



# *CITY COUNCIL*

## ***Standards of Living Committee***

### **Meeting Report December 2, 2013**

**Committee Members Attending:** M. Goodman-Hinnershitz (Co-Chair), J. Waltman

**Others Attending:** D. Sterner, D. Reed, S. Marmarou, C. Younger, C. Snyder, L. Kelleher, C. Jones

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz called the meeting to order at 5:20 pm.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the administrative reports were disseminated electronically earlier today and she inquired if there were any questions.

#### **I. REVIEW OF PAGODA MOU**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz distributed a draft copy of the Pagoda MOU that was introduced at the November 25<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of Council. She stated that the draft MOU provides coverage for both the City and the Pagoda Foundation and the MOU notes areas where the City and the Foundation need to work together to identify a viable solution. She stated that the MOU acknowledges the Foundation's desire to assist the City in the continued preservation and enhancement of this iconic landmark. She stated that the MOU is a "starter" document and that additional detail can be worked out through a strategic plan.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Lloyd arrived.

Mr. Waltman agreed with the concept but suggested the inclusion of a timeline to avoid delays in the development of a strategic plan for the Pagoda and Mount Penn. He inquired if Mr. Spencer was provided with a draft. A draft copy was provided to him.

Mr. Marmarou inquired about the revenues obtained through the Pagoda. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that revenues are obtained through the rental of the facility and from the café. She noted that a third source of revenue comes from the gift shop run by the Pagoda

Skyline Inc. She noted that this organization has operated for an extended period of time without any type of MOU or agreement. She noted that an independent external audit of the Foundation occurred and no issues or findings were identified.

Mr. Marmarou inquired about the amount of money in the Foundation's treasury from Pagoda related revenue. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the use of the revenue generated directly from the Pagoda needs to be determined by the Foundation and the City, as listed in the MOU.

Ms. Reed stated that since its inception, the Pagoda has been cared for by various groups without written agreements. She noted the need for formal agreements for groups using City property. She noted that she and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz have resigned from the Pagoda Foundation, due to various circumstances.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the MOU is eligible for final passage on December 9<sup>th</sup>. She noted that the MOU defines the broader terms of the agreement and the framework for additional agreements moving forward.

Mr. Spencer inquired if the MOU is the strategic plan. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the MOU speaks to the need for the Foundation and the City to develop a strategic plan.

Mr. Waltman noted the need for a strategic plan for Mount Penn and the Pagoda as the Mount Penn is a viable attraction. Ms. Reed noted that Mount Penn is located within multiple municipalities and that all involved municipalities should be involved in creating a plan for Mount Penn.

Mr. Waltman suggested requiring the creation of a strategic plan within six (6) months.

The Standards of Living Meeting adjourned to allow the start of the Economic Development Meeting.

The Standards of Living Meeting reconvened at approximately 7:05 pm.

## **II. Re-paving of Cotton Street**

Mr. Jones stated that he is currently finalizing the bidding documents to repave Cotton Street. He stated that the project should begin in April 2014. He stated that both sides of Cotton Street will be repaved.

Mr. Marmarou noted that while replacing the roofing at the 9<sup>th</sup> and Marion firehouse, chestnut beams were discovered and these beams are being removed. He stated that this is valuable wood and that the City should sell it, rather than allow the contractor to remove the

wood and take it. He stated that he spoke to some contractors who estimated that the wood could be sold for upwards of \$100,000.

Mr. Jones stated that he will speak with Burkey Construction about the matter and get back to Mr. Marmarou.

### **III. Wyomissing Park Street Lighting**

Mr. Jones stated that a series of 50 light standards in the Wyomissing Park area will be replaced and rewired. He stated that the current “Christmas light” style of wiring will be replaced with conduit, which will prevent the entire circuit from going down when one individual light standard fails.

Ms. Kelleher inquired if Mr. Jones has an estimate for the cost of the project. She stated that Representative Caltagirone requested an estimate for the project last week, as he wants to seek some State funding to offset the cost of the project. Mr. Jones stated that he would forward the estimate to Ms. Snyder and Ms. Kelleher.

Mr. Jones described the various types of lights that currently exist. He stated that the community wants to retain the current vintage-type of standards that exist in the majority of the neighborhood. He explained that these types of standards are available in steel and aluminum. He noted that the steel standard is more expensive but requires less maintenance, while the aluminum standard would require painting to thwart rusting.

### **IV. Schuylkill Avenue Railroad Bridge**

Mr. Jones stated that Penn DOT will be replacing the Schuylkill Avenue Railroad Bridge which is located in the vicinity of West Green Street. He stated that the average user probably does not realize he has crossed a bridge as the grade is slight. He stated that Norfolk Southern wants to raise the bridge by four (4) feet, which will allow higher loads to be transported through this line.

Mr. Jones stated that raising the bridge by four (4) feet creates some issues with ADA accessibility, as the grade of the bridge will increase dramatically. He explained that a criss-cross access path will need to be established, which will require PennDOT to acquire various properties in the affected area.

Mr. Jones stated that this approach will require the bridge to be closed for approximately one (1) year. He stated that PennDOT is working with the City to determine a viable detour route. He stated that after the closure the bridge will be opened with one (1) lane of traffic while the final repair work is completed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the additional agenda items (Comprehensive Plan

Update, MVA Action Plan and Update Zoning Backlog) will be deferred until the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

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