

MINUTES

DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
February 16, 2010
City Hall: 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Floyd called the Regular Meeting of the Decatur City Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 2010.

PRESENT: Mayor Floyd, Mayor pro tem Baskett, Commissioners Boykin, Cunningham, and Garrett; and, City Manager Merriss.

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of February 1, 2010 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Boykin, second by Commissioner Garrett, and all voting “aye”.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS.

Mayor Floyd opened the meeting for public comment.

Tommy Watkins, 211 Sycamore Drive, requested that the proposed extension of the “No Parking” zone in the 200 block of Sycamore Drive be reduced to 41 feet instead of the proposed 55 feet so that he would not have to relocate his mailbox.

There were no other comments from the public.

AUTHORIZATION FOR LEGAL REVIEW FOR ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS.

Planning Director Amanda Thompson made a request on behalf of the Zoning Board of Appeals that the City Commission authorize a legal review of the City’s zoning ordinance as it applied to the current use of the property at 444 Sycamore Drive by the Georgia Mental Health Network as a Peer Support and Recovery Respite Center by an outside attorney who specialized in zoning and land use law selected by the City Attorney, Bryan Downs. Ms. Thompson stated that regardless of whether an appeal was ultimately filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the use of this property, the information provided through the review would be helpful as various potential changes to the City’s land development regulations and zoning ordinances were considered after completion of the 2010 strategic plan.

In response to a question from Commissioner Garrett, City Manager Merriss stated that there was a line item in the budget for City legal expenses and that there were sufficient funds in the account to cover this request.

Mayor pro tem Baskett stated that he thought it was a good idea to get an outside opinion on this matter and that he appreciated the Zoning Board of Appeals request.

Mayor Floyd noted that while the City Commission was authorizing the expending funds for the review, this was the last action that the City Commission would take on the issue and that the City Commission would not be involved in any appeal process.

On a motion by Commissioner Cunningham, second by Commissioner Boykin, and all voting “aye”, the request was approved.

EXTENDING THE “NO PARKING” ZONE IN THE 200 BLOCK OF SYCAMORE DRIVE.

By consensus, consideration of this item was tabled until the March 1, 2010 City Commission meeting.

CHANGE ORDER – ASPHALT COMPOSITE CROSSWALKS INSTALLATION.

Assistant City Manager David Junger recommended approval of a change order in the amount of \$9,730.60 for additional work performed for the installation of the asphalt composite sidewalks. Mr. Junger stated that the crosswalk installation and striping of all project crosswalks was complete. Mr. Junger stated that field changes were required in order to create the proper alignments with existing curb cut ramps and that the width of the crosswalks was also increased in order to have a three foot wide smooth surface along the center of the crosswalk to make use easier by persons in wheelchairs and visually impaired pedestrians.

In response to a question from Mayor Floyd, Mr. Junger stated that the smooth surface was not a requirement since the stamped pattern was already in compliance with ADA standards.

Mayor pro tem Baskett exclaimed that the work looked great.

Commissioners Garrett and Boykin thanked staff for including input from PEDS on the design.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Baskett, second by Commission Boykin, and all voting “aye”, the change order was approved.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

Deputy City Manager Hugh Saxon recommended approval of an agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for federal transportation enhancement (TE) funding for the West Ponce de Leon Avenue-West Trinity Place Bicycle Lane improvements. Mr. Saxon stated that once the agreement was executed by GDOT, the City would receive authorization to advertise for bids and proceed with construction. Mr. Saxon stated that the agreement required the City to provide a local share of \$65,465 to match the \$261,860 in TE funding for the project and that funding was available from the capital bond fund.

In response to a question from Commissioner Boykin, Mr. Saxon stated that the it would probably take a couple of months to get started but once construction began it would not take long to complete the project.

On a motion by Commissioner Boykin, second by Commissioner Garrett, and all voting "aye", Resolution R-10-02 was adopted authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the West Ponce de Leon Avenue- West Trinity Place Bicycle Lane project.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.

Walter Kellar, 412 Oakland Street, presented the City Commission with information on creating a community garden in a floodplain area along Oakland Street.

City Manager Merriss stated that Mr. Junger would be the staff contact.

Gardner Neely, 305 South Columbia Drive, requested information on the completion of the bike plan.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

Mayor Floyd read the Planning Commission agenda for March 9, 2010.

On behalf of the Decatur Arts Alliance, Assistant Director of Community and Economic Development Linda Harris requested use of an artistic, stylized version of the City of Decatur logo for the 2010 Arts Festival Poster. Ms. Harris stated that the poster artist was James Dean and that the logo was a very small portion of the artwork on the poster. Ms. Harris stated that all proceeds from the sale of the poster would go towards producing the Decatur Arts Festival and that while the Decatur Arts Alliance would own the original artwork that they would place it in the City's public art collection to hang in one of the public buildings.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Baskett, second by Commissioner Cunningham, and all voting "aye", the Decatur Arts Alliance was given permission to use the City of Decatur logo as requested.

Ms. Thompson stated that Arbor Day was celebrated nationally in February and requested that Mayor Floyd declare February 16, 2010 as Arbor Day in the City of Decatur. Ms. Thompson noted that such a proclamation would assist the City in its application to become a Tree City.

Ms. Thompson introduced Neil Norton, a City resident; arborist; and a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, who presented a report on the street tree inventory he helped coordinate.

Mr. Norton stated that there were 153 street trees along Ponce de Leon Avenue from North Candler Street to the Post Office that were surveyed and inventoried by Ms.

Thompson, an intern and himself; and, that the inventory was assigned an approximate value of \$340,000.

In response to a question from Commissioner Boykin, Mr. Norton stated that the team was able to collect data on the condition of the trees and that 96% were ranked as being in excellent or good condition.

City Manager Merriss stated that the City would be conducting its 3rd citizen survey in March 2010 and encouraged those who would be randomly selected to participate.

Commissioner Garrett commended the Police Department's Community Relations Specialist Juanchella Grooms on organizing a Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.) town hall meeting at the Decatur Housing Authority that was very well attended.

Commissioner Garrett noted that Trees Atlanta would be hosting a tree planting in Oakhurst on Saturday, February 20th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

Commissioner Boykin congratulated Mr. Norton and Ms. Thompson on their tree inventory work and stated that he was excited to learn that the West Ponce-West Trinity bike lane project would be soon underway.

Commissioner Cunningham stated that the Decatur Business Association's February meeting would feature a Black History presentation on Tuesday, February 23rd at the Old Courthouse on the Square.

Commissioner Cunningham stated that the Oakhurst Wine Crawl would be Saturday, February 27th and that Francine Reed would be performing at Eddie's Attic on Sunday, February 28th.

Mayor pro tem Baskett thanked Mr. Norton for sharing the tree inventory report.

Mayor Floyd noted that he was serving on the Governor's Census Committee and encouraged all residents to complete the census form when it begins arriving in mailboxes on March 15, 2010.

Mayor Floyd noted that the Boy Scouts of America would be celebrating their 100th anniversary by planting a tree at the Courthouse.

Mayor Floyd stated that Lt. Governor Casey Cagle would be touring Decatur High School and attending the Rotary Club meeting on Friday, February 19th.

Mayor Floyd stated that he had attended a reception for Carter Wilson who would be ending a 30 year coaching career at the end of the basketball season.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Peggy Merriss
Acting City Clerk