

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

AMES, IOWA

JUNE 17, 2014

The Ames City Council met in Special Session at 7:00 p.m. on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2014, 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: Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Peter Orazem, and Chris Nelson. *Ex officio* Member Lissandra Villa was present. Council Member Nelson arrived at 6:47 p.m. Council Member Goodman was absent.

**RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF *MUNICIPAL CODE* CHAPTER 27 AUTHORIZING REMOVAL OF A STREET TREE:** Moved by Orazem, seconded by Corrieri, to adopt RESOLUTION NO. 14-349 approving removal of a street tree at 821 Duff Avenue due to the need to replace an aged sanitary sewer service.

Roll Call Vote: 4-0. Resolution declared adopted unanimously, signed by the Mayor, and hereby made a portion of these Minutes.

**REPORT ON EMERALD ASH BORER MANAGEMENT:** Corey Mellies, Public Works Operations Manager, reported that the City of Ames was one of three pilot cities for inclusion in an Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) grant with the United States Forest Service. This three-year grant is providing the City an opportunity to collaborate with an urban forester to educate the public, build a network of volunteers, develop effective maintenance plans that ensure the health of our forest resources, and review ordinances to ensure protection and enhancement of our urban forest. In anticipation of this grant, City staff completed an inventory of all trees in City rights-of-way, in maintained areas of the City's parks (except Moore Memorial Park), and most City-owned facilities.

In conjunction with the IDNR grant, a tree management plan for the City is nearing completion. This document will include goals and recommendations for all City-owned trees, which total an estimated 15,000 trees. It will also include detailed information on how to handle the impending Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation. However, with the imminent threat of EAB, City staff will bring the City-wide tree management plan back to City Council at a later date once the plan to deal with the EAB is finalized.

Shane Donegan, Prairie Rivers of Iowa in partnership with Iowa Department of Natural Resources, John Joiner, Public Works Director, and Corey Mellies discussed several management options for the Ash trees. Ash tree removal will need to be a part of any EAB plan, since Ash trees in poor condition are more susceptible to infestation and will become hazardous to the public. Using the tree inventory mentioned above, staff has identified 2,322 City Ash trees that will be affected by EAB. The estimated cost for a tree removal, including stump grinding, is \$1,000 per tree, or \$2,322,000 for the entire inventory. Tree removals would also raise the need to consider replanting new trees. The estimated cost to purchase and replant a tree is approximately \$250, or a total of \$700,000 to replace the lost Ash tree inventory. Chemical treatments believed to control EAB are another option. Costs for these injections are based on the size of the tree, and are estimated at \$10 to \$12 per inch of DBH. Lastly, wood waste from the trimming and removal of City-owned trees is chipped and made into mulch that is used in City

parks and made available for free to the public, currently. Hence, the City's existing wood waste operations could potentially be modified to produce firewood for the public, as well as mulch.

Several funding sources can be considered to assist with this increase in costs. Road Use Tax monies can be used for removals and replacements of right-of-way trees. The Local Option Sales Tax Fund, General Fund, and General Obligation Bonds are potential sources of funding.

There are immediate recommendations that should take place and those recommendations include the removal of any Ash trees that are hazardous or in poor condition in the right-of-way and City parks, extensive public outreach regarding EAB and the impact on citizens, modify Chapter 27 of *Municipal Code* to allow for the pre-emptive removal of diseased trees on City property, and lastly, modify the *Municipal Code* to clearly state that dead, dying, or diseased trees on private property must be removed by the property owner.

In order to complete an EAB plan for the City, staff needs City Council direction on the potential treatment of Ash trees. As is stated above, treatment may be used to protect high-value trees, to spread out the timing of removals, and/or to allow new trees to become established before removing Ash trees. Another consideration is whether the City should bear all treatment costs or whether adjacent citizens should bear the cost of treatments through a tree adoption program. Once direction is given on treatment, a final plan will be developed and brought back to City Council this fall.

Council Member Betcher inquired where the largest groups of Ash trees are located. Mr. Mellies said there are several areas with highly concentrated amounts of Ash trees. City staff can provide Council with a map detailing the locations of all Ash trees. Council Member Betcher is concerned that it could be expensive for private property owners in older neighborhoods to remove the Ash trees from their property.

Council Member Betcher also inquired what Iowa State University plans to do with its Ash trees. Mr. Mellies noted that Iowa State will be doing a combination plan with some treatment and some removal, depending on the status of the tree. They have already started to proactively remove the poorer quality Ash trees.

Council Member Corrieri asked for some direction on numbers of trees they would recommend should receive treatment. Mr. Donegan noted that the higher-value trees, the largest and healthiest, are the trees that should be protected because they provide the most benefits.

Council Member Gartin agreed with Council Member Corrieri that he too would like a plan that recommends treatment and/or removal for the Ash trees in the community to give Council a sense of how involved staff would need to be and what that time involvement might look like for staff.

Council Member Nelson arrived at 6:47 p.m.

**LAND USE POLICY PLAN WORKSHOP:** Planning and Housing Director, Kelly Diekmann, reported that direction from the Council regarding the extent of the update will allow staff to

prepare a scope of work with tasks and timelines. A proposed work plan will be based upon the stated range of interests, planning resources of staff and consultants, and community outreach efforts to formulate amendments to the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). Depending on the degree of change or Council's specific desired changes, there is a wide range of options for updating the LUPP. Options include a major overhaul with extensive public outreach for a new vision, goals and policies, re-shape goals and policies to meet current intent and purposes, repackage and clarify the Plan's priorities, minor changes to specific test of the plan with no major repackage or rewrite, and finally, create sub-area plans for growth areas and intensification areas.

Staff also took Council's feedback and incorporated information from the May 20<sup>th</sup> workshop presentation about potential challenges and other trends to make a list of potential update topics. Part of the discussion of an update is to look at current challenges related to implementing the vision of the plan, as well as preparing a comprehensive plan to think about the City's aspirations and intentions for the next 20-30 years.

Council Member Gartin proposed that a workshop including the Research Park, Chamber of Commerce, Mainstreet Action Plan, Ames Economic Development Commission, and others, should be coordinated to focus on economic planning. He believes a workshop may be helpful while creating the LUPP to look ahead to the land we are going to need for industrial and commercial purposes.

City Manager Steve Schainker noted that it's very important to consider the vision of the Council, as well as the community, and how they envision the city growing in the next 15-20 years.

After much conversation surrounding their options for updating the LUPP, Council agreed that they would like to focus on several key areas:

1. Maintain the current Vision and work with language of the Goals and Policies for clarity on how to guide long range planning versus current development projects
2. Review the concept of Growth Areas for their basis and need, including Ames Urban Fringe Plan designations related to future annexation
3. Consider individual Growth Area planning needs, prepare sub-area plans for full range of uses and types of development within a growth area, proactively engage with property owners on defined City interests
4. Consider the residential development pattern, expectations in "New Lands;" and reconsider language of Village and FS zoning designations to meet variety of housing interests and building types
5. Review transportation and infrastructure planning for infill opportunities and limitations affecting future growth
6. Consider Lincoln Way corridor as a unique place with a sub-area plan for intensification of residential and commercial development with design and use requirements
7. Incorporate concepts into the Plan supporting national trends related to housing types, economic development, community design, placemaking, transportation and mobility options, and sustainability

Council Member Orazem would also like to include a sub-area plan and focus on the

hospital/medical area surrounding managing transportation, residential areas, etc.

Council would like Mr. Diekmann to define and detail each of the above for further direction on what plans they will be incorporating, as well as identify main key sub areas for sub area planning, besides just the hospital/medical sub-area. Council will prioritize after further direction from Mr. Diekmann.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Nelson, to direct Planning and Housing to further look into the options for the Land Use Policy Plan.

Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:** No comments.

**CLOSED SESSION:** Moved by Betcher, seconded by Orazem, to hold a Closed Session as provided by Section 21.5c *Code of Iowa*, to discuss matters in litigation.

Roll Call Vote: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

The meeting reconvened in Regular Session at 9:48 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Gartin to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

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Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

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Ann H. Campbell, Mayor

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Erin Cain, Recording Secretary