

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Minutes, April 4, 2022

1. Call to Order: Mayor Randall Walker, Presiding Officer called to order the work session held April 4, 2022 at 5:00pm.
2. Roll: Mayor Randall Walker; Mayor Pro Tempore Willie King, and Council Members Darryl Albritton, Phyllis Bynum-Grace, Riley Hunt, Robert Jones, and Joy Peterson.

City Staff: Lee Gilmour – City Manager, Robert Smith - Assistant City Manager, Brooke Newby – City Attorney, Annie Warren – City Clerk, Bryan Wood- Community Development Director, Brenda King – Director of Administration, Ashley Hardin – Economic Development Administrator, Holly Wharton – Community Planner, Chief Lee Parker – Fire & Emergency Services, Capt. Alan Everidge – Police Department, Ansley Fitzner – Public Works Superintendent, Mitchell Worthington - Director of Finance, Sedrick Swan – Director of Leisure Services, Tabitha Clark – Communications Administrator and Alicia Hartley – Downtown Manager.

Guests: Will Oliver – Houston Home Journal, Charles Housel, Brandon Miller, John Patel, Anjebhal Patel, Brandon Miller, Becky Wilson and Allision Hamsley.

3. Items of Review/Discussion: Mayor Randall Walker

3a. Appear(s):

1. Request to park a concession trailer behind Houston Lodge #35 building

Mr. Charles Housel with Houston Lodge advised they had been searching for a location to park the concession trailer and is requesting to be allowed to do so behind their building on Jernigan Street. The location would be on their property and not block access to the parking lot or surrounding tenants. Mr. Housel provided pictures of other businesses with trailers parked on their property. Mayor Walker asked Mr. Gilmour Administration's position. Mr. Gilmour advised the history of the others pointed out by Mr. Housel would need to be reviewed; he noted Monster BBQ on Carroll Street is allowed as their business is there and is part of the use. Councilmember Peterson inquired if the lodge had considered parking at a storage facility; Mr. Housel advised they had not as the proceeds from the concession trailer go back into their operating funds. Councilmember Peterson asked if he had spoken with the neighbors; Mr. Housel advised he had not as it is their property.

2. Great Inn redevelopment options

Mr. John Patel advised he was seeking the opinion of Mayor & Council on the redevelopment of properties at 200 Valley Drive and 1004-1006 St. Patrick's Drive. The recent rezoning denial for the St. Patrick's Drive property was perhaps the incorrect rezoning request on their part and he wanted to solicit input and provided their proposed options on the properties. Mr. Patel advised for St. Patrick's Drive they were proposing a new retail center and renovation of the back three buildings for rent only dwellings. For Valley Drive renovate the current restaurant and bar to include recreational space, guest laundry and gym and modernize the rooms for rent only dwellings. Mr. Patel provided conceptual photos of the concepts for both properties. He noted for the St. Patrick's property to work it needs to have increased density. His

company is taking on this project as there is a need for housing for corporate America and the mixed-use development. An alternative option for Valley Drive would be a mix of low-income housing and regular dwellings and the St. Patrick's property the same and marketed towards the trucking community. Mayor Walker inquired as to how this was brought forth to Council; Mr. Wood advised on the St. Patrick's property it had completed the zoning requested and had been denied by Council, but the applicant has come back with an alternate proposal and there is a six-month requirement for refiling and Mr. Patel is asking for suggestions on how to proceed.

Mr. Patel advised he was not aware at the second public hearing he had an opportunity to speak and his company to date has expended man hours and monies for the denied application and again stressed he is looking for guidance on how to proceed. Mayor Walker advised it is not the position of Council to provide that. Mr. Gilmour advised he had spoken with Mr. Patel and suggested he come before Council with their options and regarding the denial of the PUD application and Council's concern with apartments near Walmart, but the petitioner does have to wait the six months to file the application again. Regarding Valley Drive application can be made now for the density variance and goes through the Planning Commission; Mr. Wood noted the proposal for a trucker's lodge is a permitted use and there would be no action required of Council. Councilmember Peterson asked staff if they are seeking workforce housing in lieu of a trucker stop; Mr. Wood advised yes. Mr. Patel advised if the current plan was pursued some of the housing units would be Section 8. Mr. Patel reiterated again; he was there seeking an opinion on which direction to proceed. Councilmember King noted as part of the process it must go through the Planning Commission; Mr. Patel advised he would follow the process for the refiling.

3. Presentation of revamped historic sites tour

Ms. Becky Wilson with the Perry Convention & Visitors Bureau provided an update on the revamped historic tour, which is posted live on the Visit Perry website. The tour is broken down by Downtown, Historic Homes, and Churches. Information includes photographs of the locations and facts. The project is still a work in progress with more information being collected on the churches and an audio component to be added.

3b. Department of Community Development

1. Strategic Planning Areas

Ms. Wharton advised the current strategic planning areas are being revamped to coincide with the updated census blocks. Ms. Wharton presented a PowerPoint depicting the various districts and the adjustments being proposed. Mayor Walker inquired if the change would exclude certain areas from grants; Ms. Wharton advised it would not. It was the consensus of Council to proceed with the changes presented.

3c. Office of the City Manager

1. Department impact when 24% of the local workforce work from home.

a. Department of Community Development

Mr. Wood presented the impact could increase permits for new homes with extra bedrooms and/or office space, increase in permits for accessory structures, additions, pools, and other home improvements to accommodate for separate workspaces and other lifestyle changes. Potential increase in code compliance complaints and possible increase in the number of home occupation and residential business permits.

b. Fire and Emergency Services Department

Chief Parker reviewed the statistics of EMS responses beginning in 2020 when the pandemic began, which showed a decrease. Once the stay-at-home orders were lifted there was an increase and continues to do so at the present time. Further research indicates people are continuing to work from home and the trend is likely to continue. The impact could be interruption of non-emergency duties (training, hydrant testing, public education events), more wear and tear on apparatus, increased fuel consumption, increase mutual aid request.

c. Department of Public Works

Ms. Fitzner presented the impact could show an increased interaction with staff and residents with the observation of trash & debris collection routes and patterns, volume increase of residential trash collection, bulk & yard debris accumulation, stormwater flows and how it impacts their property and residents are able to observe the city services being completed. Trash pickup has increased since the beginning of lockdowns, including the consumption of residential water and sewer.

d. Department of Leisure Services

Mr. Swan presented studies show people would like a work/life balance and will have an estimated 105 hours of free time and will increase leisure travel, volunteering and community and more interest in productive activities. A strategic approach to this would be more programming for adults, seniors and youth and more outdoor recreation activities. Promotion of existing facilities and enhancement would be needed.

e. Police Department

Capt. Everidge presented statistics on response calls for 2020 when the pandemic lockdown began. If more people work from home certain service calls such as mental health issues, family issues, neighbor disputes, could increase and the potential for a decrease in burglaries and thefts from residential areas.

2. DDA approved draft of RFP for Ball/Main Street lot

Mr. Smith reviewed the draft RFP the DDA has recommended for approval on the Ball/Main Street lot which would solicit proposals from the criteria outlined, and per Council's direction last fall to obtain the highest and best use for the property. The DDA was suggesting a mixed-use development. Should a proposal be received and it is a viable project the DDA will come back before Council to request the lot be formerly transferred to them to move forward. Councilmember Albritton inquired to why an

RFP was needed; Mr. Smith advised since this is the DDA's first time soliciting proposals this avenue is the best practice to achieve that. Councilmember Peterson asked why the same procedure that was used on the Commodore Street lot would not be followed; Mr. Smith advised the DDA is electing to work with a developer to achieve a beneficial downtown project and this route will allow for the selection of the type of development. Councilmember Peterson asked if a project is found would the lot be sold to a developer; Mr. Smith advised it could be or leased, but there are various structuring options. Mr. Gilmour advised the DDA does not want to move forward if Council does not support; the Commodore Street lot the DDA owned at the time and had the authority to do as they saw fit. There had been a previous project brought forth by the DDA and Council was not comfortable with, so this route will allow for the best use of the property and be brought forth for review and support before a commitment is made. Councilmember Peterson asked if a bond project could be considered; Mr. Smith advised no and further noted the DDA is soliciting what is palpable for the market. Councilmember Peterson felt the parcel was too valuable a spot to lose for parking and access to the downtown shops. Mr. Gilmour advised there is ample parking in downtown and the upcoming parking study will confirm, but the days of parking directly in front of a business are no longer feasible. Mr. Smith noted, the DDA will review any proposals received and if there is viable project it will be brought forth to Council. Mayor Walker agreed with Mr. Gilmour on the parking, it is not being utilized as it should be and there is a constant problem with shop employees parking in customer spaces, and there is more than enough public parking. Council Member Bynum-Grace stated Council has to allow the DDA to pursue this opportunity. On conclusion of discussion, it was the consensus of Council to allow the DDA to move forward with the RFP for the Ball/Main Street lot.

*Councilmember Bynum-Grace left the meeting at 7:28pm.

3. DDA approved draft of Incentive Policy

Mr. Smith reviewed the policy which is used to promote the beneficial and managed development in the downtown district. It was noted any of the listed financial mechanisms noted are not a guarantee, but a tool the DDA can use in development. Mayor Walker noted any financing requests would be brought before Council. Council concurred and approved the incentive policy as reviewed.

4. Consider establishing City of Perry Youth Advisory Council

Mr. Smith advised in an effort to continue with the continuous communication platforms the City has it is suggested a youth advisory council be established and provides this demographic a voice in their community and encourages them Perry is the place for them and in the future. Mr. Smith reviewed the resolution outlining the establishment of the advisory council; after suggestion it will be targeted to junior and senior high school youth.

4. Council Member Items- None

5. Department Head/Staff Items: - None, but Capt. Everidge announced Michael Hamsley will retire after 43 years of service in April.

6. Adjourn: there being no further business to come before Mayor & Council;
Councilmember Jones motioned to adjourn the April 4, 2022, work session;
Councilmember Peterson seconded; all in favor and the work session was adjourned at
7:36pm.