

CITY OF HUNTINGTON WOODS
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION
MINUTES
Tuesday, May 9, 2019
7:00 p.m.
Huntington Woods City Hall

Mayor Paul called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Paul, Mayor Pro Tem Jenks, Commissioner Elder, Commissioner Olsman, Commissioner Rozell

ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Manager Sullivan

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Commissioner Rozell and supported by Commissioner Elder to approve the Agenda for the Special Meeting of May 9, 2019

Upon said Resolution being put to a vote, the City Commission voted thereon as follows

Ayes: Mayor Paul, Mayor Pro Tem Jenks, Commissioner Elder, Commissioner Olsman, Commissioner Rozell

Nays: None

Absent: None

The Mayor thereupon declared said Resolution adopted.

Senior Housing Study Session

City Manager Sullivan gave a history of the senior housing concept starting with the creation of the Senior Advisory Board in 2014. We now have a Senior Housing Study Committee that recommended the City Commission authorize a mini-design workshop to create a concept plan to begin discussions with developers. The City Commission asked to have a separate discussion on the issue before approving the design workshop.

Commissioner Rozell felt that the City should not spend money on a design workshop without first determining if the City Hall site is feasible for senior housing. He supports having Woodward and Coolidge studied as well for feasibility.

Mayor Paul reminded the Commission that the City Site is the only site the City has control over.

Commissioner Elder said that this is an important issue to her and a big reason why she decided to serve on the city commission. She supports finding ways to help seniors stay in their homes and before housing is considered on the City Hall site. Commissioner Elder believes it is important to meet with developers to get their feedback and input on site feasibility and market demand. She also feels that the Woodward corridor area is underutilized property and wants the City to pursue the State's Redevelopment Ready Community program to assist the City with redevelopment of those properties. The RRC program opens up opportunities for the city that aren't available right now, including access to the state's Community Revitalization Program grant and other support services focused on community development.

Mayor Paul asked the City Commission how they want to proceed with senior housing. He feels that developers will want more specifics from the City to help them determine the feasibility of the site.

Commissioner Elder felt that developers could provide information without specifics. By having informal conversations with the development community first, it should provide the city with some insight on how the market views the three sites. These conversations would cost nothing to the tax payer and provide us with data before we proceed with the public engagement and visioning study, which does require our public resources.

Mayor Pro Tem Jenks suggested working with LTU and UM students to gather ideas for senior housing or reconfiguring the Recreation Center layout so more room can be provided for senior activities. He felt that Woodward is a good place for mixed use – not senior housing.

Mayor Paul said that the Study Committee had looked at housing at the Rec. Center but parking was going to be an issue.

Commissioner Rozell said that parking would be a big consideration at the City Hall site too.

Commissioner Elder asked if developers should consider space in the facility for senior activities in addition to City Hall and Public Safety.

Mayor Paul felt that that would be an increase in City expenditures to provide a new service and we are looking at how to manage our long- term financial health with our current level of services.

There was discussion on whether housing should be rental units or privately owned and the consensus was residents would probably prefer privately owned.

Commissioner Olsman said he supports multi-unit housing on the City Hall site as well as Woodward. He supports getting feedback from developers. He does not believe that the Rite-Aid site will turn over since the owners have invested in upgrades in the store lately.

There was discussion on whether housing at the City Hall site should be age-restricted or not. There appeared to be support for the multi-generational housing concept at the three potential housing development sites.

Mayor Paul asked the Commission if they wanted the Study Committee to meet with developers informally or if they wanted the Committee disbanded and the City Commission would take the lead on the discussion.

The consensus was to keep the Committee intact and for the City Commission to meet directly with developers to discuss the potential ideas. It is important to put together costs for potential units so that residents can make informed decisions about whether they are interested in living in these units.

Commissioner Rozell suggested that a survey be created at the same time to get feedback from residents on other locations if the site is not feasible along with needs to help seniors age in place. The survey should also be specific to capture important data such as residents' housing preferences, lifestyle needs, services, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem Jenks asked that LTU and UM be invited to participate in the process.

Public participation

Jan Armstrong is a senior in HW. She needs to know the cost and size of a unit before she can make a decision whether she is interested in senior housing.

Joe Falik said he supports higher density housing and since the City buildings on 11 Mile are old, redevelopment along with housing would address two issues and makes sense. He was concerned that if a survey asked about a senior activity center, it might lead to expectations that the City would provide one in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Amy Sullivan, City Manager