



CITY COUNCIL

Strategic Planning

Committee

Monday, July 6, 2015
City Council Office
5:00 pm

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: J. Waltman, C. Daubert (Co Chairs), F. Acosta, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, D. Sterner, S. Marmarou, D. Reed

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

Meeting Facilitated by the Managing Director's Office

- I. Update Penn Square Properties – G. Donly**
- II. UGI Gas Meter Ordinance – T. Coleman**
- III. Street Assessment – sample property impact attached**
- IV. Curbside Waste Billing**
- V. Review of Draft Administrative Manual – E. Lloyd**

Policy Changes to Address Long Term Issues

- a. Tax Exempt Properties**
- b. Lease Agreements w/ Organizations Leasing City Facilities**
- c. Develop list of state legislation amendments that could aid Reading**

Follow-up

- March - Update - Alvernia University re Angelica Park**



CITY COUNCIL

Strategic Planning Committee

Monday, June 1, 2015
Meeting Report

Attending: J. Waltman, C. Daubert (Co Chairs), D. Reed, D. Sterner, S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz

Others Attending: L. Kelleher, C. Younger, C. Snyder

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Waltman at approximately 5:07 pm.

1. Parking Proposal

Ms. Kelleher reported that the Parking Authority Executive Director submitted the proposed ordinance today. The ordinance allows Council to set the maximum rates charged at the parking meters in the downtown; however, the Parking Authority Board can set the rates at or below the maximum by approving a resolution.

Ms. Kelleher also reported that the proposed ordinance expands the parking meter area to cover North Front Street north to North 10th Street and Elm Street to Chestnut Street.

Several Councilors expressed concerns with the dramatic expansion of the parking meter zones into residential neighborhoods and the impact that would have on residents in areas that already experience parking stress.

This topic will be further discussed at an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting.

2. Charter Board Mediation Policy

Ms. Kelleher distributed a brief outlining the mediation process submitted by the Charter Board which is attached to the meeting agenda. She reviewed the brief with those present. She explained that the mediation policy will become a part of the Charter Board's Rules of Administration and Procedure and that the Charter Board is

also requesting a modification to the Charter Board Ordinance noting the existence of the Board approved Rules.

Mr. Waltman expressed concern that allowing the complainant to be excused from attending the mediation session if he does not have legal counsel, could lead people to believe that they need legal counsel to file a complaint. *(Note: Charter Board agreed to modify the language)*

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the importance of providing a mediation option to settle complaints expeditiously and without costly litigation.

Mr. Waltman suggested reviewing the entire Charter Board ordinance along with the various workflows and attempting to place a cap on legal expenses associated with complaints.

There was discussion about replacing the phrase “complaint form” with “question” to allow someone to first inquire if an action is indeed a Charter violation. This modification will be considered with the review of the Charter Board ordinance. *(Note: Charter Board agreed to review this suggestion)*

3. Act 47 Project Update

Ms. Snyder stated that the new Act 47 Recovery Plan contains numerous initiatives. She provided an update as follows:

- Debt Service – 4 initiatives - all were covered except the refinancing that will be introduced at the June 8th meeting
- Work Force – 9 initiatives most relating to health care, salary caps and benefits – being monitored
- Administrative Services – 11 initiatives mostly relating to the need for the development of policies for the use of fund balance, windfall revenue, repeat audit findings, sale of assets and real estate, etc.
- Police – 9 initiatives, 5 are related to bargaining unit issues
- Fire – 11 initiatives, 4 are bargaining unit related – 2 have been completed and the collection of EMS fees is currently being worked on
- Public Works – 10 initiatives, 2 relating to solid waste and recycling are dependent on the outcome of the current litigation – others such as the street assessment will be discussed prior to the development of the 2016 budget (June Finance agenda)

Ms. Snyder stated that Public Works initiatives also include the need to renegotiate the agreement with the Rec Commission and review/create agreements for others who use City property. She stated that the need to begin capital planning will also move

forward this year through the Capital Planning Committee process adopted by Council approximately two years ago.

Council noted the need to prioritize the development of agreements that will include language outlining the required responsibilities and controls, for the use of the Baer Park field house, the Fire Tower, the Greenhouse and East Ends.

Ms. Snyder stated that the Amended Recovery Plan requires the elimination of one staff person in the Mayor's Office.

Ms. Snyder explained that the administration has not yet started exploring the initiative regarding the monetization of assets. She noted that if the City enters receivership, the receiver will have the ability to sell City assets.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Ms. Reed both questioned the benefits of monetizing the City's assets as that could lead to privatization. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested looking at other cities in the Act 47 program to see what monetization efforts occurred.

There was a brief discussion on market based opportunities such as obtaining sponsors for various items.

Ms. Reed noted that the City attempted this initiative several years ago and it was unsuccessful. Ms. Kelleher agreed but noted that the difficulties associated with this endeavor corresponded with the beginning of the recession.

Mr. Daubert stated that Wilson School District successfully implemented market based opportunities over the past several years; however, they are starting to move away from this initiative.

4. Trash and Recycling Billing

Mr. Waltman noted the need to discuss this issue with RAWA. He stated that various Councilors expressed concern that delinquent trash/recycling bills are causing the disruption of water service.

Ms. Kelleher noted the need for Council to discuss this issue in advance of the discussion with RAWA.

Mr. Spatz explained the error in the newspaper article that originally reported that RAWA makes a \$1M profit from trash and recycling billing. He explained the cash v. accrual of this receivable.

Ms. Snyder stated that the mayor executed an MOU which moved trash and recycling billing and collection to RAWA. She questioned the validity of the MOU as Council approval was required.

Ms. Kelleher agreed and noted that Council must also approve all non-water related projects for RAWA. She stated that the City only had an 85% collection rate before this was out-sourced to RAWA. RAWA collects 95% of that billed. She stated that if the City ends the billing and collection relationship with RAWA, the City should prepare to outsource this function.

Ms. Snyder agreed and noted that PFM also agrees that the City should out-source billing and collection functions.

The group discussed removing trash and recycling from the water/sewer bills. Several Councilors expressed concern that tying these bills with the water/sewer bills makes it difficult for senior citizens and low income citizens to manage. However, some noted that paying monthly installments is easier than making quarterly or annual payments.

RAWA will be invited to a future COW meeting to further discuss this issue.

Mr. Coleman arrived at this time.

UGI Meters

Mr. Waltman stated that UGI gas meters were recently relocated to the exterior of the homes in the Schuylkill Avenue area. He stated that the meters now create a trip and fall hazard due to their projection into the public right of way. He stated that in some areas where the sidewalks are smaller than the standard width, the sidewalks no longer provide wheelchair access. He stated that while the regulators are required to be outside, UGI is installing the meters outside for their convenience.

Mr. Marmarou noted that this ongoing UGI meter relocation project continues to damage the City's street surfaces.

Mr. Coleman stated that he just finished meeting with Mr. Booth, HARB Chair, about this issue and the need to regulation the relocation of UGI meters but stay in compliance with the PUC Rule adopted and released in September 2014. He stated that prior to adopting an ordinance the City has to complete more internal work to clarify the exemptions for properties located within historic districts or eligible historic districts.

Mr. Coleman explained the new rule and the four key areas of the rule along with the operational responsibilities of the PUC, UGI and the City. He explained that property owners need to object to the relocation of their gas meter before the contractor appears to perform the work. He explained that UGI is required to provide 30 day written notice before a meter and regulator are relocated and the property owner should begin objecting as soon as they receive this written notification.

Several present noted that UGI does not always provide 30 days notice before performing the work and that objections are often ignored.

Mr. Coleman explained that the City can consider altering the street cut permitting process to require certain terms and that the City can provide information on the City's historic areas when UGI submits their street cut permit applications.

The group discussed the need to educate the public about the property owners options prior to the relocation of their gas meter. The increase in gas leaks caused by accidents after the meters are relocated to the front facades of properties was discussed. Mr. Waltman suggested forming a subcommittee composed of staff, officials and citizens to further address this issue.

Council thanked Mr. Coleman for his extensive work on this complicated issue.

As no other issues were brought forward, the Strategic Planning Committee meeting concluded at approximately 7:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk

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Streets Surcharge Example

	Taxable Value	Municipal Tax Mills	Municipal Tax	Rate -.5 Tax Mills	Difference	Total Frontage	Rate Per Foot	Streets Assessment	Property Tax & Assessment	Net Impact	Net Impact
815 Lancaster Avenue	1,305,900	15.689	20,488	19,849	(639)	1856	1.00	1,856	21,705	1,217	5.9%
2020 N 13	1,745,800	15.689	27,390	26,536	(854)	1989	1.00	1,989	28,525	1,135	4.1%
1515 Linden	67,500	15.689	1,059	1,026	(33)	288	1.00	288	1,314	255	24.1%
564 S 15	49,600	15.689	778	754	(24)	238	1.00	238	992	214	27.5%
1525 Arggone Rd	109,500	15.689	1,718	1,664	(54)	538	1.00	538	2,202	484	28.2%
1801 Alsace	153,200	15.689	2,404	2,329	(75)	768	1.00	768	3,097	693	28.8%

Business Analyst

25-Jul-14

29-Jul-14

16-Jun-15

Projected Fund Expenses

Street Lighting - Electricity	365,460
Traffic Signals -- Electricity	17,376
Traffic Signal Maintenance	206,591
Street Light Maintenance	111,715
Street Paving & Repair	200,000
Street Repair Inspections	48,500
	<hr/>
	949,642

Drafted by	City Clerk/Solicitor
Sponsored by/Referred by	HARB
Introduced on	May 26, 2015
Advertised on	, 2015

BILL NO. _____ 2015
AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE, CHAPTER 295, HISTORICAL AND CONSERVATION DISTRICTS BY ADDING REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF GAS METERS WITHIN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

THE CITY OF READING CITY COUNCIL HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. An ordinance amending the City Code, Chapter 295, Historical and Conservation Districts by adding regulations relating to the installation of gas meters within historic districts, as follows:

§ 295-102. B. Definitions

GAS MAIN — the primary gas utility pipe typically located below a public right-of-way.

GAS METER — a specialized flow meter, used to measure the volume of fuel gases such as natural gas and propane.

GAS METER ASSEMBLY — a gas meter installation including, individually or jointly, associated gas pressure regulator, valves, and piping.

GAS PRESSURE REGULATOR — a valve that regulates the flow of gas at a specified pressure.

GAS SERVICE — gas piping between the gas main and the gas meter assembly.

§ 295-106 D. General administrative procedures.

(1) All persons or entities desiring to undertake an exterior alteration or modification, requiring a building permit under the presently enacted building code, to any building, structure, sign, or premises or install any satellite dish, antenna, *gas meter assembly* or other modern device utilized to receive video programming signals as set forth in Subsection E below within any designated historic district, shall apply to the Preservation Officer for a certificate of appropriateness prior to obtaining the required

building permits as set forth in § 295-107. No application shall be accepted or deemed complete until such time as all forms, materials and plans are filed and any and all fees are fully paid.

E. Placement of satellite dishes in historic districts.

(1) Installation.

(a) No satellite dishes, antenna, or other similar modern device shall be installed or placed in front yards, front of buildings or along their facades that can be seen from a public right-of-way within historic districts. All satellite dishes, antenna, or other similar modern devices shall be located to the rear of the main dwelling unit. Antenna and satellite dishes shall be installed in the rear or on the roof of the main dwelling unit. A roof-mounted satellite dish or antenna shall not be visible from the public right-of-way. When being secured to a brick wall, anchoring for satellite dishes shall only occur within the mortar joints and not within the brick themselves.

(b) Satellite dishes that are placed in accordance with this chapter may be approved at staff level when submitted with a diagram of their proposed placement on the structure or building. Placement of satellite dishes on any other area of a structure or building shall be sent to the Reading Board of Historical Architectural Review for review.

(2) Exceptions. Satellite dishes, antenna, or other modern devices, as defined herein, may be installed in front of buildings in the historic district only if no other means of reception can be provided. In such cases where the proposed location of a satellite *dish* is visible from a public right-of-way, the owner or tenant of the property shall seek the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness as required in § 295-107 of this chapter. Such satellite dishes, antenna, or other modern devices shall be installed to be unobtrusive and shall be screened from view through the use of landscaping, fencing and/or architectural building features. The Building Inspector and Historic Preservation Specialist shall approve the installation to ensure there is no disruption to the historic nature and aesthetic value of the district.

(3) Removal. Any satellite dishes installed in the front of buildings before the enactment of this chapter shall be removed to meet the requirements of the ordinance or must be reviewed by the Reading Board of Historical Architectural Review to obtain a certificate of appropriateness as required per § 295-107 of this chapter within one year of the effective date of this chapter. Satellite dishes shall be removed when the owner or tenant who installed the device no longer inhabits the property.

(4) Violations and penalty. Placement of any satellite dish that does not conform to the guidelines of this section will constitute a violation and may be subject to penalty and enforcement per §§ 295-122 and 295-123.

F. Placement of gas meters in historic districts.

(1) Installation.

(a) No gas meters shall be installed or placed in front yards, front of buildings or along their facades that can be seen from a public right-of-way within historic districts. Such gas meters shall be located inside the building, at an exterior location that is not visible from a public right-of-way, or shall be installed within an exterior, below-grade vault that is covered by a flush, corrosion-resistant access hatch.

(b) Exposed gas pressure regulator installations shall be inconspicuously located outside the main dwelling unit.

(c) All exposed components of a gas meter assembly installation shall be fabricated of corrosion-resistant materials and painted along with associated visible valves and piping to match the color of the adjacent façade of the building.

(d) Gas meter assembly installations shall be resistant to tampering, vandalism, and protected from damage by moving vehicles.

(e) Gas meter assembly installations shall not encroach upon required sidewalk widths, so designated by City ordinance.

(f) Gas meter assembly installations shall maintain uniformity in overall size, elevation, and configuration with new or existing gas meter assembly installations located at each immediately adjacent property.

(g) Existing sidewalks and streets disturbed by installations or alterations of the gas main, gas service, or a gas meter assembly shall be repaved to match existing adjacent surfaces in panels extending the entire width of the sidewalk or street and shall be finished with appropriate seams and joints to provide surface continuity with adjacent paving, free of uneven or non-uniform conditions.

(h) Gas meters that are placed in accordance with this chapter may be approved by the Preservation Officer when submitted with a diagram of their proposed placement on the structure or building and relevant photographs of the building. Placement of gas meters on any other area of a structure or building shall be reviewed by the Historical Architectural Review Board.

(2) Exceptions. Gas meters, as defined herein, may be installed in front yards, front of buildings, or along their facades that can be seen from a public right-of-way within historic districts only if no other means of gas service can be provided. In such cases where the proposed location of a gas meter is visible from a public right-of-way, the public utility shall seek the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness as required in § 295-107 of this chapter. Such gas meters shall be unobtrusive and shall be screened from view through the use of landscaping, fencing and/or architectural building features. The Building Inspector and Historic Preservation Specialist shall approve the installation to ensure there is no disruption to the historic nature and aesthetic value of the district.

(3) Removal. Any existing gas meter assembly installed in front yards, front of buildings or along their facades that can be seen from a public right-of-way within historic districts before the enactment of this Section must be reviewed by the Historical Architectural Review Board to obtain a certificate of appropriateness as required per § 295-106 of this chapter within one year of the effective date of this chapter. The

Historical Architectural Review Board may require removal and/or alterations to existing gas meter assemblies and adjacent construction to meet the requirements of this Section.

(4) Violations and penalty. Placement. Placement of any gas meter that does not conform to the guidelines of this section will constitute a violation and may be subject to penalty and enforcement per §§ 295-122 and 295-123.

§ 295-107. Required permits and certificates.

A. Building permit. No person shall erect, construct, reconstruct, alter, restore, demolish, raze or change in appearance in any manner any building, structure, object or site, in whole or in part, in any designated historic district, without first obtaining the required permits which have been issued on the strength of a certificate of appropriateness.

B. Certificate of appropriateness.

(1) Historic districts. No permit shall be issued or cause to be issued, for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition or razing of any building, structure, or premises, in whole or in part, within a designated historic district until a certificate of appropriateness has been issued. Such certificate shall not be limited to work requiring a building permit according to the presently enacted building code, but shall include all work affecting general design, arrangement, texture, material and color of a structure which can be seen from a public street or way. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: painting; sandblasting; chemical cleaning; stucco or other applied textures; replacement or major repair of windows, cornices, trim or other nonstructural elements; signs; and other work affecting any building, structure or premises.

(2) Conservation districts.

(a) No permit shall be issued or cause to be issued, for new construction and additions to buildings or structures, including a porch or porch enclosure, that impacts the streetscape within a designated conservation district until a certificate of appropriateness has been issued, unless specifically listed as exempt below.

(b) Demolition activity impacting the streetscape, including demolition of any character defining porch, balcony, deck, cornice, dormer or roof, shall require the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness, unless specifically listed as exempt below.

(c) The following activities shall not require a certificate of appropriateness:

(1) Demolition or construction of any building or structure not visible from a public right-of-way.

(2) Maintenance, repair, or alteration of a building or structure or part thereof.
(3) Installation of appurtenances and accessory elements of a decorative or ancillary nature, regardless of visibility from a public street, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Storm windows and doors, awnings and shutters.
- (b) Signs, banners and flags.
- (c) Downspouts and gutters.
- (d) Flower boxes, light fixtures and mailboxes.
- (e) Heating or cooling units, including solar heating fixtures.
- (f) Fences, walls not exceeding four feet in height, gates, arbors and trellises.
- (g) Antennas and satellite dishes.
- (h) Other ancillary or decorative elements.

[i] Gas meters that are not visible from a public right-of-way.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective in ten (10) days of approval in accordance with Section 221 of the City of Reading Home Rule Charter.

Enacted by Council _____, 2015

President of Council

Attest:

City Clerk

Submitted to Mayor: _____

Date: _____

Received by the Mayor's Office: _____

Date: _____

Approved by Mayor: _____

Date: _____

Vetoed by Mayor: _____

Date: _____