

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024 - 7:00 PM**

**Members Present:** Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Lencioni, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner, Weber

**Members Absent:** Gehm

**Others Present:** Heather McGuire, City Administrator; Russell Colby, Director of Community Development; Derek Conley, Director of Economic Development; Bruce Sylvester, Assistant Director of Community Development-Planning & Engineering; Allen Fennell, Assistant Director of Community Development-Building Services; Rachel Hitzemann, City Planner; Peter Suhr, Director of Public Works; Deputy Fire Chief Jeremy Mauthe;

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was convened by Chair Lencioni at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Roll was called:

Present: Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Lencioni, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner, Weber

Absent: Gehm

**3. OMNIBUS VOTE**

None.

**4. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- a. Presentation regarding Draft Downtown Parking Study from Consultant Desman Inc.

Derek Conley presented the timeline of the Downtown Parking Study.

Gerald Salzman, Consultant from Desman, presented the results of the Downtown Parking Study materials posted in the packet.

Ald. Foulkes asked if Mr. Salzman what his top two recommendations would be from the parking study. Mr. Salzman responded that the counting signs on the garage so people would know how many spaces are available on each floor of the parking garage, the access on the First Street Garage to the north on the second floor, and adding a third, the wayfinding for the parking lots.

Ald. Bessner stated we are missing signage consistency. I think two hour parking is fair but is there an 80/20 rule as to who is violating? Mr. Salzman responded that most people are honest it is more of employee abuse.

Ald. Bessner asked how the electronic sensor works? Mr. Salzman explained there are different ways to do it, but in the First Street Garage every floor has one entry point. At that point there would be a sensor on the ceiling that would detect a car going in and detect a car going out. The sign would say if the lot is full or would say how many empty spaces there are on that level.

Ald. Wirball asked about some of the lots in the City that are not City owned lots. If the City loses these lots would that push the 85% occupancy up? Mr. Salzman responded it would push the occupancy rate up beyond the industry standard of 85%. Ald. Wirball added that the surveys done by Desman show both the businesses and patrons have the same concern, distance to destination. Once you hit the 85% patrons driving around get frustrated and ultimately go somewhere else. Mr. Salzman agreed that was accurate.

Ald. Wirball added there are some things going on around in the City that we would like to implement to create a better flow of walking and biking. Would you recommend removing 35 on street parking on the southeast quadrant with no alternative parking? Mr. Salzman responded he would like to see an alternative plan.

Ald. Wirball confirmed Mr. Salzman's suggestion would be to use the digital counters or wayfinding or a parking app. Mr. Salzman agreed the City could use all of these and the app should be on the business' websites.

Ald. Muenz asked for clarification on the purpose of parking time limits. Mr. Salzman responded it is to encourage turnover. All day parkers park in garage, not the on street parking.

Ald. Bongard added the reality of this study is that there isn't a parking problem in St. Charles. At the peak time you're under the threshold for becoming a problem. Mr. Salzman responded there are spaces available, it's just finding them.

Chair Lencioni asked for clarification if the study was based on what is intended to be developed. What are your thoughts on the change management required to help people understand where parking spaces are? Mr. Salzman responded that the digital signage that will show people what floor to go to will be very helpful to change the behavior of people parking. The app or website will also be very helpful.

Ald. Pietryla said taking incremental steps would be valuable. Mr. Salzman said the things they recommended would not require the City to wait. It may take a year to get some of the recommendations in place. Encouraging businesses to put parking instructions on their websites should be quick.

Ald. Weber added he is in support of wayfinding signage. If we want to continue to grow we are going to need to address parking.

Ald. Silkaitis agreed signing is a good idea. I'm not a fan of metered parking, but where would you put metered parking? Mr. Salzman stated west of the river on Main Street to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street is the area that is most occupied. I don't think the City is ready for metered parking.

Ald. Bongard stated that based on the study, there is not a need to sign a contract for use of private parking or losing 15 – 20 spaces is not going to make a difference.

- b. Recommendation to approve a Sales Tax Sharing Agreement with Fox Valley Buick-GMC, Inc

Derek Conley, Director of Economic Development, presented the Executive Summary and materials posted in the meeting packet.

Representative from Fox Valley Auto Group, Scott Richmond, thanked the City for working with them adding this will expand the capabilities of the dealership, will add employees, and revenue for the City.

Ald. Wirball questioned the improvements timeline. Mr. Richmond responded a lot of the improvements are already in place. There are still more interior improvements to do.

**Motion by Ald. Wirball, second by Ald. Pietryla to approve a Sales Tax Sharing Agreement with Fox Valley Buick-GMC, Inc.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Weber, Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Gehm**

**Motion carried: 8-0**

- c. Recommendation to approve Plat of Vacation and Plat of Easement for 2651 E Main St.

Rachel Hitzemann, City Planner, presented the Executive Summary and materials posted in the meeting packet.

**Motion by Ald. Wirball, second by Ald. Bongard to approve Plats of Vacation and Plat of Easement for 2651 E. Main Street.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Weber, Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Gehm**

**Motion carried: 8-0**

- d. Consideration of a request to amend the Natural Area Easement at 818 Fox Glen Drive.

Ellen Johnson, City Planner, presented request to amend the National Area Easement at 818 Fox Glen Drive.

Ald. Pietryla questioned the scaled back number of 30 feet in the material reviewed. Mr. Colby interjected an option of scaling back is to fit the footprint of what is being proposed. A plat will have to be prepared to showing the distance.

**Motion by Ald. Wirball, second by Ald. Pietryla to approve staff recommendation amending the easement of the Natural Area Easement at 818 Fox Glen Drive to a distance that is only covering the proposed improvements.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Weber, Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner**

**Nays: None**

**Absent: Gehm**

**Motion carried: 8-0**

e. Presentation regarding Affordable Housing Policy

Russell Colby, Director of Community Development, along with Ellen Johnson, City Planner, presented regarding Affordable Housing Policy.

i. 2023 St. Charles Housing Affordability Analysis & Illinois Housing Development Authority's 2023 Statewide Report on Local Government Affordability

Ald. Muenz asked for an understanding on one of the options presented, when you say pursuing other types of units and housing diversity, what does that mean? Mr. Colby answered we don't necessarily have an answer to that question yet, but if there is direction to explore the ability to take in a fee that we would have more availability to use on different types of units. Right now it's restricted specifically for affordable units that meet the definition under the State Act because it's collected through our trust fund which is based on those requirements.

Ald. Pietryla asked if our data dips below 10% are we compelled to submit that report? If we were to give the money to Kane County would we have control over where it is spent? Ms. Johnson answered no, we submit the report of our own accord, the state doesn't require us to do so. If we find that our numbers fall below the 10% that's an indication to us that likely our number will fall in the next report issued by the State in 5 years. If money were given to Kane County from our Housing Trust Fund it must be spent in St. Charles.

Ald. Bongard asked if the money could be repurposed for something else? Mr. Colby answered, no not the existing money we have taken in under the current programs. We could look at splitting out the housing fee from some other type of fee and have some different program requirements. If there is an interest from the Committee to do that we could explore that option.

ii. St. Charles Housing Trust Fund Update

Ellen Johnson, City Planner, presented the St. Charles Housing Trust Fund Update.

Ald. Muenz asked about the “standalone” affordable units, is there an opportunity to encourage smaller builders to create a smaller scale incremental housing that blends in with neighborhoods, that is more of the starter type unit, multifamily housing, like a duplex, fourplex, condo that looks like a home that fits in the neighborhoods that would be more in the attainable housing area. Ms. Johnson responded stating those type of developers can apply for housing trust funds through the county program.

Ald. Weber asked about the Anthony Place project. Can the City kick in more money? Mr. Colby responded the project is contingent on State’s tax credit.

Ald. Wirball commented that the data we are using shows we need more affordable housing. A great opportunity at Charlestowne Mall that a component of that be affordable housing or at least part of that be affordable senior housing. What is the Home Rehab and Accessibility Program? How often used and how much money have we provided. Ms. Johnson answered the program has been in effect since 2011. Since then the City has issued 6 rehab loans. The funds used were about \$61,000. There are limitations on the value of the home and homeowner’s income. It is a piggyback program to Kane County’s program. Ald. Wirball noted the program lists ramps, chairlifts, bathroom modifications. Do we have a lot of inquires about that? Ms. Johnson answered to clarify the County may have issued loans for these types of modifications and their funds may have covered the costs, so there was no need for the additional St. Charles funds for a given project.

Ald. Silkaitis stated I would like to insist if a large development comes in that they provide 10% of the units as affordable units. I am in favor of the Housing Commission recommendation to increase the fees.

Ald. Muenz added that it is my understanding that when they do affordable housing it shouldn’t be a set aside area but intermingled with other housing. Mr. Colby responded that is correct, but we have allowed for different project models, but it is not the ideal.

The Council discussed Developers preference to pay the fee in lieu rather than putting 10% affordable housing into the developments.

iii. Recommendation regarding 2024 Inclusionary Housing Fee

Ellen Johnson, City Planner, presented recommendation for 2024 Inclusionary Housing Fee.

**Motion by Ald. Wirball, second by Ald. Pietryla to approve the recommendation for 2024 Inclusionary Housing Fee.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Silkaitis, Bongard, Muenz, Pietryla, Wirball, Bessner**

**Nays: Weber, Foulkes**

**Absent: Gehm**

**Motion carried: 6-2**

- f. Feedback Regarding City-owned Dean Street Parcel Identified for Donation to Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley.

Ellen Johnson, City Planner, presented feedback regarding City-owned Dean Street Parcel Identified for Donation to Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley.

Ald. Pietryla recused himself from the discussion.

**Motion by Ald. Wirball, second by Ald. Muenz to approve vacating City-owned Dean Street Parcel for donation to Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley.**

**Roll was called:**

**Ayes: Weber, Silkaitis, Foulkes, Bongard, Muenz, Wirball, Bessner**

**Nays: None**

**Recused: Pietryla**

**Absent: Gehm**

**Motion carried: 7-0**

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Arthur Lemke, St. Charles resident, asked about the number of units in Anthony Place. Ms. Johnson responded there were 75 units.

Mr. John Glenn, St. Charles resident and Housing Commission member, read key points from a CNBC article about why young people are not moving out on their own due to housing costs and supply shortage.

## **6. ADDITIONAL ITEMS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL OR STAFF**

Ald. Muenz suggested asking businesses along Route 64 to help during the winter snowy season to help by clearing sidewalks for pedestrians.

Ald. Wirball commented that he has heard there are apartments going vacant in Carroll Tower. Would like to get information as to why there are vacancies. Ms. Heather McGuire, City Administrator, advised there is some transition in ownership that is outside any zoning approvals from the City. Mr. Colby commented we do not have the confirmed information about if this will remain an affordable complex, but staff will follow up.

## **7. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Ald. Pietryla and seconded to adjourn at 9:17 p.m. Unanimously approved by voice vote.**