the “minimum” level the make a project viable. The magic number seems elusive but \$1.5 MM is not it. He also sees nothing to support that the project will not move forward without any incentive. Ald. Bram motioned to alter the maximum payout to the applicant to \$1.0MM. Ald. Dunn seconded the motion.
 - e) Ald. Levin stated that this dealership is already doing business in Bensenville, IL and they could continue to do so. He suggested that it is not good public policy to compete against other municipalities but the reality is it is a competitive situation. The report is fair in it’s

amount and timeframe and Elmhurst wanted to be a good place to do business and also good stewards of tax dollars. He will not support the motion, which has no basis for the arbitrary change.

- f) Ald. Bram replied that he agreed with some of Ald. Levin's comments. Ald. Bram has no concern of losing this deal as a result of lowering the incentive.
 - g) Ald. York stated that the city does not have any of this money – it all comes from the business earning it and paying sales tax – the city just provides some back to the business to incent them to do business in this city. The dealer representative stated in committee meeting that it would take \$1.5 MM to get this deal done.
 - h) Ald. Bram asked where the data is that supports that statement.
 - i) The motion to amend to \$1.0MM fails (2 Aye: Bram, Dunn; 11 Nays: Leader, Polomsky, Hipskind, York, Levin, Healy, Honquest, Kennedy, Mulliner, Wagner, Deuter; 1 Absent: Gutenkauf)
 - j) Ald. Healy stated that this locks the city in to Elmhurst for 15 years – if they move before that, they pay us back the incentive amount to date.
 - k) Ald. Mulliner applauded the committee on the deal that they negotiated with the dealership and is pleased to improve this eyesore.
 - l) Report passes: (11 Ayes: York, Hipskind, Levin, Healy, Honquest, Mulliner, Deuter, Leader, Polomsky, Kennedy, Wagner; 2 Nays: Dunn, Bram; 1 Absent: Gutenkauf)
- 3) 8.4 – Case Number 14 ZBA – 03/Nitti Subdivision and Variation – Tentative Plat – 200 N. Berteau Ave. (DP&Z)
- a) Ald. Levin stated that the request for the variance meets all requirements and requests that the council supports it.
 - b) Report passes (12 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent)

Reports and Recommendations of Appointed and Elected Officials

- Mayor Morley announced a result of a referral by Polomsky regarding sustainability that has been ongoing for over a year. The mayor announced a sustainability task force by the City to establish sustainability goals across all city departments with regular updates.
- Mayor Morley and Ald. Mulliner met with ComEd this past week. They are ready to present their next annual update. ComEd has increased their commitment and will be installing smart meters in 100% of Elmhurst community. They will be at city council meeting next week. Installation will begin in June.
- Mayor Morley also announced that a local resident “Fast Freddy” is up for NASCAR hall of fame.
- Memorial Day Parade, 5/26 at 9:30 am from City Hall to Wilder Park.
- City Manager provided a budget update – stating that the 2015 budget-planning calendar has been released. He also stated that FY 2013 resulted in a general fund balance above what was expected – some of which was driven by auto sales and other sales taxes. Expenditure variances were favorable due to salaries and other benefits being lower than planned. He plans to present plans to the finance committee for review to provide tax relief to citizens as a result. There is a difference of about \$3MM in favorable revenues and expenditures.
- Ald. Hipskind congratulated the city on the great budget results – expenditures being down and sales tax being up is a great result.
- Ald. Bram asked if the City knows why the O'Hare traffic has changed patterns.

- City Manager responded that yes, it is increased and the suburban commission is looking into noise monitoring.

Ordinances

- 1) 10.1 – An ordinance amending chapter 14 entitled “Stormwater and Floodplains” of the City of Elmhurst municipal code adopting “New Single Family Home Stormwater Management Policy”
 - a) No discussion.
 - b) Ordinance passes: 11 Ayes, 1 Nay: Hipskind; 1 Absent: Gutenkauf
- 2) 10.2 – An Ordinance granting conditional use permit and associated variations for the redevelopment of the property commonly known as 135-149 N. Addison Ave. Elmhurst, IL
 - a) Ald. Bram reminded all that the total height will be 65 feet and that it could be a detriment to the “cuteness” of the downtown.
 - b) Ordinance passes: 11 Ayes; 2 Nays: Deuter, Bram; 1 Absent: Gutenkauf

Other Business

- Ald. York thanked the City Staff on Agenda item 7.11 and the hard work that it took to get there.
- Mayor Morley clarified the vote of the DuPage Mayor’s and Managers Council that Elmhurst voted against that proposal which was essentially a barter by the state to keep the county funds coming by supporting the tax rate.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.