

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

July 15, 2020
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Claire Syrett and Chris Pryor.

Mayor Vinis opened the July 15, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

1. **WORK SESSION: 1059 Willamette Redevelopment**

Business Development Analyst Amanda D'Souza and Economic Development Planner Anne Fifield gave a presentation regarding the disposition and redevelopment of the property located at 1059 Willamette Street (the former Lane Community College Downtown Center).

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Taylor – asked the City Manager if the City is giving up the possibility of using this property for a homeless shelter; stated she thinks the shelter needs to be downtown.
- Councilor Syrett – stated she does not believe the shelter should be downtown; asked for Council to be provided with a list of all possible funding sources; asked if MUPTA in-lieu-of funds are going into the Affordable Housing Fund; asked for clarification of Downtown Urban Renewal funds.
- Councilor Clark – stated his priority ranking for use of Downtown Urban Renewal funds is Farmers Market first, Park Blocks second, and this project third; asked about the cost per unit.
- Councilor Zelenka – inquired about the deferred maintenance of the property and if it is salvageable; asked what funds are available to use for demolition and site prep; asked if Systems Development Charges can be covered by general fund or urban renewal funds; stated he favors work force housing at this site, and shares Councilor Clark's priority ranking; inquired into the process for reallocating some of this project's urban renewal funds to the Park Blocks project.
- Councilor Semple – stated her priority ranking for use of funds is Farmers Market first, housing second, and Park Blocks third; stated she would like to see a restroom at the Park Blocks; favors demolition of the existing building and housing at this site.
- Councilor Pryor – stated he supports this project for affordable housing downtown and supports moving forward to a public hearing.
- Councilor Syrett – cautioned putting this project through more scrutiny than any other affordable housing project; asked what the funding gap is for this project; stated it is hard for Council to know how to prioritize potential ways to fill the gap if the amount of the gap is unknown.
- Councilor Clark – stated he is reconsidering his priority ranking for use of Downtown Urban Renewal funds, though Farmers Market is still first; stated if Council is willing to spend the Facilities Reserve it could fund these three projects and make a significant contribution to building a homeless service center.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked again what the process would be for shifting funds among the projects in the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan; stated he supports moving forward with a public hearing.

- Councilor Taylor – stated the environmental costs of demolition should be considered; said she thinks the Park Blocks are fine as they are if a restroom is added.
- Councilor Yeh – stated she is in favor of moving this forward to a public hearing and that housing should be Council’s top priority; appreciated staff finding other funding sources to possibly tap.
- Councilor Semple – inquired about the funding shortfall for the Farmers Market project; stated she is still concerned about how much money is being spent on multiple projects with uncertain financial times coming; stated housing and homeless supports are needed; stated the Park Blocks only need the sidewalks repaired and a restroom added.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to direct the City Manager to schedule a Public Hearing on the 1059 Willamette project in order to solicit public feedback on whether the project should move forward, as well as the appropriate funding mechanisms for the project. The City Manager is further directed to implement the proposed public engagement process. **PASSED 8:0.**

2. **WORK SESSION: CAP 2.0 Update**

Sustainability Manager Chelsea Clinton was available to review the revised Community Climate Action Plan 2.0 document and answer questions.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked for more detail about the community engagement process and how it involved business owners and those in the building trades; inquired if the City plans to purchase carbon offsets and at what cost; asked when EWEB’s electrification study will be complete and stated he doesn’t think Council should be making a decision until all the data is in.
- Councilor Syrett – said, based on feedback received from the community, she suggests a timeline be incorporated into the plan for consideration of the ideas generated; inquired if there are any specific plans or policies related to increasing solar use; stated she sees the CAP 2.0 as a dynamic plan, both on-going and iterative.
- Councilor Semple – shared the Sustainability Commission will be making a recommendation.
- Councilor Taylor – stated she has heard from constituents concerned about curbing the use of natural gas; asked if the CAP 2.0 document will be changed after negotiations with Northwest Natural Gas are concluded; asked for a list of the actions the community is being asked to do.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated the purchase of offsets should be a last resort; suggested a limit of the offsets that can be done be incorporated in the plan and stated he has advocated that offsets only be local; said he does not favor delaying approval of this plan for the six months to one year it would take to complete the analysis of actions.
- Councilor Clark – stated this plan encourages people to move to electrification, which means it is important to hear from EWEB as the electric provider; said the community needs to know how much the increased electricity draw will cost and where it will come from.
- Mayor Vinis – stated she sees this document as organic, and once it is enacted, the City is on the path to implementation; reminded Council it will receive annual reports and bi-annual assessments of greenhouse gas reductions.
- Councilor Taylor – stated that unintended consequences of any action should be considered.

3. **WORK SESSION: Financial Update**

Finance Director Twylla Miller gave an informational presentation of the City’s current financial condition, and in context with the PERS Employer Incentive Fund (EIF) deposit.

Councilor Syrett left the meeting at 1:25 pm.

MOTION TO EXTEND AND VOTE: Councilor Pryor, seconded by Councilor Clark, moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. **PASSED 6:1**, Councilor Semple opposed.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – stated he is glad the City is taking advantage of the EIF; stated that nationally, almost nine percent of all mortgages are in forbearance and that number is probably higher in Eugene; stated a dramatic local option is needed to help renters and homeowners.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated he is in support of maximizing the EIF deposit.
- Councilor Taylor – agreed as much as possible should be invested in the EIF.

The meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Adams
Deputy City Recorder

(Recorded by Jessica Gebb)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).