

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COMMISSION
LONG RANGE PLANNING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 1, 2014
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 151 MARTIN
9:00 A.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Scott D. Moore, Mayor, called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.

II. ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL: Present,	Mayor Moore Commissioner Dilgard Commissioner Hoff Commissioner McDaniel Commissioner Nickita Commissioner Rinschler Mayor Pro Tem Sherman
Absent,	absent

Administration: Assistant City Manager Valentine, Attorney Currier, Clerk Pierce, Finance Director Ostin, Assistant Finance Director Gerber, Police Chief Studt, Deputy Police Chief Clemence, Building Official Johnson, Assistant Building Official Cooper, Fire Chief Metz, Assistant Fire Chief Connaughton, City Engineer O'Meara, Assistant City Engineer Cousino, DPS Director Wood, Public Works Manager Matthews, Library Director Koschik, City Planner Ecker, Planner Baka

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

**I. FINANCE
FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL MODEL &
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/FUNDING PRIORITIES**

Tim St. Andrew, Plante Moran, explained the forecast covers the general fund, major and local streets funds and the water and sewer funds. He noted that revenues contained in the forecast are based on the current conditions and the expenditures in the budget rolled forward every year with inflationary increases. He noted that the assumption is a 2.2-3.8 % taxable value increases overall for the City. He stated that the City will see growth in taxable value and in the property tax revenue associated with the taxable value.

Ms. Ostin confirmed for Commissioner Rinschler that the millage rate will remain constant. Commissioner Rinschler noted that the City has the option to lower the millage rate to keep the revenue constant or raise the millage rate for a higher revenue than forecasted as the City is not at the Headlee cap. Ms. Ostin confirmed that there is 9/10 of a mill left which would generate approximately \$1.4 million.

Commissioner Hoff questioned if the Chesterfield Fire Station is in the current budget. Ms. Ostin confirmed that \$2.5 million is budgeted for that project. Mr. Valentine noted that it is anticipated those costs would only cover construction and additional funds would need to be allocated for the project.

Dave Hoendorf questioned whether there is a benefit in bonding for the legacy and pension costs. Ms. Ostin explained that if there was a bond, the amount paid would increase. She stated that when the pension system is closed, the payment will spike. The City is now on the downturn.

II. ENGINEERING

MAJOR & LOCAL STREET FUNDING REPORT

City Engineer O'Meara explained the proposed capital improvement projects for major and local streets through 2018. He pointed out that in order to maintain the permanent road system to its current level of service, the annual cost is approximately \$1.3 million for major streets and \$1.5 million for local streets.

PARKING STRUCTURE EXPANSION

City Engineer O'Meara discussed the auto parking system revenues and expenses and noted that all five parking structures have a waiting list for monthly parking permits. He discussed the current parking demand and pointed out that the rates have not been adjusted in many years. Mr. O'Meara discussed sites for long term developments and noted that two floors could be added to the Pierce Structure to increase the number of parking spaces.

The Commission discussed the monthly permit rates. Commissioner Hoff pointed out that if there is an increase in the permit rate, the Principal Shopping District should be included in the discussion.

Mayor Moore pointed out that there is an opportunity to build a parking deck in the triangle district. He noted space is limited, but there may be an opportunity for a public/private relationship.

Dorothy Conrad expressed concern with all day parkers using all the spaces.

In response to a question from Dorothy Conrad regarding the decision that any improved street must be cement, Mr. O'Meara explained that the Engineering Department makes the recommendation and the City Commission makes the final determination.

III. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

CITY PARKS – PROJECT SUMMARIES

DPS Director Wood explained that the Kenning Park Concept Plan integrates the parking lot which will go out to bid this year. Mark Robinson, Johnson Hill Land Ethics, explained the proposed master plan for Kenning Park.

The Commission discussed the parking lot. Ms. Wood confirmed that \$500,000 is budgeted for the parking lot.

In response to a question from Mayor Moore, Ms. Wood explained that the elements in the master plan could be incorporated into the park in three to five years or more. Commissioner Nickita noted that the park is highly programmed. Mr. Robinson explained that the sport aspect of the park was desired by the residents.

CAPESEAL PROGRAM

Public Works Manager Matthews explained the cape seal program and the process of cape sealing. He noted that a change through MDOT now considers the application of cape seal an alteration to the pavement which requires the installation of fully engineered handicap ramps according to ADA specifications, which will increase the cost.

Mr. Matthews confirmed for Mayor Pro Tem Sherman that roads are cape sealed five to eight years. Mayor Pro Tem Sherman noted that the cost would be half of the cost to redo the road.

Lex Kuhne questioned whether a parking study was done on the Kenning Park Plan as the Advisory Parking Committee was not asked for advice. He pointed out that the programmed usage is increasing, but the number of parking spaces is being reduced.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoff regarding the planting of trees as part of the Woodward Avenue beautification, City Planner Ecker confirmed that the planting will be coordinated with Planning regarding the rapid transit Woodward median.

IV. BUILDING INCREASING CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Building Official Johnson presented an update on the increased construction activity in the City which includes building permits issued for new houses, construction projects for residential additions, and new commercial buildings.

Ken Cooper, Assistant Building Official, presented photos of construction sites around the City.

Mr. Johnson confirmed for Commissioner Nickita that code enforcement is suffering due to the increase in construction related inspections.

V. POLICE DEPARTMENT CAMERA SYSTEM UPGRADE

Police Chief Studt explained the camera system upgrade is estimated to cost approximately \$150,000.00. The drug forfeiture funds will be used for this upgrade. He confirmed for Commissioner Rinschler that the number of cameras is not increasing.

Chief Studt informed the Commission of the organizational structure change to occur in the Police Department in 2015.

VI. PLANNING MASTER PLANNING UPDATE INITIATIVES

City Planner Baka presented an overview of the five master plans and pointed out the recommendations still outstanding in each plan.

Mr. Baka explained that there have been discussions to bring Duany back to Birmingham to evaluate how implementation has gone and to look at the future goals and objectives of the City for the next twenty years.

He explained the current initiatives to develop a plan for the South Woodward Corridor Plan and noted that there has been discussion to develop an overall comprehensive master plan.

ALLEYS AND PASSAGES

City Planner Ecker stated that implementation has begun on the Alleys and Passages Plan beginning with landscape and wayfinding improvements. She explained the Phase 1 priorities include identifying multi-modal connection opportunities, identifying green strategies, developing signage standards, incorporating public art, and improving wayfinding.

Ms. Ecker stated that over the next few years some of the recommendations of the plan will be included in the capital improvement program.

Commissioner McDaniel commented on the Hamilton to Park alley and pointed out that the area needs to be repaved and cleaned up.

Commissioner Nickita noted that this series of projects will enhance the downtown. He encouraged staff to consider alternative ways of funding, such as sponsorship or donations.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION REPORT – WOODWARD CORRIDOR

City Planner Ecker presented the Woodward Complete Streets Plan which focuses on the public right-of-way. She noted that until the plan is finalized, it is difficult to know what the right-of-way will look like.

Ms. Ecker explained that Woodward Corridor Alternatives Analysis for the rapid transit is delayed. She explained that there is a two-year period to consider the best mode, route and alignment. She noted the study is leaning toward bus rapid transit with its own lane. She explained how the station and bus would operate and potential locations for stations in Birmingham.

Ms. Ecker confirmed for Commissioner McDaniel that the Federal Transportation Authority is extremely supportive of the rapid transit project.

Commissioner Rinschler expressed concern that one lane of traffic on Woodward could be eliminated with the bus rapid transit system.

The Commission recessed for lunch at 12:20PM.

Commissioner Rinschler left meeting at 12:20 PM.

The Commission reconvened at 12:40 PM.

VIII. HISTORICAL MUSEUM MUSEUM STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Museum Director Pielack highlighted the accomplishments completed in the strategic plan which include an ADA compliant access ramp, fundraising for the school bell project, collection stewardship, and community engagement. She noted that an ordinance amendment will be presented to the Commission to review the membership of the Museum Board to include non-residents. She explained the difficulty in meeting quorum and in recruiting members.

IX. VOLUNTARY HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Assistant City Manager Valentine explained the City Manager's suggestion to identify alternatives to consider when it comes to the Historic District Study Committee. A policy alternative is to include something in the middle rather than eliminating or reaffirming the Committee. He noted that the memo suggests further evaluation be done to determine how best to serve the community.

The Commission discussed which department budget this committee would fall under. Commissioner Hoff noted that there is a staff member whose primary responsibility is to handle historic preservation. Ms. Pielack pointed out that consideration should be given to where there material collected is stored.

X. SENIOR SERVICES JOINT SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE PHASE I & II RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW

Assistant City Manager Valentine presented the report from the City Manager outlining Phase 1 and Phase 2 determined by the Joint Senior Services Committee. Phase 1 includes a funding increase to the Birmingham Area Senior Coordinating Council (BASCC) and Phase 2 includes the development of a long-term plan to renovate or replace the existing senior center.

Mr. Valentine confirmed for David Bloom that the schools are in their strategic planning process and more discussion is needed regarding the building.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/FUNDING PRIORITIES

Finance Director Ostin reviewed the funding for the capital improvement projects, major and local streets projects, water and sewer projects, and the pension and retiree health care costs.

The Commission discussed the funded and unfunded liabilities. Mr. Valentine explained that there is approximately \$34 million that is funded. Commissioner McDaniel questioned if the City has enough revenues to support all of the projects. Ms. Ostin explained that \$1.2 million for Kenning Park is not funded, the cemetery, Multi-modal implementation and senior services are not funded, and a bond would be required for the parking deck and library expansion.

Commissioner Hoff questioned whether parks bond could be issued. Ms. Ostin confirmed that \$5.3 million have not been issued. If bonds are issued, it would drive up the debt levy.

David Bloom suggested using charts that go further out than five years. He stated that the City will not want to lose the AAA rating.

Ms. Ostin noted that further discussion will be held at the budget hearing.

MICHIGAN COMMUNITY FOR A LIFETIME

Assistant City Manager Valentine explained the Community for a Lifetime recognition program to promote aging populations. He discussed the community assessment which includes setting up an ad hoc committee and public meetings to work through the various categories which could take four to five months.

Commissioner Nickita suggested contacting other communities to determine whether it was worthwhile and the amount of staff time used.

XI. ADJOURN

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 1:42 PM.

Laura M. Pierce
City Clerk