

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

City Hall, 220 Clay Street

July 15, 2024

The meeting of the Committee of the Whole met at City Hall at 5:45 p.m. on July 15, 2024, with the following Committee persons in attendance: Mayor Daniel Laudick, Councilmembers Chris Latta, Daryl Kruse, Aaron Hawbaker, Dustin Ganfield, Hannah Crisman, Kelly Dunn, and Gil Schultz. Absent: none. Staff members from various City Departments and members of the community attended in person.

Committee of the Whole:

Mayor Laudick called the meeting to order and introduced the only item on the Committee of the Whole Agenda, Downtown Parking Discussion. Mayor stated this discussion is to provide direction to staff for next steps and introduced Fishbeck consultants Jon Forster and Josh Rozeboom via video conference. Forster provided a brief overview of occupancy, parking finances, paid parking in Downtown and a parking structure, some types of facilities, and fee in lieu of parking. Rozeboom provided examples of and options for different types of structures including cost per space to construct, mixed commercial or residential structures; he referenced height restrictions in Downtown and underground levels.

Councilmembers discussed potential for below-grade construction in Downtown, location of the example structures, private developer v. public construction with responses from City Administrator Gaines citing bedrock and water table level concerns to below-grade construction, and Forster and Rozeboom providing locations and differences between private and public development of facilities. Councilmembers also discussed starting with paid parking in the Downtown area and committing to implementing and enforcing it prior to planning the parking structure, fee in lieu of parking, capital outlay, possible referendum for a vote for General Obligation Bond, benefit of a mixed use structure as a way to grow Downtown, QR codes for parking/signage, bi-annual or annual parking counts to monitor metric and need for a structure, how to make information about paid parking more inviting and user friendly, and possibility to incentivize private construction. Schultz asked if the City is looking at and utilizing available real estate for parking including the railroad tracks/5th Street; Gaines responded that for every construction project, reconfiguration to maximize parking is reviewed and implemented where possible, and regarding the railroad tracks/5th Street, there is a grant pending for the project. Mayor Laudick encouraged Council to engage with all parties impacted by Downtown parking; Dunn encouraged collaboration and listening, not reactively responding to criticism but giving implementation of paid parking time to take effect, to help offset parking costs. Finance and Business Operations Director Jennifer Rodenbeck spoke about the railroad/5th Street reconfiguration, that Fishbeck's study had observed current lots and didn't see a better reconfiguration; develop what a paid parking system would look like to bring back to Council; that previously there was a "working parking committee" including Community Main Street and the College Hill Partnership and suggested a similar group; potential for more occupancy counts in 6 months or 1 year to show progress through data and determine need for a structure. Councilmembers further discussed previous parking studies, the paid parking implemented and then discontinued (due to COVID-19) in Downtown lots, type of kiosks and locations, use of kiosks vs. an app; Rodenbeck and Gaines responded regarding previous studies, discontinuation of paid parking, rolling out a paid parking plan, and location of kiosks and utilization of a combination of payment methods. Ganfield noted that searching online for parking options does not yield many results.

Ganfield moved to direct staff to come back with a paid parking fee structure in the scope of Downtown and College Hill for a unified system; seconded by Kruse. Ganfield moved for an addendum to have counts on an annual or bi-annual basis to determine when a structure would be needed; seconded by Crisman. Councilmembers then discussed use and value of parking studies and importance of the working parking committee. There being no public comment, the Mayor called for a voice vote. Aye: Schultz, Latta, Kruse, Hawbaker, Ganfield, Crisman, and Dunn. Nay: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes by Katie Terhune, Administrative Supervisor