

**MINUTES OF WORK SESSION
OF THE NEWPORT NEWS CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN THE 10TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
2400 WASHINGTON AVENUE**

June 26, 2018

4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: McKinley L. Price, DDS; Sharon P. Scott, MPA; Tina L. Vick; Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury; Herbert H. Bateman, Jr.; Sandra N. Cherry, D. Min.; and Marcellus L. Harris III-----7

ABSENT: -----0

OTHERS PRESENT: Cynthia Rohlf; Collins L. Owens; Mabel Washington Jenkins; David Jenkins; Wanda Pierre; Darlene Bradberry; Lisa Cipriano; Joe Moore; Susan Goodwin; Florence Kingston; Carol Meredith; Sheila McAllister; Britta Ayers; Flora Chioros; Brian Pierce, Kobi Henson; Adrian Whitcomb; Rena Crabill; Everett Skipper; Louis Martinez; Dawn Barber; James McElheney, Alan Archer; David Freeman; Jerri Wilson; Cleder Jones; Kim Lee; Eoghan Miller; Zina Middleton; and Josh Reyes

I. Closed Meeting

(4:05 p.m. – 4:53 p.m.)

II. Comprehensive Plan Briefing

Ms. Cynthia Rohlf, City Manager, reminded that the Comprehensive Plan had been updated with staff and community engagement. She noted it had been an extensive process. The Planning Department had prepared a briefing to be presented to Council for additional input, amendments, and to answer any questions. The next step would be to advertise for a public hearing and action on the comprehensive plan. She introduced Ms. Sheila McAllister, Director, Department of Planning, who noted that the Comprehensive Plan had been in the works for five (5) years, and a good product had been produced as a result. She introduced Ms. Britta Ayers, Manager of Comprehensive Planning, Department of Planning to provide the presentation (a copy of the presentation, “One City, One Future Comprehensive Plan 2040, June 26, 2018,” is attached and made a part of these minutes).

Ms. Ayers took the opportunity to thank the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee (CPCAC) and the Comprehensive Planning Team, all the City staff from various departments, and the residents and other stakeholders who participated in the planning

process. She advised that a great deal of work had gone into developing the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Ayers indicated that the Comprehensive Plan had been some years in the making and would provide information from the beginning and how that approach led to the Plan's structure. She would also provide a summary of the findings and recommendations, along with the proposed future land use and transportation maps.

Ms. Ayers noted the One City; One Future Comprehensive Plan was as follows:

- A New Beginning
 - Review mandated by law – The Code of Virginia required that localities review their Comprehensive Plan every five (5) years to determine if updates were required.
 - Changing conditions – Late 2012 – early 2013, the Planning staff reviewed the plan and concluded that an update was warranted. The adopted comprehensive plan was written prior to the recession, sequestration, and other events that made it necessary to re-examine existing conditions and our strategies moving forward.
 - Changes in best practices and technologies related to comprehensive planning as the plan became more strategic, cohesive and less voluminous. Change in how people consume information - The comprehensive plan also became more graphic.
 - Opportunity to streamline and refresh in order to make it more users friendly.

Councilwoman Woodbury questioned whether other localities had moved to this type of comprehensive plan layout. Ms. Ayers replied that many of localities were starting to move in that direction.

Ms. Ayers noted that the structure and length of the Comprehensive Plan had changed; however, they did not begin in a vacuum and recognized all of the hard work that went into developing the first Framework for the Future and its subsequent updates. She indicated staff built on the Framework for the Future which led to many significant investments over the years – both public and private. Staff changed the planning process, but it was important to note that the new approach to the Comprehensive Plan remained citizen-centric.

- Community Engagement from June 2013 – May 2015 with the engagement process continued with ongoing community workshops and presentations:
 - 1,038 Community Surveys completed
 - Three (3) Community Visioning Workshops
 - Two (2) CPCAC Visioning Workshops
 - Fourteen (14) CPCAC
 - Sixteen (16) Focus Groups
 - Eighteen (18) Stakeholder Roundtables and Interviews
 - 81 Events
 - Over 731 People attended
 - Over 69 hours of presentations
 - 3,035 Comments Received
 - 43 Locations Citywide
 - Six (6) Methods of input

Vice Mayor Vick inquired about the meeting that was held in the Lee Hall area which was small in numbers, but was impressive with the funding raised to keep the Lee Hall Depot project moving. Ms. Ayers replied one of the recommendations in the implementation plan was to work with management to create a list of proprieties.

Ms. Ayers noted that the Plan process was comprised of five (5) steps which included citizen involvement:

1. Plan Initiation
2. Data Collection and Analysis
3. Plan Preparation
4. Plan Review and Adoption
5. Plan Implementation

Ms. Ayers advised that the Process and Structure:

- Identified challenges with existing plan
- Researched best practices
- Determined we needed to:
 - More clearly promote sustainable development
 - Recognized the City as a complex system
 - Better aligned goals and strategies between elements
 - Established accountable implementation

Ms. Ayers advised that a Citizen Advisory Committee guided the planning process. The committee was comprised of appointed officials, residents, and other stakeholders representing a cross-section of the city's population. Members included representatives from the Planning Commission, residents who had participated in previous Framework for the Future planning activities, business owners, and representatives from major institutions.

Ms. Ayers noted that one of the first actions was to examine the existing plan and recommend a new structure. As a result, the committee moved from discussing topics as separate elements or chapters, to organizing assessments and recommendations around themes. This allowed a more clear discussion and understanding of interactions and interrelationships of the various focus areas. It allowed the committee to have more clearly aligned goals and strategies, and made it less challenging to establish priorities for implementation. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan had an implementation plan with priorities for action to monitor progress. This updated Plan also required the committee to address sea-level rise and recurrent flooding, along with coastal resource management to meet new state requirements.

Ms. Ayers stated the committee had researched best practices, reviewed APA research and recently completed plans from across the country. Eventually, the committee determined that a plan was needed that recognized the City was a complex system of physical, biological and social components. There was a lot of interaction and interdependencies between the various components, and all evolved and adapted to change.

Ms. Ayers noted the Six (6) Chapters comprised of the Process and Structure was as follows:

1. Introduction
 - Would tell the reader the purpose and need for the comprehensive plan, and outlined the planning process.
2. Existing Conditions
 - Was theme-based and described where the City was; what trends, challenges and opportunities were faced; what concerns our citizens had shared; and what it all meant in light of where the City wanted to be in 2040.
3. Legacy
 - Described previous adopted plans and studies. It also identified actions that had been taken to implement those visions and incorporated recommendations into the Comprehensive Plan.

4. The Dream

- Described the vision for Newport News in 2040. Laid out goals and objectives that created the roadmap for the future land use and transportation plan and was based on the themes established in Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

5. Future Land Use and Transportation

- Was also theme-based and presented the long-range vision for land use and development over the next 20 years. This chapter also includes the future land use and transportation maps.

6. Implementation

- Described the tools for implementation, how the City would monitor actions, and lists the short, medium, and long-range actions needed to implement the plan. This was a new element of the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Ayers noted that the Process and Structure plans for the City were based on six (6) themes as follows:

- **A Prosperous and Resilient City** explored the economic vitality and whether the City could bounce back in the face of adversity.
- **A Sustainable City** looked at the growth pattern and its impact on the ecosystem and delivery of services. It examined ways that could be more responsibly use of resources to meet current needs without compromising the needs of future generations.
- **An Accessible City** examined the transportation and housing choices and opportunities.
- **A Healthy and Safe City** explored how the provided services and facilities to our citizens and promoted livability.
- **A City that Respects its Uniqueness** acknowledged the history and examined ways to preserve, promote, and celebrate our natural and cultural assets.
- **A City that Balanced Good Places and New Spaces** explored how the City could preserve and respect the old while inviting new investments.

Ms. Ayers noted the themes integrated elements from the Framework for the Future 2030 and aligned with the City's Strategic Priorities and Regional Strategic Priorities.

Ms. Ayers indicated the Vision for the City was crafted by the Citizen Advisory Committee. Together with the goals and objectives, it was the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Newport News is economically strong, culturally diverse, and environmentally responsible with an exceptional quality of life, making it the preferred place in the southeast region of the United States to live, learn, work, and play.

Ms. Ayers further explained the process and structure plans for the City were based on six (6) themes to introduce the major take-aways from the existing conditions assessment and how those translated into the goals by theme. Newport News remained the economic engine of the Greater Peninsula. Employment growth continued to be in the research and development, advanced manufacturing, traditional manufacturing, food processing and distribution sectors; however, the annual population growth rate in the past decade had been less than 1 percent.

A Prosperous and Resilient City – assesses demographics, social characteristics, economic vitality, education, and delivery of urban services and infrastructure for Newport News.

- Existing Conditions
 - Employment Growth
 - Aging and Slowly Growing Population
 - Many Single Parent Households
 - Low Median Household Income where 15 percent of the population lived below the poverty line
- Critical Points of Consideration
 - Target Transit Oriented Development
 - Embrace Community Diversity would be a benefit for businesses, which could recruit from a more diverse and possibly more innovative workforce.
 - Leverage Funding for Strategic Initiatives
 - Support for Low Income and Homeless. Children living in single-parent households were more likely to live in poverty than children of two parent families. With the known impacts of childhood poverty on academic performance and the opportunities for long-term employment success, the City may need to explore additional programs to intervene, redirect and prevent these children from becoming statistics. Homelessness continued to be a challenge and a cost for the City and region. Permanent affordable housing solutions and support services were needed to reduce the homeless population and prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.
- Goals

- Economic Resiliency
- Reimagine and Rebrand
- Abate blight and Enhance the Public Realm

A Sustainable City – explores land use, development, natural resources and the ecosystem to establish assets, and challenges to our ongoing efforts to balance people, profit and the environment.

- Existing Conditions
 - Suburban Growth Pattern
 - Limited Vacant Land – the City was practically built out (about 95%).
 - Stormwater and Flooding Management – Hampton Roads was highly vulnerable to damages from storm surge and potential sea level rise. Although Newport News would not be as impacted by sea level rise as other localities in the region, there were areas that experienced recurrent flooding.
 - Additional Greenways Needed
- Critical Points of consideration
 - Redevelop and Infill would need to explore opportunities for development to meet future demand especially in those sections of the City identified as planning opportunity areas. These areas provided opportunities for neighborhood growth and improvement, which should be guided by an area plan.
 - Sustainability Education
 - City Resiliency
 - Energy Study and Adopted Policy
- Goals
 - Sustain, Balance, Go Greener
 - Cooperate

An Accessible City – examines conditions for housing and transportation to establish how these systems are interconnected and what challenges the City faces in providing choice and accessibility.

- Existing Conditions
 - Insufficient Roadway Capacity to support the growing population throughout the region, as well as increased truck traffic, port activity, and miles traveled for work and recreation.
 - Aging Infrastructure

- Car-Dependent city with limited access to public transportation, bicycle routes, and sufficient sidewalks for commuting.
- Lack of Affordable Housing in stable neighborhoods was a challenge in several areas of Newport News.
- Critical Points of consideration
 - Identify Alternative Funding for transportation projects, and identify sources of funding and reprioritize investments.
 - Increase Multi-modal Transit was the only alternative to provides choice for our residents and more efficient and safer connectivity in the future.
 - Agglomerate Job Centers and workers remained dispersed. The City needed to increase land use density in key locations to concentrate people near jobs, services and transit to reduce traffic volume.
 - Create Affordable Housing strategy that strengthens existing commitments to income-assisted and accessible housing, preserves the overall existing stock, and provide greater choices at all income levels and more diverse neighborhoods.
- Goals
 - Expand Opportunities
 - Revitalize
 - Connect

Councilwoman Woodbury inquired about multi-modal transit? Ms. Ayers replied the Bus Rapid Transit would rework the feeder system transit lines - look at areas where there were no sidewalks and to add bike routes. Councilwoman Woodbury questioned whether that required a dedicated lane. Ms. Ayers replied most would be used in the right-of-ways that were already available, and would be done in phrases. Councilwoman Woodbury questioned about bike share and whether that would be an option. Ms. Ayers stated there was not yet a demand for bike share. The bike share program took time and education, and people who were used to using the program in other areas.

A Healthy and Safe City – analyzes housing and transportation opportunities and choices provided to citizens.

- Existing Conditions
 - Medical Care Assistance
 - Access to Fresh and Healthy Food
 - Additional Neighborhood Parks
 - Facilities Upkeep
- Critical Points of consideration

- Increase Diversity of Residents
- Strategic Use for Vacant Land, opportunities to expand traditional parks and recreation facilities continued to decrease. The City of Newport News may need to explore non-traditional strategies for acquiring additional green space and recreational opportunities.
- Enhance Community Facilities by exploring alternatives to address the condition of our community facilities, which may include collocating services/programs to reduce the number of facilities to be operated and maintained.
- Goals
 - Collaborate and Protect the City's assets and opportunities.

A City that Respects its Uniqueness – examined how the City preserved, promoted and celebrated its natural, historical and cultural assets.

- Existing Conditions
 - Many Unique Assets
 - Historic Preservation
 - Enhanced Cultural Amenities as the City continued to promote cultural events through festivals, performing arts, museums, and other creative activities.
- Critical Points of consideration
 - Balance Redevelopment and Preservation
 - Market Cultural and Historic Assets
 - Create Historic Resources List
 - Revitalize Strategic Areas
- Goals
 - Preserve and Celebrate
 - Celebrate and Promote Cultural Assets
 - Conserve and Enhance Waterfront

A City that Balances Good Places and New Spaces - explored land use patterns and the character of established neighborhoods to understand how to balance respect for the old while making room for the new.

- Existing Conditions
 - Important to Revitalize and Redevelop - the primary strategies to accommodate future growth and develop a more livable city with a great sense of place.

- Lack Strong Neighborhoods with lack of activity centers, open space, and neighborhood associations.
- Public Space Design Improvements - While Newport News had made significant investments to improve its visual image, there were still many areas of the City where design and appearance had been neglected. The physical appearance of the gateways, major corridors and public spaces had an effect economic sustainability and shapes the City's livability.
- Critical Points of consideration
 - Revitalize and Redevelop Key Areas
 - Strengthen Neighborhood Identity
 - Utilize Urban Design
 - Implement Transit Oriented Design
- Goals
 - Stabilize, Enhance, and Grow

Vice Mayor Vick indicated, while the housing stock aged, she believed the Council should look at the type of programs and to have funding available for individuals with income restrictions at a higher threshold and not letting neighborhoods go down. Ms. Ayers replied there were limited programs, but some funds may be available to work together on different strategies in the well-established neighborhoods before falling into disrepair.

Councilwoman Woodbury reminded there were three community centers in the South District, one community center in the North District, and no community center in the Central District. Ms. Ayers stated that had not reviewed in detail, but looked at different community facilities (i.e. library, recreation, police, and fire). She stated there were a number of old commercial strip malls that could possibly be repurposed, but more information was needed.

Councilman Harris reminded that a sporting facility, John B. Todd Stadium was in the Central District while that the North and South Districts had none available. Ms. Ayers suggested looking at opportunities with the school division and possibly to sharing facilities.

Ms. Ayers noted that the Proposed Future Land use and Transportation Map included two maps, which guided future land use and transportation investment (a copy of the presentation, "One City, One Future Comprehensive Plan 2040, Proposed Future Land Use and Transportation Map, pages 15 - 17" is attached and made a part of these minutes).

Ms. Ayers stated that Chapter 5 of the One City, One Future Comprehensive Plan 2040 laid out the definition for each of the land use categories, and provided an overview of the Planning Opportunity Areas which were areas that required special planning considerations that

would be captured in area plans, providing additional analysis and direction to meet the needs of each target area. The Strategies and Priorities were listed in table format at the end of the chapter. These strategies and priorities tied into the implementation actions in Chapter 6. She advised, by splitting the map in two, other changes were made to help with appearance and legibility of the maps.

- Proposed Future Land Use and Transportation Plan
 - **Planning Opportunity Areas Identified***
 - Fort Eustis was identified as Government/Military
 - Land Use categories are grouped on legend
 - **Green Foundation property identified as natural area/open space***
 - Gradients for land use color have been intensified
 - **Mixed use areas re-evaluated***
 - Land use designation now parcel specific
 - **Choice Neighborhoods Initiative identified***
 - Schools are identified as community facilities
 - **Airport reflects the recommendations of the Airport Master Plan***
 - **Identified the proposed Bus Rapid Transit line***
 - Streets are gray in transportation map
 - **Transportation identified as under construction, new, or widening***

***Major Changes**

Ms. Ayers informed that the Implementation included the following:

- Ordinances
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Area Plans
- Action Plans categorized actions as annual, continuous, short-range, mid-range, and long-range. Identified responsible agencies for implementation, described the type of action (planning, programming, implementation), and identified whether capital funds were required to complete the action.

Ms. Ayers indicated the implementation of the comprehensive plan would begin once the City Council had the public hearing and take action, also review the plan once a year moving forward to better track of the goals.

Ms. Ayers indicated that the Planning Commission recommended endorsing One City, One Future Comprehensive Plan 2040, omitting “Under Study” on City Farm property to Park as a land use designation.

Councilwoman Cherry stated having been part of the process and looked at all the hard work. She thanked all the citizens and stakeholders for bearing with the process. Thanked the Planning staff and all the City Departments for staying the course. She stated when she was member of the Planning Commission, each member was required to go through a course and remember that the City of Newport News Framework for Future 2030 was explained used as a great Comprehensive Plan for the State and that spoke volumes to our City.

City Manager Rohlf stated the next step would be to hold a public hearing on July 10, 2018 or August 14, 2018.

III. Comments / Ideas / Suggestions

City Clerk Jenkins reminded of the Grand Opening of the Piggly Wiggly Grocery Store (Brooks Crossing, 3101 Jefferson Avenue) on Wednesday, June 27, 2018 at 8:30 a.m.

Councilwoman Cherry informed of an incident where a citizen was struck by a vehicle on Harpersville Road. She questioned how long it would be before sidewalks were installed. City Manager replied there was a report on the status of the sidewalk installation and its status.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated that Berkley Village (senior and disabled residents) could possibly qualify for federal funding to assist with the cost of the sidewalk project through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Mr. Skipper replied he would research the matter.

Councilwoman Scott informed of deplorable conditions on the roads near the Lee Hall Depot railroad crossing that was scattered with damaging potholes. City Manager Rohlf deferred to Mr. Skipper who replied that he would contact the Department of Public Works to work on the potholes and road right away. He indicated there were other projects slated for that area: create signals, make changes on the Warwick Boulevard side where Yorktown Road tied in. There was a longer term project on the Lee Hall Depot side and on the Lee Hall and Yorktown Road side. The challenge was with the CSX right-of-way and land issues, but the Engineering staff was working through those concerns.

Councilwoman Scott informed of a citizen concern's residents having a difficult time crossing at Pilot House Drive and Jefferson Avenue, as there were no cross walks. Mr. Skipper replied that staff would look into the matter.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated potholes were a problem throughout the City and needed to be addressed.

Councilwoman Woodbury thanked everyone who worked on the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Harris said he received a call from a youth league and inquired about the fees for the use of the fields at City facilities. There were organizations that used the fields throughout the weeks. There should be some discussion with those organizations to receive discounts or no fees because they used the fields more frequently. City Manager Rohlf stated she was working on the request that she received via email and would report back to him on this matter.

Councilman Harris inquired about a resident whose vehicle was shot, during a shooting in the neighborhood and whether there were services available to assist with repairs. City Manager Rohlf replied that the Victim/Witness Program may have funds available; the resident would need to contact the Commonwealth Attorney's office.

Councilwoman Scott questioned whether there was a different fee for residents versus non-residents for usage of the City facilities. City Manager Rohlf replied that staff would research the matter.

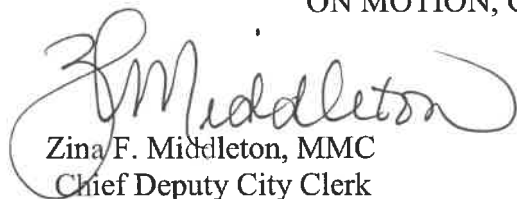
City Manager Rohlf advised that there would be a new business item on the Regular City Council agenda to reallocate funds to the Newport News Public Schools FY 2014 Capital Project appropriation for Gatewood PEEP Roof. It was requested that City Council reallocate the unspent balance of \$270,016.57 appropriated to the Discovery STEM Academy Project and re-appropriate the funds to the Gatewood PEEP building roof project, leaving a balance of \$109,370.57 to be applied to the Telecommunications building roof, once the School Division determined the next course of action for work needed for the facility's roof.

City Manager Rohlf reminded of the Swearing-in Ceremony for Police Chief Steve Drew scheduled Thursday, June 28, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. at the Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center (2410 Wickham Avenue).


Councilwoman Woodbury questioned why the City Council July Organizational meeting had to be at 10:00 a.m. City Attorney replied that the Charter mandated 10:00 a.m. He stated City Council could ask the General Assembly to change the language. Councilwoman Woodbury requested to add the request to the legislative package.

Councilwoman Cherry stated that the grass in the curb on the street next to the former Marine building was so high that it looked like another yard. City Manager Rohlf replied she would have staff look into the matter.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
ON MOTION, COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 6:13 P.M.



Zina F. Middleton, MMC
Chief Deputy City Clerk



McKinley L. Price
Mayor
Presiding Officer

A true copy, teste:

City Clerk