

CITY COUNCIL

Committee of the Whole

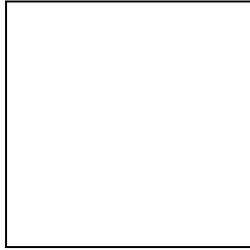
Monday, April 26, 2010

Council Office

5:00 pm

Agenda

- I. Executive Session – Personnel & Conditional Use Decisions
- II. Update Waste Water Treatment Plant Project
- III. Update Main Street Designation
- IV. Discussion - Fire Training Center Land Lease
- V. Agenda Review



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES
April 12, 2010
5:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Reed, S. Marmarou, F. Acosta, D. Sterner, V. Spencer, J. Waltman

OTHERS PRESENT:

L. Kelleher, S. Katzenmoyer, C. Geffken, R. Hottenstein, C. Younger

Mr. Spencer called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

I. Executive Session

Council entered into executive session to discuss personnel issues and conditional use decisions at 5:09 pm.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz arrived at this time.

Council exited executive session at 6:18 pm.

II. Penn St Farmer's Market

Frank Denbowski joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Denbowski gave a brief background about the market project. He stated that more foot traffic was needed for the market and many residents have a strong need for nutritional foods. He stated that the new site of the market will be in the 800 block of Penn St in front of the Reading Health Dispensary. All produce sold will be grown in Berks County.

Mr. Denbowski explained that the Berks Agricultural Resource Network (BARN) will be applying for the necessary zoning permit. He stated that this property is owned by the Reading Redevelopment Authority. No fees will be waived. The health permit will be obtained by BARN and each vendor will obtain a business privilege license. It has been determined that a mobile vending license is not necessary as the vendors will be located on private property. The approval of the market has been obtained from the area businesses. Once the Redevelopment Authority issues its approval, zoning approval will be sought.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if BARN was recruiting vendors. Mr. Denbowski explained that vendors must meet the BARN criteria. The market will be open Fridays from 11 am – 7 pm. The vendors will be selected at the beginning of the project for consistent produce. He stated that there will be approximately 8 vendors.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if each vendor will need a health permit and business license. Mr. Denbowski stated that BARN will obtain one health permit and each vendor will get a business license.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if vendors would be in the 9th & Cherry Sts parking lot. Mr. Denbowski stated that they would be located in that lot as additional space is needed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the affect of the market on traffic on Penn St. Mr. Denbowski stated that the Police Department did provide input.

Mr. Spencer stated that the market is hoping for increased foot traffic.

Mr. Spencer questioned if the vendors will need insurance coverage. Mr. Denbowski stated that each vendor must carry their own insurance.

Mr. Acosta noted his concern that many people knew about this project before Council was informed. He noted that he had conversations with the Chamber which led him to believe that this was more than a farmer's market and was actually a mercado – an outdoor market with a little bit of everything for sale. He also noted that DID is willing to have a Mid-Day Café at this location to increase interest in the market. Mr. Denbowski stated that this is a future vision and that this summer the market will be produce only with the hope of growing in future seasons. He stated that this would change the scope of the project and that other codes and health issues would need to be addressed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned when the market was scheduled to begin. Mr. Denbowski stated that it is planned to begin the end of May.

Mr. Marmarou questioned what produce would be available if locally grown that early in the season. Ms. Reed stated that there are many spring fruits and vegetables that would be ready and that the growing season may move up due to the early warm weather.

Mr. Waltman questioned how Mr. Denbowski became involved in this project. Mr. Denbowski stated that initially the Mayor was working on the project. Mayor McMahon requested assistance from Mr. Denbowski as the solid waste office is also looking for environmentally sustainable opportunities.

Mr. Waltman questioned if Council approval was needed for the project. Mr. Denbowski stated that Council action is not necessary.

Mr. Waltman thanked Mr. Denbowski for his energetic work on this project.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained that the former site of the market at Opportunity House was problematic as there was not much traffic to attract consumers. She expressed her belief that it's important for the City to work on projects that can be successful. She noted that this location will give access to fresh produce to the high rises on Franklin St and the elderly on Penn St.

Mr. Spencer stated that it is hoped that a cross section of people will use the market. Mr. Geffken stated that the best way for this to occur is for the produce to be high quality.

III. Airport Authority Appointments

Charlie Jones joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Spencer stated that action on this resolution needs to be taken at this evening's meeting.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he is in favor of the fire training center agreement but not the Airport Authority appointments. He expressed his belief that the City should continue to make appointments.

Ms. Reed stated that the resolution does not exclude City residents from being appointed.

Mr. Marmarou stated that the County should be willing to keep the two City appointees if they wish to continue serving.

Mr. Waltman stated that he requested the land ownership clause be added. He noted his concern of what would happen to the land if the Airport Authority ceased to exist. He stated that he is not happy about giving up the appointments but that it is a good compromise.

Mr. Geffken stated that at a recent meeting with the County Commissioners the Commissioners stated that they feel the City is part of the County and not a separate entity. He noted his expectation that a better working relationship is developing.

IV. Agenda Review

Mr. Spencer noted the need to add a resolution regarding the use of cell phones and an ordinance for introduction regarding a land sale to Penn DOT.

Council reviewed this evening's agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully
Submitted
Linda A. Kelleher, CMC
City Clerk