



COMMITTEE WORK SESSION AUGUST 22, 2007

Committee Members Present: Ken Braman
Brenda Hlas
Tom Jones
Bill Mowery
Mike Zita
Scott Pelot
Dennis McGlone

Also Present: Mayor James A. Price
Rick Ryland
John Moss
Jeff Pritchard
Karla Richards
Ann Campbell

The Committee Work Session convened on Wednesday, August 22, 2007 at 7:00 PM, in Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dennis McGlone. Following a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silent prayer.

Committee Work Session General Discussion:

PC Resolution #5-2007 Johnson Meadows Preliminary Plat:

Mr. Braman stated that this was approved before, however the time ran out on the permits and it is the same as was submitted previously. Mr. Ed Saus, agent representing this project, spoke briefly about the plans that were submitted. Mr. Saus stated that he has been told that everything seems to be in order and Mr. Pritchard concurred. Mr. Braman clarified that this project is 35 acres and 139 units and that nothing has changed since the last filing. Mr. Braman discussed some concerns regarding the increased costs of Meadows Lane. Mr. Pritchard concurred that the culdesac that was designed and engineered three (3) years ago. Mr. Pritchard stated that they have contacted the engineering firm to have the plans updated and costs revised. Mr. Pelot asked Mr. Saus about a projected time line, since the city has taken out the loan and paid interest all along. Mr. Saus stated that they plan to begin as quickly as possible, assuring that they will meet all of the city's requirements, adding that they hope to be constructing the units in early spring. Mr. Pritchard stated that the improvement plans have been submitted to the city, however we cannot review those plans until Council approves of the preliminary plat.

PC Resolution #5-2007 Johnson Meadows Preliminary Plat continued:

Mr. Braman moved to add this to Councils next agenda, with the public hearing and second reading on September 10, 2007. Mr. Braman stated that he wanted to waive the third reading, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

Roll Call: Yeas: Braman, Pelot, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, Zita, McGlone
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

PC Resolution #6-2007 Pride One Norton Preliminary Plat:

Mr. Braman introduced Ms. Pat Rakoci, Developer for Summit Ridge. Ms. Rakoci stated that the previous preliminary plat had not been recorded, and her permit had expired. Ms. Rakoci stated that on July 31, 2007 she appeared before the Planning Commission and received their recommendation to approve with five (5) conditions. Ms. Rakoci stated that the plan is the same as was approved last year, with a slight change in Phase I, which is noted on the Preliminary Plat. Ms. Rakoci briefly discussed the five (5) conditions. Ms. Rakoci agreed with condition #1, (Ensure that the pond in Phase 4B does not encroach into the wetland setback) and agreed with condition #2 (Provide landscape/buffering for two parcels along Cleve-Mass. Road) parcel #4604352, but not for parcel #4604353. Ms. Rakoci indicated that she has spoken with Mr. Pritchard about this and they both agreed that this parcel does not require a landscape buffer. Condition #3-(More trees need to be provided in the buffering area in Phase 3C for homes along Fairland Road) Ms. Rakoci stated that there are some trees there and they will bring in more for buffering effect. Condition #4- (Lots on the corner of circle in Phase 3A have driveway entrances on side streets only) Ms. Rakoci disagreed with this condition, and would prefer that this is not requirement, it is a 25 MPH road and felt there is no danger here. Ms. Rakoci indicated that this circle is traffic calming and does not see a need for this, adding that it was not a condition on the first filing. Ms. Rakoci was in agreement with condition #5 (Lot coverage calculations needs to be on the drawings). Mr. Pritchard indicated that once Council approves the preliminary plat, they do have the plans on file to be reviewed. Mr. Jones asked when they plan to begin moving dirt? Ms. Rakoci indicated that hopefully they could begin by the end of September. Ms. Rakoci stated that they plan on having Phase 1-C in this year as a winter job, which are the apartments, adding that the plans will be submitted within the next few weeks. Ms. Rakoci also indicated that there would be two entrances coming off of Cleveland-Massillon Road instead of just one. Mr. Pelot asked Mr. Pritchard if he concurred with Ms. Rakoci's comments? Mr. Pritchard stated that he concurred with condition #2 in relation to parcel # 4604353, condition #4 is a judgement call because it is a one way and 25 MPH, and he was not that concerned with this issue. Mr. Jones inquired about the width and depth of the lots? Ms. Rakoci stated that they vary, along the main road it is 75 x 125 and the cluster lots are 60-65 ft wide and the others are 40-45 ft. wide.

PC Resolution #6-2007 Pride One Norton preliminary Plat continued:

Mr. Braman moved to place this item on Council's next agenda, with the public hearing and second reading on September 10, 2007. Mr. Braman stated that he wanted to waive the third reading, seconded by Mr. Jones. Mr. Braman clarified that condition #4 would be more of a judgement call, and condition #2 could be addressed if a problem occurs.

Roll Call: Yeas: Braman, Jones, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, Zita, Pelot, McGlone
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Petitions for Charter Amendments:

Mr. McGlone stated that we had some citizens go out for petitions for Charter amendments, adding that they were sent to the Summit County Board of Elections, and asked Mrs. Richards if they are valid? Mrs. Richards indicated that the Board of Elections certified all four (4) petitions as valid. Mr. McGlone stated that we have no say on putting them on the ballot, they have all been certified. Mr. Pelot stated that by Council passing legislation and putting them forward, does not mean that Council supports them. We have an obligation to review the signatures and the layout of the petition and pass them on to the Board of Elections and nothing more. Mr. Pelot stated that in regards to the Sheriff Office Vs Norton Police issue, he would like the city to hold a town hall meeting in Council Chambers to educate the public, and asked Mr. Moss to prepare the figures so that we can have an apples to apples comparison. Mr. Pelot suggested this meeting be recorded and aired on Channel 15 so the public can make an educated decision on which way they would like to go on this decision. Mr. Don Weigand, a Norton resident spoke regarding this issue and that he is angry with Council for not listening to the presentation, but now you want to have a town meeting. Mr. Weigand stated that you did not do your job, we had to listen to a one sided presentation by the Summit County Sheriff, and Council was not there to ask any questions. Mr. Weigand stated that he took his own time to come here to city hall and sit down with Mr. Moss to go over the finances. Mr. Weigand stated that he is not sure who to trust, you sat back and did nothing. Mr. Weigand stated that if this were to change, you have to take a look at the current staff and make sure that they get the proper training. Mr. Weigand stated that he does not have a lot of confidence in Council to do their job. Mr. Weigand stated that he is tired of seeing this issue being a dead issue because that's what you want. Lets look at this issue without taxing the residents. We are the second or third highest taxed state in the union and in the top five in home foreclosures in the country. We have so many other issues we need to deal with; instead you are not doing your jobs by dragging this out. Its time for the residents of Norton to find out what we have. Mrs. Tompkins, a Norton resident suggested that when the city holds the town meeting, that equal time be provided to both sides in order to balance things out. Mrs. Tompkins stated that we do not need to get in to that "biased" situation again.

Petitions for Charter Amendments continued:

Mr. McGlone moved to place the Charter amendment for Section 2.09 Compensation of the Mayor on Council's next agenda, waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

Roll Call: Yeas: McGlone, Pelot, Braman, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, Zita
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Mr. McGlone moved to place the Charter amendment for Section 3.08 Compensation and Reimbursements for Council on Council's next agenda, waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

Roll Call: Yeas: McGlone, Pelot, Braman, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, Zita
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Mr. McGlone moved to place the Charter amendment for Section 5.05 Department of Public Safety on Council's next agenda, waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Jones.

Roll Call: Yeas: McGlone, Jones, Braman, Hlas, Mowery, Zita, Pelot
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Mr. McGlone moved to place the Charter amendment for Section 9.05 Disqualification of Service on Council's next agenda, waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Braman.

Roll Call: Yeas: McGlone, Braman, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, Zita, Pelot
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Purchase of Playground Equipment:

Mr. Zita stated we need to approve two (2) ordinances to purchase the new playground equipment for Columbia Woods Park. Mr. Zita stated that we need one piece of legislation to enter into a contract and another piece of legislation to purchase the equipment. Mr. Zita stated that the Parks Board met earlier this week and this was discussed and approved. Mr. Zita turned this discussion over to Mr. Pritchard for the details. Mr. Pritchard stated that we need to go through US Communities which is a national bidding process, and we have received a grant just shy of \$30,000.00 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Pritchard indicated that he would like to streamline this process in order to complete the project before the end of this year. Mr. Moss stated that we have budgeted \$55,000.00 and with the grant money received this would be enough to cover the expense. Mr. Jones asked about the time line to complete this possibly by mid October, and Mr. Pritchard stated that he hoped this would be complete by then. Mr. Ryland stated that the plan is to install it now and get it done. Mrs. Hlas stated that the GameTime Company would be the ones installing this equipment not the city. Mr. Pritchard concurred, that price covers everything including shipping and installation. Mr. Zita moved to place legislation to approve the contract for US Communities not to exceed \$85,000.00 on Council's next agenda, with emergency language and waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Pelot, Braman, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, McGlone
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Zita moved to place legislation on Council's next agenda, authorizing the purchase of the equipment from GameTime Company not to exceed \$85,000.00, with emergency language and waiving the second and third readings, seconded by Mr. Pelot.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Pelot, Braman, Hlas, Jones, Mowery, McGlone
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Sound System Improvements:

Mr. Jones stated that during the past several months he has been discussing this issue with Mr. Moss. Mr. Jones stated that while Council was on recess, Mr. Moss came up with an idea to look at improvements to the system that is appropriate for the audience as well as Council. Mr. Moss stated that the initial concept was to purchase headsets to amplify the sound, and this was budgeted at \$900.00 for this year. Since then we have looked into this and one of the problems with this is that if the sound quality is not good, increasing it only makes it louder.

Sound System Improvements:

Mr. Moss indicated that he met with WES Sound System and they took a look around, offering a suggested solution that we simply cannot afford. Mr. Moss indicated that one solution that we can afford is to rework the wiring of the speakers in the ceilings. Mr. Moss stated that we could also upgrade the microphone at the podium for the public. The estimate received is for \$1280.00, adding that some of the work can be done by the city such as pulling the wires, etc. Mr. Moss stated that the net effect is that the sound would be turned up, there would be no feedback or echoing heard. Mr. Jones clarified that we have \$900.00 set aside in the budget, and Mr. Moss indicated we would need to come up with the difference. Mr. Zita suggested that since the Mayor's Court also shares this room, he felt the difference should come from their budget, possibly the Court Computer Fund, or any other departments that use this room. Mr. Moss stated that it couldn't come from this fund because it is not a computer related expense, however it is an interesting idea. Mrs. Hlas stated that we are only short \$380.00 and there has to be money somewhere for the difference. Mr. Moss stated that the Court is already in the hole \$500.00 for printing cost that was not budgeted to print new forms. Mr. Jones questioned using money from the Rainy Day Fund, and Mr. Moss stated there is nothing budgeted in this fund, it is sitting there and if Council deemed it appropriate it could be spent. Mrs. Hlas stated there must be \$380.00 somewhere to be allocated, it does not need to be so difficult. Mr. Jones initially made a motion to add this to Council's next agenda, however Mr. Moss indicated this was not necessary because it is well under any requirement to do so. Mrs. Hlas stated that it is less than \$5,000.00. Mr. Jones moved that the Administration and Mr. Moss work together and go ahead with the installation of the sound system, seconded by Mr. Zita. Mr. Pelot questioned if this meets the requirement for the hearing impaired residents? Mr. Moss stated that this is a step forward and it will increase the volume and we could consider additional expense in the future for better microphones so that we can increase sound all around. Mrs. Hlas questioned the motion on the table, if nothing is being sent to Council, then they need to be withdrawn. Mr. Jones stated that his motion was to allow the Administration to work hand in hand and install this, and wanted Council's approval.

Roll Call: Yeas: Jones, Zita, Braman, Hlas, Mowery, Pelot, McGlone
Nays: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, a Norton resident, asked if this would help improve the sound on the Warner Cable channel as well? Mr. Moss replied yes, because the volume would be increased, adding that he was unsure how much this would help.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

Mr. Jones thanked Mr. Ryland and any others involved for their help with the flooding we had here on Monday. Mr. Jones stated that we were fortunate we did not get as much rain like Bucyrus, Shelby, Mansfield, and Barberton. Mr. Ryland stated that we did set up our Emergency Management Operations and everything went very well. The fortunate thing was that we did not receive the additional rain as was expected. Mr. Ryland stated we were ready in the event of more rainfall. Mr. Ryland stated that everyone in the city did a good job and responded well. Mr. Ryland stated that the residents were very patient with this situation, we had a the rear wall of a house collapse, and we had to close five (5) streets. Mr. Ryland indicated that next week we will need to appropriate some funds due to expenses related to the damage to our roads and curbs. Mr. Ryland stated that we have already brought in a lot of materials and additional equipment expense to make these repairs. Mr. Moss stated that as of now he could identify \$10,000.00 for aggregate and pipe. Mr. Ryland stated that we have been logging in every call, all materials and labor costs associated with this rain in the event FEMA funds become available. Mr. Jones asked if the Governor would be declaring this area as a state of emergency so that we could get some of this money back? Mr. Ryland stated that it could be possible, and it looks as though FEMA would be called in on this storm issue.

Non-Agenda Items:

Mr. Danko, a Norton resident, spoke about a recent article in the Akron Beacon Journal regarding the Summit County Sheriff, (see attached). Mr. Danko stated that he does not know why anyone would vote to bring in the Summit County Sheriff's Office when we have our own Norton Police Dept., Mr. Danko stated that we should be discussing money issues which should be discussed during open meetings. Mr. Danko stated that he is voting for the Norton Police Dept. and that he would be campaigning for them.

Mr. Don Weigand, a Norton resident, discussed the drop in natural gas prices in the last few weeks. Wholesale prices are at around 5.60 per 1,000 cubic feet. Mr. Weigand stated that there is a lot of gas in the ground right now and that this could save the city and the residents a lot of money. Mr. Weigand stated that he has contracted with a company called HESS and by doing so it will save him thousands of dollars over the next year. Mr. Weigand discussed the cost of gasoline on the stock market, which is way below retail. Mr. Weigand stated that he couldn't see how they could justify \$2.95, its way too high. Mr. Pelot stated that he felt the price increase for gasoline might have been due to the hurricane. Mr. Weigand stated that there must be more to it than that because in Cincinnati the gasoline price is 11¢ a gallon cheaper. Mr. McGlone inquired about the city's natural gas aggregation program and that the rate is terrible. Mr. Ryland indicated that he met with the broker a week ago and we cannot renegotiate our contract price, we are locked in until 2008. Mr. Ryland stated that the consulting firm that we used will no longer be used in the future and that he is working at negotiating with others. Mr. McGlone and Mr. Ryland both agreed that the brokers did a terrible job for the city.

Non-Agenda Items continued:

Mr. Ryland reminded residents that the current contract does have an option to buy out of the program, and encouraged them to look into this.

Ms. Megan Booth, a Norton resident, questioned who owns from the telephone pole to the street? Mr. Ryland indicated that this can vary anywhere from forty (40) to sixty (60) feet to the center of the road, and it is city property. Ms. Booth stated that there should not be any political signs towards the street. Ms. Booth discussed Mr. Danko's comments, and recommended that the citizens find out all the facts regarding the Summit County Sheriff's Office, there is more to this than what was written. Ms. Booth stated that there also must be more to the story about the Norton Police arresting someone for DUI and then releasing him, only to be picked up again for the same offense. Ms. Both urged the citizens to get more information about the money and the facts about these stories.

Mr. Bill Conte, a Norton resident, spoke about the damage from the storm recently. Mr. Conte discussed the need for repairs to the culverts along Gardner Blvd. Mr. Conte suggested the city look into finding the money for guardrails at the very least, if the city cannot address the culverts.

Ms. Elaine Tompkins discussed a few items for Council and the Administration to consider. (see attached).

Ms. Violet Carr, a Norton resident, asked Mr. Ryland to clarify the pending road repairs due to the heavy rains, asking if this included cleaning out ditches? Ms. Carr indicated that several ditches in the area are full with weeds and cattails. Mr. Ryland stated that the city could take a look at this issue, adding that the citizens need to report this to the city and then they would look into it.

Mr. Jones asked Mr. Ryland to address the weeds along the guardrail at Collier Road and Wadsworth Road. Mr. Ryland indicated that this area is in Norton and he would see that this is addressed.

Topics for the next Work Session:

Mr. McGlone stated that we have Council Rules and that we need to begin discussing the tax credit issue within the next few weeks. Mr. McGlone asked the Council members to take a look at this and let him know by email how they feel, or contact Mrs. Richards with your concerns.

Mr. Zita reminded Council that we have a presentation on Monday from Summit/Akron Solid Waste Authority. Mrs. Richards added that Council would need to ratify the contract no later than the October 22, 2007 Council meeting.

Adjourn:

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Dennis McGlone, President of Council

****NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM****

All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted. If you do not have access to Time-Warner Channel #15, you may request to view a copy of any VHS recorded meeting in Council Chambers. Please contact Ann Campbell in the Administration office to make the necessary arrangements at (330) 825-7815 ext. 14.