

CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE
COMMON COUNCIL
PRE-COUNCIL MINUTES
JANUARY 30, 2020

The Common Council of the City of West Lafayette, Indiana, met in the Council Chambers at the Temporary City Hall – Former Happy Hollow Elementary School on January 30, 2020, at the hour of 4:30 p.m.

President Bunder called the meeting to order and presided.

Present: James Blanco, Peter Bunder, Nick DeBoer, Shannon Kang, Kathy Parker, Gerald Thomas, and Norris Wang.

Absent: Larry Leverenz and David Sanders

Also present: Mayor John Dennis, Corporation Counsel Eric Burns, Clerk Sana Booker, Street Commissioner Ben Anderson, Director of Development Erik Carlson, Facilities Director Tim Clark, Human Resources Director Diane Foster, City Engineer Ed Garrison, City Controller Peter Gray, Police Chief Troy Harris, Fire Chief Tim Heath, WWTU Director David Henderson, and Building Commissioner Chad Spitznagle, IT Interim Director Tracey Stanifer-Dewey.

President Bunder noted that the Council will hold a Work Session meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday preceding the regular meeting. This meeting is to review rules and regulations.

PRE-COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS: None

SPECIAL REPORTS:

Joint Board Report

Councilor DeBoer stated that he plans to give a quick run-down about the Joint Board to catch-up the new Council members. The Joint Board pays a lot of bills, but we will explain the operating statutes, the history of where the Joint Board came from, and the future for it.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 01-20 To Amend Certain Portions Of The Unified Zoning Ordinance Of Tippecanoe County, Indiana, Designating The Time When The Same Shall Take Effect (Indiana Beta Of Sigma Alpha Epsilon House Corporation) (R1 to R1U) (Submitted by Area Plan Commission) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

President Bunder read Ordinance No. 01-20 by title only.

President Bunder asked if it is correct that he can take this as a victory for historic preservation.

Director of Development Carlson stated that it is. What the Council will be considering with this Ordinance is an outgrowth of the successful conversation with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). In 2018 the HPC was approached with the idea of razing the house a 424 Littleton Street so that a new parking lot could be built for the brotherhood of SAE. Through conversations with HPC and City staff, the idea has grown to rezone three houses – the 424 house, and the two directly to the north of it – from R1 to R1U, which is what most of the rest of

the neighborhood is. The difference is that R1U allows for smaller lot sizes. This rezone will allow for the lots to be changed in size to go below the 10,000 square feet. The property for these three houses can be shifted to ownership of SAE. The house at 424 would again become a livable residence, and then SAE will work with the Development Department and HPC to design a new parking lot. It will be befitting of the historic neighborhood of which it resides.

There was no further discussion.

Ordinance No. 02-20 An Ordinance To Establish The Cumulative Capital Development Fund And Readopt West Lafayette City Code Provisions Concerning The Fund (Submitted by Controller) [No. of Readings 1 of 2]

President Bunder read Ordinance No. 02-20 by title only.

City Controller Gray explained that the CCD Fund is used to purchase equipment, as allowed by State statute. We generally use it for IT infrastructure and equipment for Police and Parks Departments. He confirmed for President Bunder that we do this annually.

President Bunder explained that when the Council works on the budget they will see that this Fund appears as an income stream for the budget.

There was no further discussion.

Resolution No. 01-20 A Resolution Of The West Lafayette Common Council Concerning Certain Actions And Proceedings With Respect To The Financing Of Certain West Lafayette Senior Living Facilities (Vita Investment Holdings, LLC) (Submitted by Economic Development Commission) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

President Bunder read Resolution No. 01-20 by title only.

Dan Teder (Reiling Teder & Schrier, LLC), representing the petitioner, stated that the Economic Development Commission (EDC) approved a resolution and a report for this bonding, and this Council resolution is to approve the bonding as well. The project will be located on approximately 9 acres on the north side of Cumberland Avenue, just west of US 231. They will build 177 senior residences at that location, which will consist of memory care, nursing care, and independent living. They will spend around \$40 million on the project, and around \$35 million of that will come from economic development bonds through the State of Indiana. The statute requires that they come before the City Council. This is being done by a for-profit corporation, so they will pay real estate taxes.

Zeke Turner (Vita Investment Holdings) stated that he is a developer and operator of senior housing. He knows the West Lafayette market and has spent time here, and he is excited about this project. This project will be a mixed-income and mixed-use project. It will target the middle and lower side of the market. Many markets have good options for senior housing, but tend to be very expensive. The package on this project allows competitiveness in terms of price, which is a good thing for the consumers, while still making a property that is desirable and nice for the care. The topic here is the bonds. He explained that the City is a conduit issuer and bears no liability for the bonds. There is no effect on the City's credit rating. It is simply passing through to take advantage of the tax-exempt status from the State's bond volume.

Councilor DeBoer stated that he appreciates targeting the middle and lower income part of the market. It is needed here and elsewhere. He asked what this means in terms of out-of-pocket costs or Medicare.

Mr. Turner explained that the facility will charge less for its services. Part of that is done by lowering the cost of capital in the project by using things like bonds and tax credits, which allows lower caring costs on the project. This means that they can charge less through to the market and pass on some of those savings to the consumer. According to a Genworth study, the average cost of assisted living is just over \$5,000.00 per month. On a private-pay basis, consumers in this project will pay between \$200 and \$500 less than that. In addition, the facility will be certified as a residential care facility with the State, which means it will certify with the Medicaid program. People who run out of money, or do not have money to begin with, will still be able to live there through the Medicaid service program.

Councilor Blanco asked what percentage of the units are set aside for Medicaid recipients. Mr. Turner responded that they estimate a preponderance of Medicaid in the building, so between 60% and 80%. A lot of it will depend on who comes to the door. Mr. Turner explained that this facility is not targeting strictly low-income; it is targeting a wider swath of people. According to the market assessment they have done, there is substantial demand for this type of service. The goal as they present it to the market, is that they will take care of the consumer, and they get to live there, but how they pay for it or how they get there is their own private business. Someone who is private-pay may be living next to someone who is there through Medicaid, but no one really knows the difference. He believes that is a good thing to present to the market.

The Council and Director Carlson discussed that a rezone on this property previously failed to pass due to traffic concerns [Ordinance No. 31-15]; however, this project conforms by-right into the current zoning. Director Carlson explained that any traffic concerns with this project would still be the purview of the Engineering and Building Departments during the permitting process, while this Ordinance is only for the bonding capacities.

In response to a question from President Bunder, Mr. Turner stated that other projects they have done include Creasy Springs across from Franciscan East and the Springs at Lafayette on the old Home Hospital site. This building will have a different feel because it is more residential than medical. Mr. Turner noted that he is excited about how the architecture of this building will look off of Cumberland Avenue and US 231.

There was no further discussion.

Resolution No. 02-20 A Resolution To Amend The Comprehensive Plan For Tippecanoe County To Include The West Lafayette Downtown Plan As A Land Use Element (Submitted by Area Plan Commission) [No. of Readings 1 of 1]

President Bunder read Resolution No. 02-20 by title only.

Director Carlson stated that the Downtown Master Plan process actually began on his first day on the job with the City at a Pre-Council meeting. At that meeting, Ryan O’Gara (Assistant Director, Area Plan Commission) held up a heat map of his envisionment of heights of buildings and densities in the downtown area. After the Council voted on a request to the APC to develop the Plan [Resolution No. 07-18], the process began, and the Steering Committee came together. A draft was presented at the Library and has had opportunity for public comment. These meetings will allow for more public comment about what we can and should do for our downtown. Mr. O’Gara will be at the Council meeting on Monday.

President Bunder explained that after discussion at the Council meeting, we may table it for a month to provide time for public input and so that Councilor Leverenz can be present. Director Carlson stated that we will welcome that process, and noted that this has been a huge labor of love for the Department of Development and the Steering Committee. It will have a beneficial impact in the long-term for the City, and we want to make sure that our citizens have as much opportunity to comment and improve it even more so.

President Bunder stated that this is exciting to have a plan for the next 50 years or more, if we get this right. He added that as someone who has set through a couple of these neighborhood Plans, he knows it is a long process, and the APC deserves a lot of credit. The opportunity to do this kind of design work is why people get into urban planning.

Director Carlson noted that Page 85 of the Plan is the fulcrum. It is a great overview of the future Land Use Map that also visualizes what it would be like to turn the Levee area, also known as the Riverfront, into more of a downtown grid instead of the suburban style layout it has been since the mid-part of the last century. We always hear from Lafayette that students do not cross the river because it is a boundary. However, the river is not the divide; River Road to the river is the divide. It is not a pedestrian-friendly landscape where people feel comfortable walking there. Through this Plan, there is an opportunity, over decades – this is not something that will be done in five years – to truly merge the downtowns. Although there will always be the jurisdictional line between the cities, the hope is that people will not really realize they are crossing over. It will be a vibrant downtown for both cities and for Tippecanoe County as a whole.

President Bunder stated that it is important for people to understand that this happens in phases. He appreciates the material in the Plan that suggests how this might proceed, beginning with the southern part and moving up.

Councilor DeBoer asked if any amendments are on in our purview. Director Carlson stated that it is his understanding that if it is amended it will go back to the APC. The APC will have the opportunity to ratify or reject the City's amendments. If the APC does reject it, it would come back to this Council and take a simple majority vote to retain the amendments.

There was no further discussion.

COMMUNICATIONS

► President Bunder reminded the Council to come early on Monday for a Work Session at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business at this time, Councilor DeBoer moved for adjournment. President Bunder adjourned the meeting, the time being 4:53 p.m.