



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY
NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA
February 23, 2021
6:00 PM

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rob Marlowe at 6:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Councilman Peter Altman, Councilman Matt Murphy and Councilman Mike Peters. Deputy Mayor Chopper Davis was excused.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Assistant City Manager Rodd Hale, Finance Director Crystal Feast, Fire Chief Chris Fitch, Economic Development Director Charles Rudd, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Adams, Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed, Human Resources Manager Bernie Wharran and System & Services Librarian Stephanie Jones.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Presentation of US Highway 19 and Downtown Master Plan Drafts - Page 2

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to review the draft Master Plans for the US Highway 19 corridor and the downtown. Mr. Rudd stated this is Phase II of the process. The ideas presented last October have been flushed out. He stated this is a visionary plan. He then introduced Tom McGilloway from Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc. who then made a presentation to Council. Mr. McGilloway began his presentation by stating that NPR is a community in transition. This is taking the next step forward. The goal is to create an achievable Master Plan. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted the themes from the previous public meetings. Mr. McGilloway highlighted the functional plan elements of the draft plans. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted biking infrastructure and parking resources. Mr. McGilloway then discussed public art and housing. Mr. McGilloway then moved to the geographic elements. Main Street enhancements included more shade. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted infill and façade opportunities. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted pop up container park concepts. Mr. McGilloway then discussed plans for Railroad Square. Mr. McGilloway then moved on to recommendations for Sims Park and Orange Lake. Mr. McGilloway then discussed opportunities for east Main. Mr. McGilloway then discussed opportunities for south Grand. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted opportunities for the

Palm/Rivergate District. There could be a pocket park on the old church property. Mr. McGilloway then moved to the boat launch and Chamber building site. There could be satellite parking agreements or a shuttle service.

Mr. McGilloway then moved on to the US Highway 19 corridor. There is an opportunity to transition to broader mix of uses. Washingtonian Palms could be planted at all four corners at US Highway 19 and Main Street. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted opportunities for the Main Street gateway and south gateway. A street connection could connect Southgate Shopping Center to the neighborhood behind it. Mr. McGilloway then highlighted opportunities of the north gateway.

Mr. McGilloway then moved on to phasing priorities and goals. Next steps include a presentation by the TBRPC with the draft report in early March and the final plan in April.

Councilman Altman stated if the boat ramp property on US 19 is available the County should grab it. He stated he liked the idea of more river walk. He stated to reassert that our county is a non-chartered county and that TIF can go into the CRA and we have to get the investment to go along with the public improvements. Mr. McGilloway stated there is already demonstrated success for people to see the potential.

Councilman Murphy stated he is interested in the changes to public art. He stated perhaps we could join with the County on some of the improvements. He stated integrating shade trees would be nice and look good. It will help with the summer heat.

Councilman Peters stated there were some wonderful ideas. He stated NPR has become cool again. He stated the city has really advanced in recent years. There are more improvements on the way. We need to be strategic on how to go forward. We need to keep the momentum going. He stated he loved the walkability and the biking possibilities.

Mayor Marlowe stated he liked the fact that we are looking at neighborhoods. Enhancements were planned but stopped due to the recession. He stated he had someone ask if there were any funding available for solar. There may be some possibilities through CDBG in the future. He stated last week Councilman Altman showed a picture of a shuttle vehicle and he stated it would be good to have a circuit with one here starting at the new garage and going through the downtown. It would not be much to get them or operate them. He stated it would be an opportunity to revisit once the garage comes online. He stated bigger boats could be launched from the property west of US Highway 19. He stated we can do some things with canopies along Main Street and Railroad Square.

Councilman Altman stated he agreed with Councilman Murphy's comments about public art. He stated the non-qualified renters we have are constantly moving. He stated we are talking about half of our city. Whether it is rental or not the upgrades are attracting the base we are looking for. We have to pay attention and do things in neighborhoods. He stated there are many potholes on Legions Way.

Councilman Murphy we need to keep the fire going with the public-private partnerships.

Councilman Peters stated he has talked to people about the boat ramp and additional access. He stated the City of Port Richey may be interested in helping to relive their boat usage. He stated the City needs to look at additional kayak launches. He stated he hopes the concepts along US Highway 19 can come to fruition.

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to review the legislative priorities for the upcoming session. The legislative session begins on March 3rd. There is a large impact on our budget due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

City Manager Manns stated she is recommending that the City support the FLC 2021 Action Agenda. There are five main priorities which include sales tax fairness, short-term rentals, discharges to surface waters, affordable housing and annexation. City Manager Manns then highlighted each priority in more detail. City Manager Manns then highlighted other issues including cybersecurity, transportation, mobility plans, digital divide and resiliency plans. City Manager Manns then highlighted the legislation that staff is following including wastewater discharge, impace fees, the displacement of waste haulers, a citizen review board to investigate each agency, funding initiatives for libraries, protections against liability for COVID-19, requiring bleeding control kits, public notices and restricting smoking in public parks.

Councilman Peters stated the only requirement of state legislators is to pass the budget. He suggested reminding them that we feel the same way in regards to mandates as they do from the federal government. He spoke with Allison Payne with FLC earlier this week regarding what legislation is moving. He stated there will be a three million shortfall in the budget. Councilman Peters then discussed the bill related to home based businesses and short-term rentals.

Councilman Murphy stated he supports the recommendations. Hopefully we can deter some of the intrusive things.

Councilman Altman told Councilman Peters he hopes he still has contacts in Tallahassee. Councilman Altman stated Senator Simpson was a defender of CRA's. He stated he was considering turning his home into a B&B but was discouraged after visiting St. Augustine. He stated one thing that needed to be mentioned was a bill regarding the medical examiner and having our fire department take people to the hospital. We should have a right to be able to transport. He stated we are going to have a county fire station located in city limits. He stated our residents are paying three times in millage than county residents do.

Mayor Marlowe stated we need to emphasize the sales tax fairness is not a new tax. He stated it puts all retailers at a competitive disadvantage. In regards to the citizens advisory board he said it would be set up by the County and the City would have not control over it.

4 Communications

Councilman Altman stated Chairman Oakley will be in town on Thursday. He asked each Council member submit a time to the City Clerk who could finalize an agenda.

5 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Judy Meyers, CMC, City Clerk