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CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING

Monday, October 20, 2003
6:30 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Mt. Rainier Room

PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Grossman, Councilmembers Chang, Gustafson, Hansen, Montgomery, and Ransom

ABSENT: Mayor Jepsen

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Deputy Mayor Grossman, who presided.

2. FLAG SALUTE/ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Grossman led the flag salute. Upon roll call by the City Clerk, all Councilmembers were present with the exception of Councilmembers Hansen and Montgomery, who arrived shortly thereafter, and Mayor Jepsen.

Upon motion by Councilmember Gustafson, seconded by Councilmember Ransom and unanimously carried, Mayor Jepsen was excused.

3. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT AND FUTURE AGENDAS

Steve Burkett, City Manager, asked staff to update the Council on the City's response to the record rainfall that occurred today.

Paul Haines, Public Works Director, reported that City staff received 73 requests for service due to flooding, and that staff was working on several flooding problems throughout the City. He anticipated that staff would be responding to calls throughout the evening. On a positive note, he mentioned that Ronald Bog did not crest due to small maintenance projects that have improved detention and capacity. He listed other projects the City will undertake to improve stormwater drainage as part of the Surface Water Master Plan.

Councilmember Ransom asked about the anticipated date for starting the Ronald Bog Drainage Improvements.

Mr. Haines said the Ronald Bog Drainage Improvement project actually began as a series of smaller components aimed at addressing stormwater drainage in the Ronald Bog

Basin. He said the remainder of project components will be prioritized as the Surface Water Master Plan is completed next year. He commented on the impressive coordination and teamwork exhibited by City staff in responding to today's complaints.

At Councilmember Ransom's request, Mr. Haines displayed a City map showing where the complaint calls originated and comparing the number of calls with the storm event in 2001.

Councilmember Hansen remarked that although there is more work to do to address stormwater drainage in the City, there have been significant improvements over previous years.

(a) Presentation of the Government Finance Officers Budget Award and the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada Investments Policy Certification Award

Mr. Burkett recognized the efforts of the Finance Department staff, including Al Juarez, Robert Wagner, Debbie Tarry, Patti Rader, and Steve Oleson, in developing award-winning investment programs and budgets. He explained that the Finance Department was acknowledged by the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada at its annual national conference for the new Investment Policy adopted by the Council in April. The City also won the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2003 budget for the fifth consecutive year.

4. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Chang reported on the success of the Sister Cities Association visit to Boryeong, Korea. He recapped various events associated with the visit and remarked about the hospitality of the host city. He said the agreement between Shoreline and Boryeong is an historic achievement that will create future opportunities for trade and cultural exchange. He noted that Boryeong officials plan to visit Shoreline in early 2004.

Councilmember Hansen also reported on the trip to Korea, noting that Boryeong received the Shoreline delegation in "grand style." With photos taken by an official photographer, he described the activities of the delegation. He noted the possibilities of business and student exchanges.

Councilmember Chang noted that the photographs will be posted on the City's website.

Councilmember Montgomery commented favorably on the progress the City has made on its budgets and thanked City staff for their efforts in writing award-winning budget documents. Councilmember Gustafson concurred.

Deputy Mayor Grossman reported that the Seashore Transportation Committee met in Shoreline this month and continued the discussion about the direction of transportation in the north end. He was encouraged to know that a recent technical analysis performed by King County confirmed the need for rapid transit lanes in Shoreline.

Councilmember Ransom reported that the Citizen Bond Advisory Committee is not recommending that the City go out for a bond election at this time. A subcommittee will continue meeting to further analyze opportunities.

Councilmember Gustafson noted that the Committee will present an official report to Council in the near future.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) Kelly Swenson, Shoreline, thanked the Council, Parks Department, and Shoreline residents for their efforts in installing new playground equipment in three Shoreline Parks. She was particularly pleased with the new equipment at Twin Ponds Park, noting that more families are using the facilities there.

(b) Jim Mackey, Shoreline, thanked the Council for its support of the Aurora Corridor Project. He said the project will improve traffic flow, increase pedestrian safety, benefit the existing business community, and create new business opportunities. He noted that opponents of the project will likely become the primary beneficiaries.

(c) Darlene Feikema, Shoreline, thanked the Council for its efforts in creating a balanced Aurora Corridor project. She said the Council has adapted the project to address the concerns of the Shoreline Merchants Association (SMA) while also holding firm to the overall vision that meets everyone's needs. She said the project will revitalize the business district and create a healthy level of sales tax and other revenues.

(d) Wally Crow, Shoreline, executive director of the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, reported on the successful auction event co-sponsored by the Chamber and other community leaders. He said the funds will be used to continue the mission of the Chamber as well as create a college scholarship fund.

(e) Cindy Ryu, Shoreline, cited 2000 Census data to show that the poverty level has increased in Shoreline since the year 2000. She said people are economically stressed and need basic essential services, not grandiose capital projects. She argued against transferring funds from the operating budget to the capital budget, noting that the Surface Water operating fund and Street Fund for 2004 are considerably less than last year. She said the general capital fund is increased by 418.1% for 2004. She asserted that the City will spend more than Council approved for 2003, and that spending will likely surpass the level that Council will approve for 2004 unless changes are made.

(f) Janet Way, Shoreline, expressed concern about the recent rainfall and the inadequacy of the City's surface water infrastructure. She said Seattle residents are

experiencing massive flooding because much of their water originates from Shoreline's Thornton Creek. She said the good news about floods is that fish thrive, noting that a fisheries biologist identified a large chinook salmon in a local stream during the flood. She opposed reducing the Surface Water budget by 37% (as indicated in the proposed 2004 budget) and said that neighbors would rather see Aurora Corridor Project funds used to address surface water issues and related problems. She advocated reducing the scope of the Aurora Corridor Project.

(g) Dale Wright, Shoreline, asserted that the SMA does not want productive dialogue, but instead wants the City to agree with its plan for the Aurora Corridor. He said the SMA has not compromised on any of its demands since 1999, even though the Council has made numerous compromises along the way. He said Aurora Avenue is as important to the community as it is to the merchants. He asserted that the SMA has refused to honor the community consensus or the democratic process in which it was achieved. He said the Council's responsibility is to seriously consider community input in the process of developing a decision that is in the best interest of the overall community. He concluded by thanking the Council for its support of the community's consensus despite continued criticism and intimidation.

(h) Daniel Mann, Shoreline, said the so-called "democratic process" regarding the Aurora Corridor does not represent the will of many citizens. He said people do not understand why the City insists on spending ten times the amount that Lynnwood spent on its segment of Aurora Avenue. He asserted that the City is spending all of its grant money for the full three-mile project on the first mile. He contended that the City's plan will decrease the tax base, increase cut-through traffic, and create negative socio-economic impacts. He said merchants want a reasonable project done at a responsible cost, but the City has never had an adequate dialogue with the merchants.

(i) Steve Meyer, Shoreline, said he became interested in the Aurora Corridor Project by watching the Council meetings on the City's government access channel. He said as a homeowner and voter, he supports the SMA position and agrees that the Council's Aurora plan is too costly and burdensome. He said he will support Councilmembers who will support a less costly solution to Aurora Avenue.

Deputy Mayor Grossman responded to public comments.

Councilmember Ransom asked Mr. Haines to comment on the coordination effort between Shoreline and the City of Seattle regarding downstream flow.

Mr. Haines said the City is utilizing information generated for the City of Seattle and other adjacent communities as it anticipates the needs in Shoreline vis-a-vis the Surface Water Master Plan (SWMP). He said Shoreline's plan will include strategies that anticipate the effect of stormwater flows on other jurisdictions. He noted that during today's rainfall, the City focused solely on the needs of Shoreline residents. He reiterated that there were several positive outcomes due to the improvements made to the Ronald Bog Basin.

Councilmember Chang expressed satisfaction that the City and the Shorewood Hills Homeowners Association were able to collaborate in completing the ravine piping project there. He felt the area would have flooded if the project had not been completed.

Councilmember Chang asked staff to respond to Mr. Mann's assertion that the City is using all of its grant funding on just the first mile of the project.

Mr. Burkett explained that the City is not using all its grant funding on the first mile, noting that there is additional money allocated for the next phase. Deputy Mayor Grossman said the Aurora Corridor Project will be discussed in greater detail during the budget review process.

6. WORKSHOP ITEMS

(a) Transmittal of the 2004 Proposed Budget

Mr. Burkett provided an overview of the proposed process and schedule to review and adopt the Proposed 2004 City Budget. He said the 2004 budget is balanced in all funds and totals $58.3 million, which is 13.7% more than the 2003 Amended Budget. The City's operating fund expenditures decreased $5 million or 14%, from 2003 to 2004, while the capital expenditures are projected to increase by $12.1 million, or 82.9%. This increase is related to the construction of a City Hall and moving forward with transportation-related projects. He outlined the challenges faced in these difficult economic times and highlighted the major changes in the budget from last year.

Continuing, he said staff followed the two guiding principles for developing the budget: 1) Continually looking at the long-term financial outlook (eliminating dependence on unstable revenue sources and using ongoing resources to fund ongoing expenditures); and 2) Not spending more than the City collects. He pointed out that the City collects much less revenue per capita than other cities, and that a slow sales tax growth rate makes a significant difference in what the City is able to collect.

Continuing, Mr. Burkett highlighted the various revenue sources, expenditures, and City funds. He said the City is in an excellent financial position, despite the slow economy. He pointed out that conservative projections indicate the City will experience budget deficits beginning in 2005. Therefore, Council needs to develop long-term strategies to ensure that expenditures do not outpace revenues. He reiterated that the proposed budget is balanced and includes adequate reserve levels to meet all adopted budget policies. He concluded by thanking Finance Director Debbie Tarry and staff for their efforts in producing a fiscally responsible budget.

Deputy Mayor Grossman asked Councilmembers to identify issues of interest as the proposed budget is discussed. Topics suggested were:

- Comparison of Shoreline's sales tax revenue to neighboring cities (Councilmember Chang)
- Cost for putting street lights on Aurora Avenue (Councilmember Chang)
- Spending for sidewalks (Councilmember Chang)
- Possible property tax levy lid lift (Councilmember Ransom)
- Formation of a citizen budget review committee (Councilmember Gustafson)

Councilmember Ransom asked what alternatives the City pursued regarding employee health insurance. Mr. Burkett responded that the City purchases the least expensive insurance coverage through the Association of Washington Cities, who uses its buying power to get the lowest rates. He said it was unlikely that another company would be able to reduce the rate of insurance increases.

Responding to Council, Mr. Burkett explained that although it appears that expenditures are being reduced by 37% in the Surface Water Management Fund, funds that would have been spent on Surface Water Management will be maintained in the fund balance until the Surface Water Management Study is completed. He said while actual expenses go down for 2004, the fund balance increases by approximately 30%. After the study is completed, Council can then make decisions on how to best utilize these funds.

Deputy Mayor Grossman affirmed that the fund balance is a dedicated reserve of money that can be used on Surface Water Management projects after the study is completed.

(b) Interurban Trail - Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing Alternatives and Recommendation

Kirk McKinley, Aurora Corridor and Interurban Trail Project Manager, said staff is requesting Council direction on type and alignment of the pedestrian bridge for the Interurban Trail crossings at NE 155th Street and Aurora Avenue. He then introduced John MacKenzie of CH2MHill, the Project Manager for the Bridge Alternatives Study. Mr. McKinley provided background on the project and the proposed construction schedule for the trail. He said staff recommends the "loop ramp" option, with a bridge at 155th Street as an add-on, and arch or truss structure type for the bridges.

He went on to describe the public outreach effort, noting that Safeway does not support the Midvale option because of negative business impacts. He said that over 50 people attended the public open house and submitted comments. He said the participants were generally very positive about the project.

Mr. MacKenzie reviewed the bridge structure types, preliminary costing figures, and the advantages and disadvantages of the five alignment alternatives considered at the September Open House:

1) At-Grade Option: bike paths/sidewalks ($2.3 million)
2) Elevated Option: concrete box structure, ($4.5 million)
3) Loop Ramp Option: arch or truss structure ($3.8 million)

4) Westminster Option: steel arch or steel truss ($3.8 million)
5) Midvale Option: truss or arch over Aurora, concrete box or girder over NE 155th ($4.0 million)

Mr. McKinley summarized the presentation by explaining that the loop ramp option utilizing the arch or truss structure most closely meets the evaluation criteria, which include: 1) affordability; 2) safety for trail users; 3) logical route alignment; 4) flexibility for future improvements; 5) provision for at-grade connections; 6) opportunity to express community identity; 7) anticipates future development; and 8) leverages the Aurora Corridor project to construct a shared path. He also shared a letter from the Joshua Green Corporation opposing the Elevated Option because it would create a significant view and access barrier between Aurora Avenue and the "Aurora Triangle" properties. Mr. McKinley said following Council approval, design would likely be completed in early 2004, and construction would commence in 2005 (concurrent with the Aurora Corridor Project).

Councilmember Gustafson expressed a preference for a phased approach, noting that a bridge crossing at NE 155th Street could be delayed until redevelopment occurs in the "Aurora Triangle." He felt the City could work with the property owner on a mutually beneficial solution to that crossing later on.

Councilmember Ransom expressed a preference for the loop ramp alternative utilizing the truss structure type. He also said he was considering a proposition by Councilmember Hansen to cross Aurora Avenue diagonally.

Councilmember Hansen proposed a sixth alternative: a diagonal bridge from the 155th Street bulkhead across Aurora Avenue, over the Chevron Gas Station and along the back side of the commercial properties abutting Aurora Avenue or residential properties facing Midvale, and connecting to the Seattle City Light right-of-way north of Shoreline Family Auto. He felt the loop ramp would not be well-utilized because of the lack of grade separation, noting that pedestrians frequently bypass the NE 130th Street bridge at Aurora Avenue. He felt that grade separation should be one of the main objectives of any bridge crossing. He spoke strongly in favor of the diagonal option.

Councilmember Gustafson felt the diagonal option would eliminate any possible future connection to properties in the Aurora Triangle. He said a phased approach would at least provide the option of working with property owners to build a connection in the future.

Councilmember Hansen noted that property owners oppose the vacation of Westminster Way and are not likely to support the phased approach.

Deputy Mayor Grossman said the loop ramp option does not preclude future development, nor does it prevent Joshua Green properties from connecting to it. He said there are loop ramp crossings in the region that work well, and that Shoreline's bridge will function differently from the NE 130th Street example.

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Councilmember Montgomery was intrigued with Councilmember Hansen's idea, but was inclined toward the loop ramp option. She said not building a bridge over NE 155th Street could cause pedestrian safety problems.

Councilmember Hansen reemphasized the importance of having grade separations at both crossings (NE 155th Street and Aurora Avenue).

Councilmember Chang felt diagonal crossings could cause visibility and safety concerns. Mr. MacKenzie replied that the structure would need to be high enough to allow an adequate sight distance for traffic signals. Councilmember Chang surmised that a higher bridge would require longer ramps, thereby increasing the cost of the project.

Mr. Haines cautioned against speculating about specific designs. He said the bridge would not necessarily have to be higher because traffic signals could conceivably be incorporated into the design itself.

Responding to Councilmember Chang, Mr. McKinley confirmed that if an elevated option is selected, the Interurban Trail would require modification because it comes down to grade level at NE 155th Street. Mr. McKinley noted that the elevated option includes those costs.

Responding to Councilmember Chang, Mr. McKinley said the property owners were mainly concerned that an elevated option would obstruct views to the businesses located on their property.

Deputy Mayor Grossman envisioned the overpass as an opportunity to bring the trail down to grade level to allow trail users access to the retail area. He expressed a preference for the truss structure type reminiscent of the earlier Interurban Trail.

Mr. Haines felt that the selected option should include a connection between the neighborhood and commerce. He said while it is important that the Interurban Trail maintain its continuity, allowing people access to commerce will be a long-term added value.

Councilmember Hansen felt that completion of the Interurban Trail, as opposed to access to commerce, is the main objective of the project.

Mr. Haines explained that while it may not be the highest priority, staff's analysis included consideration of the needs of the adjacent neighborhood.

Councilmember Gustafson felt that the preferred option should include access to Shoreline Community College. He expressed support for the loop ramp option since the elevated option exceeds available funds.

Councilmember Hansen said he would support additional allocations if needed in order to do the job right.

Councilmember Chang felt the loop ramp design to be the most logical option, in light of business concerns and budget constraints.

Mr. McKinley reiterated staff's recommendation. There was more discussion of both Councilmember Hansen's option and the loop ramp option. Deputy Mayor Grossman asked for more information about costs with the diagonal option. There was general consensus to pursue the loop ramp option, with Councilmember Hansen expressing his continued opposition.

Mr. McKinley pointed out that staff considered a design similar to Councilmember Hansen's proposal. However, private property issues were one of the deterrents to pursuing such an option.

(c) Parks Naming
(1) Connie King Skate Park
(2) Twin Ponds Park "Trail of Cedars"

Wendy Barry, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director, advised the Council of proposals to name sub-elements of two parks and requested adoption of the names as recommended by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Board. The first proposal is to name the skate park at Paramount School Park the "Connie King Skate Board Park" and the second proposal is to name the walking trail that extends from Meridian Ave. N to the south pond at Twin Ponds Park the "Trail of Cedars." The PRCS Board reviewed these proposals at the January 2003 meeting. In accordance with City policy, action was tabled for six months. She said the policy requires the PRCS Department to develop facility signage using the name upon the adoption of any facility name by the City Council.

Councilmember Ransom asked if cedar trees were the predominant species on the trail at Twin Ponds Park. Ms. Barry replied that cedars are the most visible species, and that the PRCS Board concurs with the recommendation.

Councilmember Chang expressed reservations about naming a park after a living person. Councilmembers understood his concerns, but Councilmember Hansen pointed out that the naming was of a sub-element and not the entire park.

Councilmembers Ransom and Montgomery pointed out that Connie King was a major force in the creation of the skate park. Councilmember Ransom felt it was fitting to reward a person while she was still alive. There was consensus to concur with the naming proposals.

7. CONTINUED PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) Janet Way, Shoreline, felt the pedestrian bridge options for the Interurban Trail could provide opportunities for creating more open space. She said the project could also provide a potential solution for stormwater drainage problems in that area. She reiterated her earlier concern about the change in funding for the Surface Water budget.

(b) Tim Peterson, Shoreline, representing the Holiday Resort Community Association, asked if the Holiday Resort mobile home property is being considered as a potential site for City Hall, and if Council has made a decision regarding this site. He asked when a decision might be announced regarding this issue. He concluded by asking if the 2004-2009 Capital Improvement Plan includes any money for affordable housing for seniors and the disabled.

(c) Daniel Mann, Shoreline, said the Shoreline Merchants Association's main appeal issue was that the Aurora Corridor Project never considered the cumulative impacts of the entire three-mile project. He said the City incorrectly told the court that the Aurora Corridor project is only a one-mile project, and therefore justified itself in not doing a cumulative impact analysis. On another topic, he felt the $500,000 allocated for sidewalks in the budget does not adequately address what is a high priority need in the City. He said people have waited a long time for sidewalks, particularly around schools.

Deputy Mayor Grossman responded to public comments. He reiterated that funding for Surface Water is not being reduced, but is going into a reserve account for future use. He clarified that no decision has been made regarding the siting of City Hall. He pointed out that the City passed a tax-incentive program for affordable housing, and that a new housing development is proposed to be built in the North City area.

Mr. Burkett clarified that the project is proposed to be an 88-unit development for low-to-moderate income families.

Responding to Mr. Mann, Deputy Mayor Grossman noted that although the SMA is appealing the decision, the court ruled in favor of the City on every point. It was also his understanding that sidewalks could be found at all Shoreline schools.

8. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:55 p.m., Deputy Mayor Grossman declared the meeting adjourned.

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Sharon Mattioli, City Clerk