



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069

Thursday, March 07, 2024 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Business & Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room on the 7 day of March, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Councilmember Peacock called meeting to order at 4:00pm

PRESENT:

Councilmember Matthew Peacock
Councilmember Helen Grant
Councilmember Michael Nash

OTHERS PRESENT:

Councilmember Lauren Schueler
Councilmember Stephen Holman
Mr. Anthony Francisco – Director of Finance
Ms. Beth Muckala – Assistant City Attorney III
Ms. Jane Hudson – Planning & Community Development Director
Ms. Kathryn Walker – City Attorney
Mr. Scott Sturtz – Interim Public Works Director
Ms. Shaakira Calnick – Internal Auditor
Ms. Roné Tromble – Administrative Tech. IV
Ms. Kelly Abell- Planner I
Ms. Sandra Simeroth – Administrative Tech. III

AGENDA ITEM

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING ACCESSORY COMMERCIAL UNITS.

Ms. Jane Hudson Planning and Community Development director said, we had this before BACA back in December of 2021. I was going to recap some of that before we moved on to more of the presentation. From our previous discussion, one of the

Item 1 continued

things that really kept coming back around was this idea of the neighborhood engagement, and really it was focused on the Core. Does Council want to have meetings and break it into sections and ask the neighbors: What are you looking for? What does and doesn't work? And really get the neighborhood engaged. One of the points from that last meeting, was could we get Neighborhood Alliance to come in and start that organization with getting those meetings set up. Their contract will renew on July 1st, so that would be a good time, if that's something that Council wanted to expand into their contract.

Council also kept circling back around on the standard of expectation, utilizing existing structures. Council didn't really want to come in and change a lot; don't change the footprint. You wanted to make sure that we were going to be able to keep the neighborhood intact. Additionally discussed that council didn't want an applicant to have to come in and do a SPUD. Staff has come up with the idea of having a Neighborhood Commercial District Zone that council would adopt and put into the Zoning Ordinance. But we also thought it was still really important for the applicants to still come to Council and give the neighbors the ability to have the Pre-Development meeting with them and express any concerns but not have to write an actual SPUD. The City would have a checklist of the small amount of uses that they could do within that Neighborhood Commercial, and have the opportunity for Council to look at that.

It would be similar to Special Use Permit but it would just be that straight zoning. So we wouldn't have to have them write anything. We were really looking at just some specific very applicable neighborhood uses. We also were talking about the change of ownership, and when they do sell the business, is somebody going to come in and really uphold what council has already approved? So we could go out and make sure that they're still doing what was approved. There is a fee for that, but we wouldn't have to charge the fee. We could at least just reissue maybe a Certificate of Compliance or Certificate of Occupancy for them, to make sure that we have visited the site and that we're going to move forward with what was adopted.

In the previous Plan Norman, Councilmember Hall pointed out they actually had a type in there for Neighborhood Commercial Node, in that one that they'd actually had an area requirement of one-half acre. This is just a generalized definition of the Neighborhood Commercial we had gone over last time. Then our definition of the Local Commercial is here, in C-1. So we look at this as a Local Commercial District, but the uses that were included in the C-1 really are outside of what we have been talking about as uses that we would want to see. We will obviously pull from some of that, but we need to really limit that. These are just the straight reuse of existing buildings for the neighborhood commercial.

Then I also have the presentation on the Accessory Commercial Unit. Those are obviously the existing buildings, but they're also connected to the residential structures that are there on the lot.

Item 1 continued

Councilmember Peacock, Most residents are thinking we're not going to do that! But when you see the actual example, they're beautiful little projects. They're small, and they fit in the neighborhood. I know we're talking about Accessory Commercial Units, but I think you really hit the intent of what I wanted to have a discussion about. I think the broader discussion is how do we get commercial services into neighborhoods without dropping a bunch of 7-11s?

Ms. Jane Hudson, Norman has Midway this is a corner lot, The Earth, we have mid-block, and it was there in 1954 when zoning 884 ordinance was done, both have been there a lot of years. Clearly it can be successful and it is not deterring from the neighborhood. Over to the west there's a commercial zoning and it is mid-block they turned it into a daycare. Prior to it becoming a daycare, it was a retail use, same thing on Iowa it is mid-block.

Councilmember Peacock, The concept is not new, this is how a city used to build itself. We're just trying to revive the old concept.

Ms. Jane Hudson, I wanted to find out from you. Do you want us to go ahead and approach Neighborhood Alliance and see if that's something that they would be willing to start the discussion and possibly look at adding it to the contract. Start the neighborhood meetings?

Councilmember's agree we should definitely use the Neighborhood Alliance. They have valuable input for the developers about what their neighborhood might support. They could help us flush out that list of uses. You take that list of C-1 uses and check off the ones that don't work for a neighborhood and continue down the list until you get a list with neighborhood feedback

Councilmember Peacock – I love the presentation, the only concern I have is I want to see two paths. Because we talked about Accessory Units, and we talked about Neighborhood Commercial. I think Midway Deli, The Earth, that's Neighborhood Commercial, but not really Accessory. But if you have a principle dwelling, if you could build an ADU off the alley, we would be able to build an ACU off the alley. I just think it is two different things. So I don't want to try to marry them too much. Obviously the goal is to get Neighborhood Commercial. So if that is the straight path forward, that's the one we should focus on. But I also think there's an angle for accessory commercial units as well.

Ms. Jane Hudson, when people come in and want to do an accessory commercial unit right now, they could easily do that under a SPUD today, but maybe they don't realize that and we need to get this public discussion going.. When we get Neighborhood Alliance onboard, maybe it's just the neighborhood meetings

Councilmember Peacock – Do you have direction?

Jane Hudson – I do.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING A REQUEST FROM THE WEATHER MUSEUM TO HOLD A GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ELECTION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW WEATHER MUSEUM.

Ms. Kathryn Walker City Attorney said, - Talked about this in 1st meeting in February it's coming back because we have a specific request from Ross Forsight, to place this on ballot proposition on the ballot for June for General Obligation Tax Bond.

That would require that this be put on the agenda on Tuesday and felt like we need to discuss this before going to Council and this meeting was available. The 1st read on ordinance would be March 12, 2024 and the second read would be March 26, 2024 if the June 25, 2024 election date were to go forward.

He is asking for 15 million dollars of seed money for purpose of purchasing land, construction equipping planning, branding and development and any other activities to aid in the obtaining of gifts or grants to create, The National Weather Museum and Science Center- Weather Experience. He is anticipating the cost of the facility would exceed 100 million and the bonds would be issued immediately to fund those beginning activities.

He is mentioning the jobs that will come from the construction of the facility, the future tourism opportunities and additional revenue opportunities. When we talked in February, Anthony talked through the Constitutional provision that authorizes these kind of bonds we can take up to 30 years to pay them.

Possible ballot language For the Broad Purpose of Economic and Community Development then we could narrow it down to this specific project we could put more information in there it would just limit our flexibility within this Ordinance it's up to Council if you want some restrictions or if you want to be more flexible because of this provision in the Constitution. I talked to Bond Council to confirm that it's so broad for economic development purposes, it could be used for a privately owned business and the weather Museum wouldn't necessarily have to be a non-profit. It wouldn't have to be owned by the City that just effects weather it's taxable or non-taxable debt.

Councilmembers in agreement with getting Deliverables attached to it, and wants to know if there are any commitment by other funding available and thinks they should have pledges lined up before we go forward.

Ms. Kathryn Walker, yes we could put something in the election Ordinance itself or putting together a separate agreement that would be approved by council at the same time with all the deliverables. We can have something stating having a smaller amount released immediately and then upon certain deliverables then we would release. Every time you issue the bonds you are incurring costs.

Mr. Anthony Francisco, with OU they did not have money in hand, but they had pledges they had the State's authorized bonds and Noble Foundation had given a \$10 million dollar donation but it was not cash in hand yet, so I think some language that would tie that down would be useful

Item 2 continued

Ms. Kathryn Walker, Putting it into an agreement gives us flexibility in the future if something happens and we need to adjust, if we put it in the taxing ordinance we are leased.

Mr. Forsight and property owners are having really positive conversations, it's not a contract to purchase. If we put a location in there we are stuck with that location addressing these things with our deliverables. We could put the location in the development agreement that would allow council to make changes if necessary a little easier.

Councilmembers would like an education campaign and who is responsible for running the information around this whose money are we spending.

Ms. Kathryn Walker, we should probably only do the education campaign because it's an election that Council's calling for and hopefully the Weather museum would put together a group for a Yes Campaign and do advocacy if that's what they want to do.

Another thing is you can do a payback for the bonds up to 30 years. We would need to know how long we would want to go. You don't tie up that piece of millage that you can bond against for that small of an amount. We can get some projections together to see what it looks like in 10 years, 15 years for the taxpayers to have that discussion. What you have to put in the ordinance would be the maximum interest rate. That's set in the Constitution is 14%, obviously hopefully not anywhere near that, then the length of the term and then the purpose of those funds.

Councilmembers would be open to an August election if they can get the education campaign done and surveys.

Ms. Katherine Walker, bring it back to BACA in May and possibly a Study Session right after that for all council discussion

Councilmember Peacock, no other question we will come back in May.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50pm

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor