

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

JANUARY 7, 2020

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor John Haila at 7:00 p.m. on the 7th day of January, 2020, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue. Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, and Rachel Junck were present. Council Member David Martin and *ex officio* Member Devyn Leeson were absent.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Betcher, to change the date of the Regular Meeting of the Ames Conference Board from January 14, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. to January 28, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. Motion declared carried unanimously.

AMES PLAN 2040 - REVIEW OF GROWTH SCENARIOS

Public Input: Mayor Haila welcomed members of the public and said Council is looking forward to input on the proposed scenarios. Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann explained an overview of scenarios was provided to City Council on December 19, 2019, and the information is on the City website for review by the public. He further explained that on January 14, 2020, Council will give direction on the proposed scenarios, and then staff and RDG will prepare a future land use map to reflect designations.

Timothy Morgan, 3416 Clinton Court, Ames, said he owns a family farm north of Ames that is included in the North Growth Area. He said Ames and Gilbert have long histories of being strong and independent communities. Mr. Morgan asked Council to make decisions ethically and not to annex land without a landowner's consent.

Jonathan Bunge, 226 S. Maple Avenue, Ames, said landowners unwilling to sell land in any area could derail the plan. He also said a Fleet Farm store may be coming to Ames and wondered how the addition of that store could change the cost of developing the East Growth Area.

Council Member Gartin expressed concern that all questions from members of the public may not get answered during the meeting and said emails to the Mayor and Council members are always welcome.

Mary Richards, 720 Kellogg Avenue, #201, Ames, said she doesn't have a recommendation on expansion scenarios, but wanted to express environmental concerns. She urged the Council to be proactive in making the climate crisis a central background as the scenarios are considered.

Gaylord Victora, 4002 Edgewater Drive, Ames, said he is concerned about the projected revenue sources and said fees, taxes, and permits can be a detriment to bringing in new residents. Mr. Victora said he believes community input is very important to this process.

Kent Vickre, 2625 Meadow Glen Road, Ames, said he has safety and environmental concerns about the Southwest Growth Area. Mr. Vickre discussed the importance of a buffer between residents and agriculture, noting residents in that area already complain about the odor.

Phil Iasevoli, 3108 South Dakota Avenue, Ames, discussed the impact of development on rural and agricultural activities and expressed concern about the effects of development on soil, groundwater, rivers, and wetland areas. He referenced the 2005 Worle Creek Sanitary Sewer Extension Study and requested Council review it and use it as a tool in future considerations of developing the Southwest Growth Area.

Paul Livingston, 105 S. 16th Street, Ames, represented the Champlin-Lloyd property, and said the property should be considered in the growth scenarios as a tier one opportunity. He noted half of the property is within the Ames Community School District. Mr. Livingston said he hopes this property will be considered as part of the conversation because of its proximity to the City, emergency services, and Iowa State University (ISU). He said the property is ready to go, and it would be a voluntary annexation.

Hector Arbuckle, 519 Oliver Circle, Ames, said he is disappointed in the plan because it doesn't account for the changes in lifestyle that will be needed. He said all new development should be carbon neutral and made from sustainable materials, and public transportation and walkability should be promoted.

Kim Christiansen, 2985 South Dakota Avenue, Ames, said ISU controls 3,500 acres south of Highway 30 between University Boulevard and County Line Road. He said the properties are intensively agricultural and a buffer is needed between heavy agricultural use and intense urban development. He said the remaining developable land should be left for rural development, which is more compatible to the rural lifestyle that already exists in the area.

Lynn Champlin-Lloyd, 3818 Pheonix Street, Ames, said she and her family want to sell their farm, and that there is already City water and sewer down Dartmoor Road and through the valley. She said the farm is ready to be annexed and noted the area that cannot be developed will contribute to making the area a beautiful place to live.

Peter Hallock, 114 8th Street, Ames, said the capacity for infill hasn't fully been considered, and he has concerns about fringe development to the east and south of Ames. Mr. Hallock urged Council to place as much growth as possible within existing Ames, look at contiguous development, and consider the cost of transit.

Brent Pringnitz, 2377 240th Street, Ames, said he lives just across County Line Road in Boone County and his farm is in the Southwest Growth Area. He said the Ames Fringe Plan from 2007 involves communities working together to protect rural lands to preserve rural lifestyle and agriculture. Mr. Pringnitz expressed concern that the scenarios don't mention agriculture and encroach on university properties.

Erv Klaas, 2200 Hamilton Drive #508, Ames, said he has concerns about all scenarios, but mostly the North Growth Area. He said population density and geographic area would be the largest to the north. Mr. Klaas noted Riverside Drive is the primary arterial to the east and Grand Avenue is the only route to downtown Ames. He said the South Growth Area has direct access to the interstate.

Mr. Klaas said nature is being pushed beyond its limits, and a new paradigm is needed for civilization that's in respect for natural cycles of renewal in nature.

Jeri Neal, 916 Ridgewood Avenue, Ames, said she represents the Ames Bicycle Coalition and supports making a community where transportation equity exists for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit. She urged Council to consider barriers to walking, cycling, or transit that might be implicated in the growth scenarios.

Jodi Chittick, 3830 Hyde Avenue, Ames, said traffic has doubled and the speeding has increased in the Bloomington Heights neighborhood. She expressed concern for the children in the area, and said if the North Growth Area is chosen she recommends the City add stop signs along Hyde Avenue, add a flashing light and crosswalk near the park, and continue to allow street parking.

Council Member Gartin encouraged members of the public to sign up for Ames Plan 2040 updates on the City website.

Dhrvv Raturi, 2026 Hawthorne Court, Ames, said some new residents are fleeing environmental conditions elsewhere. He said walkability, equitable transportation, and shopping local should be considered.

Linda Murken, 17185 George Washington Carver Avenue, Gilbert, said she knows Ames will continue to grow, but is concerned because agricultural land cannot be replaced. She asked the Council to do as much as it can to encourage infill. She said the Urban Fringe Plan needs to be strengthened and updated, and more players need to be involved.

Justin Dodge, 105 S. 16th Street, Ames, said the options and tiered approaches show flexibility. He said it's important to remind everyone that costs include developer investments and the taxpayer is not on the hook for many of the costs that are shown. He said the estimates have been conservative, and he believes the development community would respond and adapt to whatever option(s) the Council chooses.

Chuck Winkleblack, 105 S. 16th Street, Ames, said he was a part of this process 20 years ago, and this time he appreciates the time and process. He said it was never thought that Ames would go beyond certain points. Mr. Winkleblack said standards have changed immensely regarding impacts on the environment over the years, and that stormwater is dealt with in radically different ways than years ago.

Mark Harmison, 2042 S. 500th Avenue, Ames, said most of the options involve annexation. He said there would be large tax increases without any services being received. He said when considering annexing land, Council should annex in proportion to services that can be offered immediately. He told the Council his property has Worle Creek running through it, and he is unclear on what more development would do to the creek.

Lauris Olson, 1705 Buchanan Drive, Ames, said with any expansion to the north or northwest the traffic flow should be considered. She said the North Dakota Avenue traffic count is over 1,000 vehicles per day and cannot be widened because of the steep ditches. Ms. Olson also noted that Ketelsen Marsh is within the East Growth Area.

Mayor Haila closed public input.

Council Discussion: Director Diekmann told the Council that a voluntary annexation petition has been submitted for the Champlin-Lloyd property. He explained that Council will consider the request on January 14, 2020, and will determine whether or not to begin the public hearing process.

Mr. Diekmann reviewed the development tiers for growth, explaining that the tiers represent access to infrastructure and ease of service. He said the tiers are not meant to signify a sequence.

Ms. Beatty-Hansen said it's not Council's goal to annex unwilling landowners. Council Member Betcher said she is hesitant to say that when the plan goes out 20 years and will involve many future City Councils.

Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked if more will be seen on infill. Mr. Diekmann concurred, saying the only time it has been discussed was the Council workshop where some areas were identified as options. He said infill is difficult to predict, costly, and time consuming which makes it hard to predict how much population growth can be accommodated.

Council Member Betcher said she knows what it's like to live near various agriculture uses and said she has not thought about those negative impacts to development. She appreciated members of the public bringing those thoughts forward. Mr. Diekmann said ISU has been clear the agriculture/science corridor will remain.

Mayor Haila said it seems very difficult to meet a lot of needs with infill. Member Diekmann showed the map including potential infill areas and said the City will have to make an investment to provide services either way. Member Gartin said two out of three Iowa counties have declining populations but Story County is increasing. He said not planning for growth would increase environmental challenges. Mr. Gartin worried that putting a "ring" around Ames would encourage the population to live in other communities that want to grow, and encourage rural subdivisions.

Member Beatty-Hansen said sustainability must be considered, and there is value in considering infill even if it will be harder. Mr. Gartin said a large increase in population cannot be assumed, but he wants a substantial part of the plan to be infill. Mayor Haila said infill depends heavily on the property owner. Member Gartin said he used to presume more development means increased potential for flooding, but there are areas where development and water improvements have provided a benefit, such as the Southdale area.

Mayor Haila asked Council if there's anything else needed from staff to assist in decision making. Ms. Corrieri said it's important to take the public comments received, as well as the public input

collected by RDG into consideration. Mr. Diekmann said staff didn't consider any floodplain areas for development and reported to Council in March on existing conditions that included a vacant lands inventory.

Council Member Gartin said a number of people raised the issues of climate and transportation. He said the City went through a robust Complete Streets program that was adopted unanimously, and those priorities will be included in new developments. Mr. Gartin said a realistic conversation should take place with CyRide. Mr. Diekmann said a preliminary meeting with CyRide took place to discuss the scenarios, and when preferred land uses are determined it will be easier to make service cost estimates.

Council Member Gartin referenced climate change. Mr. Diekmann said the City is committed to obtaining a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory, which may lead to a Climate Action Plan. He said if a goal is established in the Climate Action Plan regarding land use it would need to be part of Ames Plan 2040. Mr. Diekmann said if a climate threshold is going to be made a priority, that has to be known in January because that will change the information needed from staff.

Member Betcher said it seems that Council will need to give appropriate weights to the issues raised.

Mayor Haila said if a decision is going to be made on January 14, 2020, he believes the public should have another opportunity for comment. Mayor Haila encouraged members of the public to continue submitting comments by email.

Public Comment and Follow-Up Questions: None.

Other: None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Gartin said he was very impressed with the attendance and public comment.

Council Member Junck said she would make herself available to hear from constituents.

Council Member Corrieri said community feedback is so important, and that Council doesn't receive enough email regarding critically important issues that affect the future.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor

Erin Thompson, Recording Secretary