



CITY COUNCIL

Strategic Planning Committee

Monday, September 16, 2013
at close of Finance Meeting
City Council Office

Strategic planning determines where an organization is going, how it's going to get there and measures success over time. It ensures the most effective use of the organization's limited resources by focusing resources on key priorities. The Council Strategic Planning committee will prioritize, in collaboration with the City's administration, the City's goals, objectives and strategies and determine which initiatives take precedence for implementation, under three main objectives: Finance, Standards of Living and Economic Development

Committee Members: Jeff Waltman (Chair), Francis Acosta, Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Dennis Sterner, Strat Marmarou, Donna Reed and Randy Corcoran

Although Council committee meetings are open to the public, public comment is not permitted at Council Committee meetings. However, citizens are encouraged to attend and observe the meetings. Comment from citizens or professionals during the meeting may be solicited on agenda topics via invitation by the Committee Chair. All electronic recording devices must be at the entry door in all meeting rooms and offices, as per Bill No. 27-2012

1. Review Strategic Planning Goals

2. Status of Strategic Planning Initiatives

- a. Committees
- b. Agendas
- c. Issues Management
- Creation of Veterans Grove Monument Management Team (discussed in part at Aug Mtg)
 - Create internal team with representatives from Public Works, HARB, Planning, Council Office and Veterans Affairs to review applications to

place monuments in City Park, coordinate maintenance of existing memorials, etc.

- Update on the Establishment of the Community Development Corporation (CDC)
- d. Alignment with Administration goals
- e. Leadership meetings
- f. Other ???

3. Committee Chairs - agendas review (meeting recaps and draft agendas below)

4. Formulating Agendas Moving Forward (collaboration with administration)

5. Big Ticket Items (priorities)

6. Issues Management

- a. Methods
- b. Implementation timeline

7. Reports from Board liaisons

- a. Penn Corridor
- b. BPRC
- c. EAC
- d. Rec Commission
- e. Pagoda Foundation
- f.

COMMITTEE AGENDA RECAP

Finance & Budget

Recap July 15th Meeting

- Review draft 2014 CDBG Budget
- Inquiry if additional employees in Codes, Trades, FM were cost neutral as projected
- Projection that 2013 will end with a \$9M cash surplus, after the MMO payment

Agenda September 16th Meeting

- Review draft 2012 External Audit
- Review 2014 Budget

- Define Budget Review Process

Standards of Living

Recap September 3rd Meeting

- Review Tattoo Ordinance regulations with the Board of Health
- Presentation on Recycling Scavenging
- Discuss need for improved street cut regulations

October Meeting not planned due to Budget Review

Economic Development

Recap September 3rd Meeting

- Brief updates on the RRA/OCR loan re the demolition at 5th and Penn Sts and the purchase of the properties in the 400 block of Penn

October Meeting not planned due to Budget Review

Nominations

Recap Interviewed at September 3rd and 9th Meeting

- Delphia Howze - appointment - Diversity Board
- James McDevitt - appointment - Human Relations Commission
- Daniel Laws Jr - appointment - DID
- Lynn Smith - reappointment - Animal Control Board
- Jeff Darlington - reappointment - Board of Ethics
- Brian Fichthorn - reappointment - Main Street Board
- Pamela Cianciosi - reappointment - Citizens Advisory Board - District 5
- Craig Breneiser - appointment - Fire Civil Service Board

Agenda October 7th Meeting

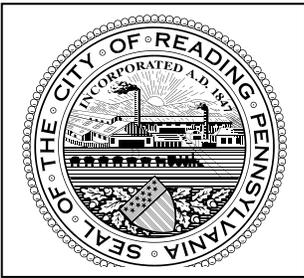
Ready for interview:

- James Fegley
- Deborah Lachina

Currently in background:

- Barbara Coyle
- Todd Rathman
- Kelley Coates

** Requires recommendation by Mayor before being scheduled for interview.*



CITY COUNCIL

Strategic Planning Committee

Monday, August 19, 2013
Meeting Report

Attending: J. Waltman, Chair; F. Acosta, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, D. Sterner, D. Reed, R. Corcoran, S. Marmarou

Others Attending: L. Kelleher, C. Snyder, C. Younger, E. Lloyd, V. Spencer, D. Cituk, G. Mann

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Waltman.

Finance Committee

Mr. Waltman stated that the Administration plans to present the 2014 Budget at the beginning of September. Budget meetings will start on the third Monday in September at 5 pm. He stated that further review and discussion regarding Act 73 will occur at the October meeting.

Standards of Living

The September Economic Development Committee topics are:

- Main Street Committee Update
 - Vision for the downtown
 - Review of Committee Progress
- Review Tattoo Regulation Ordinance (Board of Health)
- MVA Action Plan

Quality of Life Issues

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the quality of life issues in City owned parks and the City's inability to continue to properly take care of basic maintenance such as mowing and trimming. She suggested exploring various options such as partnerships and naming rights to improve the maintenance of City-owned areas. Mr. Spencer noted that some parks are bequeathed to the City and the names cannot be changed.

Ms. Snyder stated that she is touring all City-owned parks with Mr. Ruyek to get a better understanding of the location and condition of City-owned parks, playgrounds, etc.

Mr. Waltman noted that the Lindbergh Viaduct and the Penn Street Bridge were cleaned and weeded shortly after the Gateway presentation.

Veterans Grove Management

Mr. Sterner suggested creating an advisory group or task force to oversee management of the Veterans Grove area within City Park to maintain and clean the various monuments that have been installed.

Mr. Waltman agreed with the need for some group to oversee this area and make recommendations to Council.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested creating a Park Commission to advise about all park related management issues.

Ms. Snyder agreed with the need for improved park and Veteran's Grove management and she suggested beginning with a conversation with Mr. Ruyak.

Ms. Kelleher suggested adding Ms. Johnson and Mr. Miller, as HARB and the Planning Commission also have an interest in these areas and would like to create policy around the placement of monuments in parks. She also suggested including Dale Derr, from the County Veteran's Office as he can assist with gathering existing veteran's groups.

Economic Development

As per the June Economic Development Meeting, the Parking Plan will be presented by RPA Executive Director.

Land Value Tax

Mr. Sterner inquired about the status of the Land Value Tax (LVT) issue. Mr. Lloyd stated that he is currently meeting with various business and citizens groups to educate them about the proposal to switch to this property tax application.

Mr. Mann stated that PFM has spoken with Mr. Lloyd about this issue and is preparing an opinion paper.

Mr. Lloyd noted the need for Council feedback on this issue. He stated that he has been meeting with various organizations to educate them on the LVT

Mr. Acosta stated that he and other Councilors provided feedback about their positions on the Land Value Tax after each of the two info sessions conducted at the June Economic Development Committee meeting and May Committee of the Whole meeting. He stated that in general, the majority of Council was not supportive of the switch and some of the specifics were as follows:

- Certain property owners like car dealerships will not be able to build out their lots due to zoning regulations and the needs of their businesses. Can some provision be applied to protect or grandfather some properties?
- The switch to the LVT could create a negative environment. How will the Administration respond?
- This type of switch could push some property owners out of Reading if they are currently on the edge. How will the Administration reach out to those property owners who are on the verge of leaving Reading.
- The LVT penalizes businesses who are required to have large parking areas. Should government dictate what the highest and best use of a property is?
- Need to obtain input and endorsements from various groups.
- Need for education on the phase in of the LVT and the full impact of all City properties

- Impact this will have on businesses similar to those on Rockland Street with large off-street parking areas as required by the Zoning Ordinance
- Impact on properties in low-density zoning districts as the Zoning Ordinance limits build out (Maximum Building Coverage 30% and Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage 40%) and impact on historic district areas that will not be able to “build up”
- The Land Value switch has many moving parts that need to align properly. How will the administration make sure that the switch is successful and without problems and is the County Treasurer prepared to make this switch?
- LVT suggests building out properties to increase the highest and best use of the property, decreasing the amount of vacant land that can be taxed. How will this impact the future Storm Water Utility charges on properties?

Mr. Acosta stated that these issues need to be addressed before an ordinance is introduced.

Mr. Waltman suggested that Mr. Lloyd prepare and present Council with a white paper on the LVT so they can collectively decide to consider it at a Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:08 pm.

*Respectfully Submitted by,
Linda A. Kelleher CMC
City Clerk*