

## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

OCTOBER 16, 2012

The Ames City Council met in special session at 7:00 p.m. on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2012, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law with Mayor Ann Campbell presiding and the following Council Members present: Davis, Goodman, Larson, Orazem, Szopinski, and Wacha. *Ex officio* member Baker was also present.

**FLOOD MITIGATION STUDY PROGRESS UPDATE:** Mayor Campbell introduced Water and Pollution Control Director John Dunn. Mr. Dunn told the group that an update would be given on the Flood Mitigation Study, which is being completed by HDR Engineering (HDR). Mr. Dunn said staff recommended this firm for the Study in part because of the strategy proposed for public involvement, and for its technical expertise for modeling and mapping the implications and the ability to sort through appropriate levels of protection for our community. Mr. Dunn introduced the project manager, Andy McCoy and John Engel, water resources engineer, both of HDR.

Mr. McCoy said the Flood Mitigation Study would consist of collecting public input, developing and analyzing alternatives and strategies, and summarizing impacts. He said positive and negative impacts will be determined of the flood mitigation alternatives, and then the best alternatives and strategies will be presented to the City Council.

Mr. McCoy said the first set of public sessions consisted of questions directed toward the public, and that alternatives and strategies will be presented at the second set of public meetings. Council Member Larson asked if the people involved in the public meetings so far have represented areas outside of Ames. Mr. McCoy said communication has gone out to residents in Story County and the Squaw Creek watershed. Mr. Dunn said the steering committee leading and guiding the process includes Iowa State University Facilities, Iowa Department of Transportation, and the City of Ames, all of which will be involved in whatever strategies are recommended.

Mr. McCoy said alternatives will be presented to the City Council in January and February. Mr. Kindred said HDR will use technical data and costs for alternatives to give the City Council alternatives, and then it will be a policy level decision for the City Council. He said he is confident that HDR and staff are working to give the best information possible.

Mr. McCoy reviewed the attendance of the four public meetings held so far, and also said that there were 71 hits on the online, self-directed meeting. He also reviewed the tools used to reach members of the public. Impacts from the flooding were reviewed, as well as responses to questions asked of the public.

Council Member Goodman asked about the data needed to change the statistics of the “100 year flood” level or the “500 year flood” level. Mr. McCoy said that those terms are somewhat misleading, and described that there is a 1-in-100 chance that a “100 year flood” will happen during any year. He also said the watersheds are different than they were years ago.

Mr. Kindred said after the 1993 flood a study was completed in 1996, and then the 1% flood was redefined based on the added data. He said with the passage of time, it can continually be updated, but still doesn't provide the degree of certainty that the City would like to have.

Mr. McCoy showed a graphical impression of the base flood level near US Highway 30. He said the

1996 and 2008 floods were the equivalent of a base flood, or a 1% annual chance and the 1993 flood was ½ foot higher than that. Mr. McCoy said the .2% annual chance, or a 500 year flood would be two feet higher than the base flood level, and he told the Council that the 2010 flood was 2.5 feet higher than the base flood level, which illustrates the magnitude of what has happened.

Mr. McCoy said that regarding the Flood Mitigation Study, the flood frequency analysis will be updated. He said HDR is looking at what happens to the estimate when taking into account the information from 1998-2011. Mr. McCoy showed how four extreme rainfall events that have occurred in Iowa within the last four years were transposed and applied to the Ames watershed to see the implications of the rainfall and runoff.

Mr. Goodman asked about the rainfall vs. runoff, and the differences in runoff. Mr. McCoy said the moisture conditions and the type of land play a role, as well as how fast the rain falls. Mr. McCoy reviewed the map of the watershed with the transposed storm boundaries applied.

Discussion ensued regarding the differences in the Ames flood of 2010 vs. the transposed events. Mr. McCoy said the next steps include an initial list of alternatives and screening criteria developed at the technical workshop on October 26, 2012 which will be presented to the public on November 14, 2012 and then the final alternatives list and detailed screening criteria will be developed in early December.

Mayor Campbell asked if the concerns at the public sessions were related to the intensity of rainfall, and not necessarily river flooding. Mr. McCoy said it was addressed a few times, but that many people were discussing river flooding, and most were wanting to talk about development standards. Council Member Davis asked if there were any issues that stood out among the rest. Mr. Dunn said the three that were heard the most were: filling in the floodplain, the impact of the US Highway 30 bridge over the Skunk River, and comments related to the Deery Brothers proposal.

Council Member Larson asked about the speed at which water enters from the watershed and how quickly it gets to Ames now. Mr. McCoy said they spoke with a couple people with that concern. He said it depends on where the rain falls. Mr. Larson said he has heard that water comes quickly off of farm land. Mr. Engel said they did hear that there has been a shift from ridge tilling along contours, which may hold back water, to more of a no till which could increase runoff. Mr. Kindred said some farmland has been tilled and put back into production, so a lot of land that used to slow down water is no longer there. Mr. Larson asked if there are opportunities where water could be slowed. Mr. McCoy said there are opportunities, including wetlands. Mr. Larson asked about the possibility of having agreements with farmers to reimburse them for loss of crops to slow water down. Mr. Goodman asked how the opportunities would be produced by HDR. Mr. McCoy said within the workgroup there is a starting place for alternatives. Mr. Dunn said the group will be sensitive to the public, but doesn't want to downplay the experience of HDR, who has done this before. Mr. Schainker reviewed the remaining time line of the Flood Mitigation Study.

The meeting recessed at 7:55 p.m. and reconvened at 8:00 p.m.

**NEIGHBORHOOD SUMMIT:** The neighborhood representatives introduced themselves. Staff members present were: Planner Jeff Benson (Neighborhood Liaison), Neighborhoods Inspector Sara Van Meeteren, Police Officer Adam McPherson (Safe Neighborhoods Team), Community Resource Officer Naimah Saadiq, Police Officer Nathan Rivera (Safe Neighborhoods Team),

Lieutenant Tom Shelton (Safe Neighborhoods Team), and Sergeant Brad Baker. Officer Rivera said the Safe Neighborhoods team is tasked with neighborhood-based problems and street-level issues. He said the team is led by Sergeant Mike Arkovich, and it works mainly on self-initiated activity tailored to solving unique problems related to neighborhoods. Officer Rivera said the phone number for the Safe Neighborhoods Team is (515) 231-4661.

Mr. Benson gave an update on the neighborhood programs and initiatives that are ongoing. He said the City was in contact with 16 neighborhood associations this year, and added that many neighborhoods that are active do not have associations set up.

Pat Brown, 3212 West Street, Ames, thanked the Council and City staff for the enforcement of the health and safety code.

Sue Crull, Brookside neighborhood representative said their neighborhood celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> Fourth of July picnic this year, and that it was the second neighborhood to paint on the street. She also said the tennis courts and steps to Brookside Park look very good. Ms. Crull said she toured Roosevelt School with a housing initiative group last week that is very interested in rehabilitating the building into apartments. She said the group would be happy to have the green space be a park. Ms. Crull said the group is getting its finances in order and will later approach the City Council. She expressed concern regarding the zoning, and said she hoped that tax credits and grants could be used for the remodel. Mayor Campbell asked if the group works with a developer. Ms. Crull said she assumed they would work with a contractor.

Marty Helland, representing the Emanon neighborhood association said she would like to see more interest from the City in the park portion of Roosevelt. She said she is very hopeful that the City can work with the school board, and that it can be maintained.

A representative of Citizens for Roosevelt Park, a group to collaborate with the School Board and the citizens of Ames to ensure that the green space remains, said their website ([citizensforrooseveltpark.org](http://citizensforrooseveltpark.org)) is updated with current information on the issue. She encouraged the City to collaborate with the school board regarding the park.

Fred Bradner, representing the Sunrise neighborhood association, said Willson-Beardshear is also for sale. He said the neighborhood is very interested in the green space of that property. Mr. Bradner also said that the Hospital-Medical group continues to have conversations and work together. He thanked the City Council for initiating the conversations with Hospital-Medical parties.

Linda Feldman, representing the Sunrise neighborhood association, said the neighborhood was delighted to have the Police and Fire Departments attend their picnic. She said residents are also interested in street art and corner gardens.

Peter Hallock, representing the Historic Old Town neighborhood association, said their neighborhood did tree planting for the second year, and plans to continue it next year. He said they are working with Iowa State University on a statewide inventory of urban trees. Mr. Hallock said he believes it's critical to maintain vegetation in neighborhoods. He also said he appreciated working with Parks and Recreation on Old Town Park.

A representative of North Old Town neighborhood association said Sara VanMeeteren had helped with some properties in their area. She said few things are enforceable, and wishes City Council

would discuss standards for upkeep that can be enforced. Ms. Brown added that landlords are concerned that there is not a property maintenance code for the exterior of owner-occupied homes. The representative of North Old Town said that the noxious weeds ordinance is just “not cutting it” in regard to yard maintenance. Mr. Larson suggested the Ames Repair and Care program might be appropriate. Mr. Bradner said in some instances the homes are not occupied.

A representative of Bloomington Heights neighborhood association said their neighborhood is planning to work with the City on response times for fire/ paramedic services, as well as automotive traffic . She said they are also working with Parks and Recreation on safety at the park. She said their other concern is the water pipe tripping hazards that are sticking up 5-6" on the sidewalks.

A representative of the Timberland neighborhood association said since their neighborhood was annexed the City has been maintaining the roads as they were, but now they are very irregular and bumpy and have become unsafe. He said the residents are interested in finding some common ground on how to self-fund the resurfacing of the road, and want to find out what type of resurfacing the City would be comfortable maintaining.

Another representative of the Timberland neighborhood association commented on the wildlife the neighbors have seen this year.

Susan Tucker, representing the Orchard Estates area, said several residents have heard gun shots from the YMCA woods behind the houses. She said she knows many people use those trails. Ms. Tucker also said neighbors are anxious regarding the sale of the YMCA lodge and land to Iowa State University (ISU) since there are many unknowns. The neighbors hope to meet with ISU staff soon. She said she hopes the area can remain untouched. Mayor Campbell commended the neighborhood for planning a meeting with ISU, and said that the Police Department needs to know about the gun shots.

Ms. Brown thanked the Police Department, and said there haven't been loud parties or riots in some time. Officer Rivera also thanked the neighborhoods for their efforts.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

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Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

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Ann H. Campbell, Mayor

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Erin Thompson, Recording Secretary