

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor John LeTourneau
Councilmember Nadine Heinrich
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Jeff Menth
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby
Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LeTourneau called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Discuss Renaming Central Park

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed the staff report.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that Ron Schara approached him a few months ago with the idea of looking at the name of Central Park to be more identifying to the community and the area.

Ron Schara stated that he has lived in Ramsey for 25 years, providing background information on his knowledge of the area and Central Park. He commented that one of the most renowned competitive women's trap shooters, Loral I. Delaney, lives nearby the park and suggested that the park be named Loral I Park. He reviewed some of the accomplishments of Ms. Delaney.

Mayor LeTourneau asked how long the Delaneys and Armstrongs have been part of the community.

Mr. Schara stated that her family has a long history in Ramsey, noting that Armstrong Boulevard was named for Ms. Delaney's father, Fred Armstrong. He believed that the City should take the opportunity to recognize people that have made huge contributions to Minnesota and Ramsey, and in Ms. Delaney's case, nationally.

Councilmember Menth asked what action would be necessary to change the name of a park.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained the process that the Park and Recreation Commission is developing for the naming of public facilities. He stated that currently there is not a rigid procedure in place.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she recognizes the park as Central Park. She appreciated the knowledge that was shared about Ms. Delaney. She suggested keeping the Central Park name but placing Delaney in front of that, Delaney Central Park. She asked if the donation of the park land included any naming stipulations.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that he did not know of a stipulation or reason that name was chosen, other than convenience.

Mr. Schara stated that with the land being donated by Federal Ammunition, it would seem to link together well with Ms. Delaney. He provided input on the increasing participation of high school students in trap shooting.

Councilmember Kuzma asked what would be required financially to change the signage and information that is circulated with the park name. He asked how that would be funded.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that he does not have that cost information. He stated that the sign on the existing monument sign could be replicated for \$5,000 to \$10,000 or this could be an opportunity to update the monument sign. He advised of possible funding that could be used for that purpose.

Councilmember Menth stated that perhaps Federal Cartridge would be interested in sponsoring the sign, with a mention that the sign is sponsored by the company.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that when she read the case, she felt hesitant to rename the park as it is the most well-known park in the City. She stated that after reading the information about the distinguished resident, she is open to the idea and would be willing to move this forward.

Councilmember Specht thanked Mr. Schara for the information and attending tonight. He echoed the comments of Councilmember Heinrich that he too was first hesitant, but is now open to the idea.

Mayor LeTourneau confirmed the consensus of the Council to move this request forward for further review.

The Council thanked Mr. Schara for attending tonight.

2.02: Review 2020 Strategic Plan Final Draft

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Riley stated that he recalled a discussion of repurposing the old town hall, but the document shows it being used as a welcome center, which he did not think was accurate.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that the language could be changed, explaining that the intent was to improve the aesthetic and attempt to find a purpose.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that perhaps that could be used as a historical center for the community.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that perhaps the focus be the restoration of the exterior and the repurposed use could be determined at a later date.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she believed that the intent for 2020 was to improve the landscaping.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that staff will review the possibility of grants for improving the exterior/building and noted that if a partner was found for a repurposed use, that could be another potential source of funding.

It was the consensus of the Council to change that language to “Improve the image (landscape and/or exterior enhancement) of the Historical Town Hall to improve the appearance of the Highway 47 corridor.”

Councilmember Riley referenced number five and stated that the previous action was attempting to ensure that the new apartments are maintained and remain high quality. He commented that the new action item appears to be very different.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill explained that goal five was based on a discussion related to planning for multi-family housing. He explained that number six was changed to add crimefree multi-housing. He stated that if the goal is to include exterior maintenance, that could be added to number six.

Councilmember Riley suggested adding more definition to high quality. He explained that having a crimefree facility does not ensure that the building is well maintained. He stated that he would like to have all of the apartment owners work together to keep each other at a high standard.

Councilmember Heinrich asked for input from staff related to clutter on patios and other blighted elements.

Police Chief Katers explained that the crimefree multi-family program itself has a primary focus of preventing crime in multi-family housing units. He commented that blighted properties would fall more into property maintenance and code enforcement. He believed that the issues would be separate.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill provided an updated title for number six with additional key outcomes and indicators.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed with the new language proposed and agreed that the two issues of crime and property maintenance would be separate issues. She commented that while the desire is to keep the apartment building to a certain quality, she believed there would be redundancy in some elements because apartments have their own lease specifications on what can be kept on patios and such.

Councilmember Menth agreed that would be redundant. He noted that apartment owners also want to have a quality looking product, but sometimes have to weed out the “bad eggs”.

Councilmember Specht agreed that it would be vital to have both elements included to address property maintenance and crime prevention.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that some property maintenance elements would be better addressed through updates to the City Code and ordinances to ensure that outdoor storage could be enforceable.

The Council agreed with the updated language as proposed by Deputy City Administrator Gladhill.

Councilmember Riley was unsure why a turnback plan is included in number seven.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that there have been some discussions that would be included as part of the turnbacks that the County would eventually turn back to the City.

Councilmember Riley stated that he would remove the turnback language.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that whether the road would be turned back to the City, that would be included as part of the corridor study.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she felt that would be a beneficial element if a study is being done.

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed alternate language that could replace “turnback plan”.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced number nine and was unsure that the community center should be included.

Councilmember Heinrich explained that the purpose in including that was to direct staff to include that in the plan but to show that it is a lower priority to the other elements (public works campus and water treatment center). She stated that some residents would like to see a community center and including that element but showing lower priority provides that explanation.

Councilmember Heinrich asked if staff would have the ability to take on new communications and social media platforms.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that staff would review the time and effort that would be necessary.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that the social media platform element has a low impact to staff time.

Councilmember Riley commented that the City has a communications staff member and therefore should have that capability.

Councilmember Menth referenced the current coronavirus issue and asked for an update on the remote attendance ability.

City Administrator Ulrich provided an update, noting that the technology updates should be completed in March.

Mayor LeTourneau commented that the more proactive enforcement discussed earlier by some Councilmembers would have a large impact to staff and cautioned the Council to consider that when the topic moves forward in the future.

Councilmember Riley believed that there should be proactive enforcement within The COR, as that area of the City has more attention.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that the apartment buildings have their own policies that they would enforce, and the City could simply encourage the owners to enforce their policies.

Councilmember Musgrove thanked staff for incorporating the comments and discussion from the past meeting into this draft.

The consensus of the Council was to move this plan forward as a final draft. Staff noted that this will come forward on a future agenda for formal action.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar

City Administrator Ulrich stated that in the past the Public Works Committee recommendations appeared on the Consent Agenda at the Council regular meeting. He stated that going forward, each item that requires action will come forward (on Consent or as a regular case) as needed,

rather than including the list of items from the Public Works Committee's meeting on the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the worksession date of March 16th and asked if that is a concrete date.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that date was selected as a date to hold the Board/Commission interviews, but three of the four attendees could not attend. He noted that the Board/Commission interviews could occur at the regularly scheduled worksession on the 24th and the agenda that was scheduled for the 24th could be discussed on the 16th.

Councilmember Heinrich requested to add a potential worksession future topic item related to Council stipends and how that compares to neighboring cities.

Administrative Services Director Lasher stated that she reviewed data today and the City is quite low compared to other communities. It was the consensus of the Council to hold a discussion on that topic.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

Councilmember Mentsh stated that the census is coming up and advised of an upcoming meeting that is open to the public. He confirmed that he could also make the announcement at the regular meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.