

Staff Report

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY COMMISSION ISSUES TO INVESTIGATE

September 12, 2017

BACKGROUND:

In February, the City Council voted to establish a Campus and Community Commission (CCC). This Commission is charged with investigating issues of common interest to the City, Iowa State University, and the ISU Student Government. The Commission may be assigned issues by the City Council, and the Commission may propose issues for City Council approval. The resolution describing the Commission's charge is attached.

The Commission was appointed over the spring and summer and held its initial meeting on August 28. The Commission membership includes:

- Evelyn Beavers, Neighborhood Association Representative
- Tom Lindsley, City At-Large Representative
- Warren Madden, Business Community Representative
- Pete Englin, ISU Administration Appointee
- Eric Abrams, Main Street Cultural District Appointee
- Karin Chitty*, Campustown Action Association Appointee
- Rob Bingham, ISU Student Government Appointee
- Cody Smith, ISU Student Government Appointee

*The Commission selected Karin Chitty to be the Commission chair

At its initial meeting, the CCC members discussed potential issues it might investigate. The Commission brainstormed a list of topics, including:

- Communicating construction and other disruptions to university community/others
- University action for off-campus student conduct
- Parking in Campustown
- Welcoming/inclusiveness of Campustown/Main Street
- Public gathering space in Campustown
- Services/retail needs in Campustown
- Rental housing occupancy
- Rent Smart Ames utilization
- Connectability (transportation between areas of Ames), infrastructure quality
- Retention of recent graduates
- What should the 100-block of Welch Avenue look like?

Following discussion, the Commission narrowed this list to three main priorities:

1. Parking in Campustown
2. Public Gathering Space in Campustown
3. Inclusive Community Principles:
 - a. Education of tenants/landlords
 - b. Welcoming/inclusiveness of Campustown/Downtown
 - c. Rent Smart Ames utilization
 - d. Retention of recent graduates
 - e. Connectivity between areas of Ames

The Commission indicated the remaining issues from the brainstorming session may be proposed to the City Council as work activities once the initial three priorities are addressed.

STAFF COMMENTS:

At the August 8 City Council meeting, the City Council received a letter from the Campustown Action Association (CAA) regarding the Campustown gathering space concept (attached). The City Council moved to add the letter to the list of priorities the City Council will discuss with the CCC.

During the City Council's workshop regarding campus area parking regulations in May, the City Council also discussed whether to refer the issue of parking regulations to the CCC. However, no motions were made during that discussion to do so.

The City Council now has the opportunity to add to, remove from, or modify the proposed topics the Commission has identified to pursue. The Council could consider the following to guide them in making those determinations:

1. What work product will the Commission produce for the Council?

The City Council may identify specific questions it would like to have answered by the Commission to help guide the Commission's work. For example, in regards to the Campustown Gathering Space issue, the Council could ask the CCC:

- a. What is the right location for a project?
- b. What are the desired uses of the space?
- c. What needs/concerns do affected property owners have with a proposed site

It should be emphasized that the Commission should play a role in obtaining background information regarding a specific topic, gathering feedback from the stakeholder groups, identifying current problems, and suggesting courses of action to the City Council. The City Council would

then turn the issue over to City staff and/or consultants to develop implementation plans.

2. Is this Commission the appropriate group to address the topics proposed?

Some issues may involve other City boards or commissions, or may require professional analysis the CCC is not able to provide. The CCC may propose issues that are not priorities of the City Council. The Council ultimately must decide in which topic areas it wants to invest CCC's and staff's resources.

After reviewing the proposed topics, the City Council may choose to re-direct Commission proposals to others to be completed. For topics the Council directs the CCC to work on, the City Council could provide clear direction regarding not only what is within the CCC's scope, but what areas, if any, are outside its scope of work.

3. Is there capacity among the CCC and among City staff to address the issues that have been identified?

The Commission has two methods of addressing issues: one is for the members themselves to all work together on a topic. The other is to create a topic-specific task force to bring additional experts and stakeholders into a discussion. Although the use of task forces can help distribute the work, it requires coordination by the Commission leadership and support from City staff to ensure compliance with open meetings/records and City policies. **It may be advisable to limit the number of topics the Commission is directed to pursue to a few at a time, to ensure the work can remain organized and manageable. Additional topics can be pursued once the initial topics are completed.**

4. If the City Council has specific requirements for each topic, it should communicate those to the CCC now.

These might include specific timeframes, stakeholders to ensure are involved in the discussion, and—above all—specific questions the Council feels must be answered by the Commission for its efforts to be considered a success.

Once additional direction has been provided to the Commission, the Commission will use its next meeting to develop action plans for each topic. These plans will include the specific questions the City Council has requested be answered, timeframes, stakeholders to consult, meeting logistics, and any limitations on the scope of the Commission's work.

NEXT STEPS:

At the September 12, 2017 meeting, it is expected that the City Council members will identify: 1) the topics they want explored by the CCC, and 2) questions for each topic. It should be emphasized again that not all of the topics can be explored at one time, and the City Council will have to prioritize the work.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-097

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY COMMISSION
FOR THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA**

WHEREAS, from time to time, issues arise that are of common interest to the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Iowa State Student Government; and

WHEREAS, it is desired to establish a commission to investigate these issues and provide advice to the City Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Ames, Iowa:

Section One. **Membership:** There is hereby established a Campus and Community Commission. That Commission shall consist of eight members providing representation as follows:

(1) Business Community Representative	3 year term
(1) Neighborhood Association Representative	3 year term
(1) City At-Large Representative	3 year term
(1) Iowa State University Administration Appointee	Indefinite term
(1) Main Street Cultural District Appointee	Indefinite term
(1) Campustown Action Association Appointee	Indefinite term
(2) Iowa State University Student Government Appointees	Indefinite term

The Business Community Representative, Neighborhood Association Representative, and City-At Large Representative shall be appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council. For the purpose of staggering the terms of the membership, the Mayor shall choose one initial mayoral appointee to serve a two-year term and one to serve a one-year term. Appointees may serve two consecutive terms.

The Iowa State University Administration Appointee, Campustown Action Association Appointee, and Iowa State University Student Government Appointees shall be appointed by their respective organizations.

Section Two. **Charge:** It shall be the mission of the Campus and Community Commission to:

- (1) Provide a public forum to facilitate discussion of issues of common interest to the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Iowa State University Student Government.
- (2) Offer an opinion or recommendation to the Council regarding issues brought forward to the Commission by the Council that are of common interest to the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Iowa State University Student Government.
- (3) Subject to City Council approval, investigate issues of common interest to the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Iowa State University Student Government which are brought forward to the Commission and currently not being considered by the Council.
- (4) Prepare and transmit to the Mayor and City Council from time to time, but not less often than once each year, reports describing its proceedings and other activities of the Commission.

Section Three. Task Forces: Subject to City Council approval, the Campus and Community Commission may appoint and take input from appointed task forces on issues of common interest to the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Iowa State University Student Government that are not being dealt with by City staff or another City commission. Any such task forces created shall be conducted as follows:

(1) Task forces shall be comprised of representatives from the Ames and Iowa State University communities appointed by the Campus and Community Commission. Task force membership shall be as large as necessary to address the task force's charge. Each task force shall be chaired by a member selected by the Campus and Community Commission. A member of City staff shall be assigned to each task force by the City Manager to provide advice and to ensure that task force activities comply with the charge given by the Commission and with Chapter 21 of the Code of Iowa (Iowa Open Meetings Law).

(2) Each task force may adopt such rules of procedure and conduct for its meetings and other activities as it shall deem useful and appropriate, within the limits of the charge from the Commission. Task force meetings shall be open to the public and shall conform to the requirements of Chapter 21 of the Code of Iowa (Iowa Open Meetings Law). Meetings of each task force shall typically be held at City Hall or on the Iowa State University campus, but meetings may be held in alternate locations to provide more convenient access for special public forums.

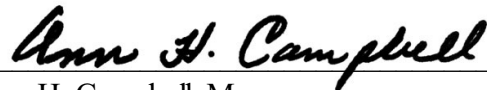
(3) Upon completion of its charge, each task force shall submit copies of its final report to the Campus and Community Commission. The Commission will present the report results to Council and gain Council approval if further action is necessary. If either Council or the Commission decides that no further action is required, the task force shall dissolve.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be published in the appendix of the *Municipal Code* of the City of Ames, Iowa.

ADOPTED THIS 28th day of February, 2017.



Diane R. Voss, City Clerk



Ann H. Campbell, Mayor

Introduced by:	Betcher
Seconded by:	Corrieri
Voting aye:	Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Corrieri, Gartin, Nelson, Orazem
Voting nay:	None
Absent:	None

Resolution declared adopted and signed by the Mayor this 28th day of February, 2017.



campustown
action
association

Campustown Action Association
119 Stanton Ave, Suite 602
Ames, IA 50014

August 3, 2017

Honorable Mayor Ann Campbell and Members of the Ames City Council,

Campustown has long been in need of a high quality, well maintained public green space large enough to hold events and comfortable enough for people to use for general outdoor gathering, eating, and studying. As the housing-density has increased in Campustown, the need for this space has only grown. In fact, it would be hard to imagine another area of the city that expanded housing by as many residents without adding a park.

Fortunately, as the density of Campustown is growing so is the tax base, making this an ideal time to start planning for an investment in creating a much-needed space with a known increase in available funds over the next several years as tax abatements subside. CAA strongly supports the concept of a large green space in Campustown.

The logical choice seems to be the space currently designated as Parking Lot X. We believe it is vital to success that we start budgeting for the project and working with property owners and businesses in the district to determine the best way to move forward with its creation.

We would like to request that Council direct staff to begin the process of planning a Campustown Plaza. Planning would require many divisions of the city government including Electric (burial of electric cable); Public Works and Transportation Engineering (design of transit through the site and pedestrian-vehicle interaction, parking issues) Finance (possible funding options), Police and Fire (consideration of public safety in the design), Planning and Housing (zoning issues and parking requirements) and the City Manager's Office (coordination and overseeing conversations with property owners, businesses and residents).

The project will not be simple and will require coordination between many entities. We would be happy to be part of a planning committee that would include representatives from CAA, property owners, the City, the Student Affairs Committee, Iowa State Administration, the local residents, and other interested parties.

As it will serve multiple uses, the space will demand professional design help. Perhaps two designs could be created, public input accepted and then the designs voted on to allow students and residents a say while still maintaining a manageable design concept. CAA would be happy to offer its assistance in facilitating this project by working with the City and other stakeholders throughout the potential project's development.

As always thank you for your time,

Kathy Dubansky

Kathy Dubansky
President

Karin Chitty

Karin Chitty
Executive Director