

Elmhurst City Council Meeting

14 present

Public: 43; Staff: 8; Police/Fire:2;

Press: 3

Observer: N. Talluto

September 15, 2014

7:32 pm – 10:30 pm

Mayor Morley called the meeting to order.

Mrs. Sullivan submitted written comments to Clerk Spencer.

Mayor Morley announced that the IL State Attorney General has issued a new ruling related to public access that the City of Elmhurst would adopt immediately. The new ruling stated that speakers do not need to state their address, only their name.

Public Forum

- Ron Bottens spoke in support of the repavement of the 2nd ward streets. He urges the council to also consider sealing the cracks to help the streets survive the winter.
- Diane Benning, 7th ward, states that her streets haven't been repaved for 50 or more years and asks that her streets get properly repaved.
- Claude Pagash, 566 W. Gladys, mentioned the new storm water management policy for the new housing development that was addressed in the latest Elmhurst Patch. He suggests that the council simply passes new ordinances for homeowners and doesn't address the blacktop that is in the city.
- Maria Presnica, 239 Elm Ave., spoke about the latest several years flooding issues in her neighborhood. She thanked her Aldermen for getting the 1st Ward project on the Burke study. She feels that the recent City Survey summary in the Elmhurst Patch "buried" the flooding issue as compared to how the actual survey results prioritized the flooding issues. Additionally, she states that it is the Council's job is to help fix the flooding issues.
- Kevin Graff, 233 Cayuga, was disappointed with the latest neighborhood meeting on Cayuga and how the city was ill prepared. He suggests that the city's plans have not changed and the city has not listened to the residents concerns at all.
- Tamara Brenner, who lives in the 4th Ward, submitted her application to fill the seat today. She stated that there was an overlap of 2 months for a commissioner on two different commissions and that was "2 months too many." She asks that the commissioner should recuse oneself from the votes during that time.
- Kathleen Sullivan, read a letter from a 1st ward resident about the Academic wing of the York High School and how it affected their flooding. She urges that the city should understand this background when entering into a contract with District 205 as the body has not lived up to its "promises" to her in the past regarding flooding.
- Jim Danzer, 830 Adell, has lived in Elmhurst for over 20 years and that the concrete has held up well, although they now need replacement. He asks that the city consider replacing with concrete not asphalt, as it is more durable.

Announcements

- 4/7/15 is the general election for municipal officers. Interested candidates may request a campaign packet now and 9/23/14 is the first date that petitions may be presented for signatures. The filing period is 12/15 – 12/22/14.
- Ald. Polomsky invites teachers to “Teacher’s Night Out” on 9/25/14 from 3:15pm onward on Spring Street.
- Ald. Gutenkauf, invites 1st Ward residents, north of the track to a meeting on 9/18 at City Hall at 7pm to discuss further the new Burke report, which presents information about the newly studied areas.
- Ald. Wagner announced the Fire Department Annual Open House at the South Fire House on 10/5 from 12 – 4pm.
- Ald. Bram announced a meeting for 2nd Ward residents on 9/30 at 7pm to discuss the Crestview area, which was included in the recent Burke report on flooding.

The **Consent Agenda** was passed (14 Ayes, 0 Nays) with no items removed.

Committee Reports

- 1) Report – Majority Report – Residential concrete street resurfacing plan (PW&B)
 - a) Ald. Kennedy passed the summary responsibility to Ald. Polomsky and Ald. Dunn who co-lead the report.
 - b) Ald. Polomsky summarized that this report is the largest increase in funding in 17 years for concrete street repair and it signifies an increase in the speed with which they will be repaired. Additionally, in support of the staff’s recommendation, the timing of ongoing repairs was set to the appropriate level and additional funds would not equate to repairing any streets in that ward any faster as they were not needed that soon.
 - c) Ald. Dunn also stated that asphalt is the leading, state of the art, and civil engineering recommendation for street surfacing.
 - d) Ald. Kennedy thanked the prior aldermen for their comments and supported the notion that the city staff and engineers have presented a sound approach to the cement repairs.
 - e) Ald. Bram stated that the city has underinvested over the past 5 years as compared to budget on repairing the concrete and therefore the city should invest more now to “catch up”. He also said that it is too expensive to replace with concrete. He believes that \$600,000 should be invested, not the majority report level of \$450,000. Ald. Bram motions to substitute the Minority Report for the Majority Report. Ald. Gutenkauf seconded the motion.
 - f) Ald. Honquest shared what he has learned over the past 15 months, about how the city staff and city council work together. In the case of this report, the Alderman shared that three different bodies before coming for a vote have reviewed the plan. Including the civil engineers on the city staff, “the experts”. Ald. Honquest supports the majority report.
 - g) Ald. Bram stated that he has championed this issue for over 12 years.
 - h) Ald. Levin stated that he supports what the city staff recommends for budgeting moving forward. Additionally, he was not clear on how the \$600,000 number was arrived at and without that information, it would be hard to understand how the dollars would be spent effectively.
 - i) Ald. Bram stated that he arrived at \$600,000 because of all of the years of under-funding as well as “fair distribution of funds throughout all of Elmhurst.”

- j) Ald. Gutenkauf pointed out the functional difference that \$600,000 allows for resurfacing of all concrete streets in 9 years vs. 12 at \$450,000.
 - k) Motion fails (2 Ayes – Bram, Gutenkauf, 12 Nays)
 - l) Majority Report passes (14 Ayes, 0 Nays)
- 2) Report – Paragon tax increment financing incentive request (F, CA&AS)
- a) Ald. York summarized that tonight’s TIF is complementary to Mariano’s and the North York area. The original request from the developer was too high and the city worked with them to come to a good agreement. The incentive will be fully earned by the 11th year of the TIF. The incentive will not be earned if the business does not make money. This developer is investing over \$14 MM to develop the old Waverton Hotel property, which is an eyesore to the community in its current state.
 - b) Ald. Dunn pointed out a number of items that make this a very favorable project to get behind including: environmental remediation investment by the developer, improving public infrastructure (stormwater bioswales and public sidewalk improvement). The developer’s normal returns are 13 – 15% and the incentive was used to help get the developer to the normal return and encourage them to develop in Elmhurst.
 - c) Ald. Hipskind supports this report because the numbers work well but also because of the improvement this could bring to this part of Elmhurst.
 - d) Ald. Deuter states that this development will help the city. She believes that the market should support a thriving business without government assistance and therefore does not support the report. She suggests that there are a number of other projects to improve this area that the money could be used for versus helping out a business that may have planned poorly.
 - e) Ald. Bram states that this hotel is “blighted”. He supports many of the TIF’s that come across his desk. He is concerned with the amount of \$500,000 as being too high. Ald. Bram motioned to suspend the rules in order to ask the developer two questions before voting on the report. Ald. Gutenkauf seconded the motion.
 - f) Ald. York suggested the question might be able to be answered by the council members without suspending the rules.
 - g) Ald. Dunn would like to know what the questions would be before voting.
 - h) Ald. Bram wants the developer to answer why 41,000 vs. 45,000 sq. ft.? as well as will they move forward with the development if the incentive is not approved.
 - i) Motion to suspend rules (7 Ayes – Bram, Gutenkauf, Dunn, Polomsky, Levin, Deuter, Leader; 7 Nays – Hipskind, York, Healy, Honquest, Kennedy, Mulliner, Wagner)
 - j) Ald. Gutenkauf requested that the council provide answers to Ald. Bram’s questions.
 - k) Ald. York stated that the parking requirements for a health club limited them due to the size of the parking lot. Additionally it was his opinion that the development would not move forward without the incentive.
 - l) Ald. Healy thanked everyone for his or her work. He recognizes that it is difficult to find the right level of incentive and he is concerned that not supporting the majority puts too much unknown into the future of this development.
 - m) Ald. Levin said that it helped him see the north York plan and how this fits into that plan. He supports development now to continue the momentum in this area. Sales tax helps reduce the burden on the resident’s property tax and the city cannot underestimate the role of development in this equation.

- n) Ald. Polomsky came to her decision with difficulty and consideration. She does support it as the revenue share is less than the TIF and is much less than what the developer originally requested.
- o) Ald. Bram stated that he was disappointed that he could not ask the developers the questions directly. He supports the incentive, as the development is needed in this area.
- p) Report passes (13 Ayes, 1 Nay – Deuter)

Reports and Recommendations of Appointed and Elected Officials

- 1) Mayor Morley
 - a) There is a vacancy in the 4th Ward for an alderman seat. You must live in the 4th Ward to apply. All application must be submitted by 5pm on 9/19/14. The Mayor will meet with all applicants.
 - b) There have been a number of “special” meetings for flooding issues in localized areas of the city. As a result, the Aldermen have requested a citywide meeting to allow for more information to be shared. This meeting will be on 10/15/14 at the City Hall and the agenda will be to discuss the history of flooding, what has been done in the past year and allow for “breakout” sessions for local areas to discuss in more detail.
 - c) He attended a Korean War Veteran meeting in Elmhurst on 9/11/14. It was the mayor’s honor to attend and he promised them that he would remind all of what they have done.
- 2) City Manager Grabowski
 - a) The new Public Works director has begun and was at the meeting tonight.
 - b) The DuPage Mayor’s and Manager’s Group has put out a challenge for city innovation. He will submit “neighborhood roll calls” as our innovation.
- 3) Christopher Burke Engineering – Flood Plan Additional Study Areas
 - a) The study methodology was the same as in past reports. Three additional areas were studied to cover inundation areas from 4/13. The study also proposed conceptual ways to provide flooding relief.
 - i) Walnut/Evergreen/Myrtle
 - ii) Collegeview
 - iii) Crestview Park
 - b) There followed a short question and answer session where Aldermen asked Dr. Burke follow up questions.

Resolutions

- 1) R-70-2014 – A resolution to approve the consent order in RE: People of the State of Illinois V City of Elmhurst
 - a) Attorney Storino summarized that the IEPA is the party that the city agreed to a settlement with. The following terms were agreed:
 - i) Elmhurst will pay \$25,000 fine to the IEPA.
 - ii) By Spring 2015 the City will complete the construction of a new salt creek project that will benefit all the citizens of Elmhurst and will cost \$100,000.
 - iii) By 12/31/14, the City will have a computerized system to relate data to different lift stations.
 - iv) The City will recommend a new sanitary sewer plan to limit sanitary sewer inflow.
 - v) By 9/30/15 city will complete the major improvement including the Jackson St. lift station.

- vi) By 12/15/17 the city will complete the inspection and evaluation of private inflow.
- vii) By the following year, the city will limit public sector inflow of INI (sanitary water).
- viii) The resolution passed (14 Ayes, 0 Nays)

Other Business

- Ald. York announced that the Elmhurst Children's Assistance Foundation would host a fundraiser at The Snuggery on 10/9/14.
- Recognition of outgoing council member – 4th Ward Alderman Stephen W. Hipkind
 - Ald. Hipkind shared that he has been honored to live in Elmhurst and to serve the city. Many great things have been accomplished during that time. Elmhurst is a wonderful place that has something for everyone. He thanked the citizens of Elmhurst, the City Staff, all the past Mayors, the Aldermen he has served with and all the people and committee's that help this town to continue to be a great place.
 - A number of Aldermen shared their well wishes with departing Alderman Hipkind.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.