

**CITY OF WINTER PARK
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
JULY 2, 2007**

The meeting of the Winter Park City Commission was called to order by Mayor David Strong at 1:07 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 401 Park Avenue South, Winter Park, Florida.

Members present:

Mayor David Strong
Commissioner John Eckbert (arrived 1:07;
departed at 3:10 p.m.)
Commissioner Douglas Metcalf
Commissioner Margie Bridges
Commissioner Karen Diebel (via telephone conferencing sporadically)

Also present:

City Manager James Williams
City Clerk Cynthia Bonham

Visioning – Strategic Planning

Mayor Strong addressed retaining a consultant to help in this process and forming a board to provide input and to react to the consultant recommendation. He asked that Commissioner Eckbert be part of the committee. There was a lengthy discussion regarding visioning for the City, gateways into the City and the post office property.

Mayor Strong suggested that at the next work session each Commissioner explain their thoughts on how they should deal with the post office, include other facilities and compare their findings. Commissioner Bridges added that they should prioritize the most important aspects as well as look at organization, their goals and what they believe they need to accomplish.

Commissioner Eckbert stated that he was looking for input to policy prior to it coming to the dais. He stated there will be a mixed use proposal that will come before the dais and the Commission needs to collectively give their input on what they would like to see in the mixed use plan ahead of time so that it is not a surprise to City staff or the Commission on what ends up being proposed.

He explained that there are a number of resources within City staff and the Commission needs their professional experience to guide them in making good decisions. He stated that City staff needs their policy guidance as to what type of proposal they will return with regarding mixed use. Commissioner Bridges suggested they have a planning work session with the planning directors and to meet with other department heads to have an interactive discussion on certain issues since they are the experts and know what the trends are going forward.

Commissioner Eckbert agreed that a work session with an interactive discussion is a critical component to a better decision making process. He suggested that each Commissioner meet separately with Planning Director Briggs prior to the work session to speak about the mixed use issues so Mr. Briggs can offer his professional guidance and the Commission can address specific policy direction.

Commissioner Metcalf commented that he liked the idea of the Commissioners asking questions, receiving answers, rendering opinions and having that all come together. Commissioner Bridges agreed with Commissioner Metcalf regarding the openness of the Commission working together to create cohesiveness, understanding and so citizens can hear their thoughts. City Manager Williams agreed with Commissioner Bridges but cautioned them about having a one on one conversation because of the Sunshine Law. Commissioner Diebel commented they could each meet with the Planning Department individually to give their input or to ask questions or could have the Planning Department by way of the City Manager to give the Commission a presentation on a regular basis.

Commissioner Eckbert stated he would be content with the Mayor taking a consensus building role, engaging other people's opinions and being an advocate among the Commission or that someone else take on this role. Mayor Strong stated that he viewed each of the Commissioners being in that consensus role from time to time depending on the subject matter. He stated that he personally looks at things as an advocate and a consensus builder. Commissioner Metcalf stated he would like to get things completed and move forward.

Mayor Strong recommended that the Commissioners bring their visioning plans for the City at the next work session and see what consensus can be reached. He stated this will include very specific action proposals to accomplish and financial considerations. There was a consensus for this being the task for next work session.

There was further discussion about gateways into the City and the budget implications for things that come before the Commission. He stated he looks toward public guidance for funding priorities and that they need to move toward the prioritization of the capital expenditures of the City. Mayor Strong and Commissioner Bridges agreed.

There was a consensus to have the next work session on July 30, 2007 from 1:00-5:00 p.m. Mayor Strong asked Mr. Briggs to make a presentation at the next Commission meeting on July 9 on mixed use. Mayor Strong asked that each Commissioner make a blue print of what they think the City's vision is physically and prioritize which of these are the most important.

Commissioner Metcalf stated that they need to be focused on parking from a strategic plan as to what will happen in the Central Business District. Commissioner Eckbert commented that one of the critical first steps to addressing that is if they can agree on deficiencies and how they address those concerns. He also asked if they could present the opportunities such as where the locations are for parking decks, how much they could gain from a parking deck in certain locations, and ask about under grounding. He commented that by doing this they will need to look at what the costs will be. The Commission had further discussion on adequate parking and how critical the parking issue has become.

Planning Director Briggs commented that they are going to speak about how to utilize the consultant for the Commuter Rail Stop Design Study and address the public process and visioning at the July 9 Commission meeting. He stated there are many scenarios to be created by the consultant and he will site plan these things to see if it works and look at the cost which will form a menu to plan the possibilities.

Mayor Strong asked Building Director George Wiggins about his review of the lights on top of the Douglas Grand. Mr. Wiggins stated they are going to provide the light fixtures that will provide down lighting in the parking lot but he will follow up to ensure they do that and that they have the correct lighting fixtures. Commissioner Metcalf commented that the lights at Bank of America parking lot look great and they need to establish that as the standard. Commissioner Bridges suggested codifying the light issue so they do not have to continually have this discussion. Mr. Briggs agreed. Commissioner Metcalf commented that they need to deal with parking issues and codify the lights quickly.

Mayor Strong commented that the City Hall Memorandum of Understanding has expired with The Pizzuti Companies. He explained they would like to extend it by placing it back into effect. Mayor Strong was not convinced that there was a role for The Pizzuti Companies. Commissioner Metcalf agreed.

Commissioner Diebel stated she would like to see an assessment regarding City Hall and what functions need to remain in the downtown area and what functions could be placed in other buildings. She commented that she would like to see a staff recommendation on this particular issue.

Mayor Strong suggested that the temporary post office be placed on the agenda for the July 9 Commission meeting for discussion on the options they may have. City Manager Williams agreed.

Commissioner Bridges spoke about tightening up the time frame from demolition to new construction. She believed there have been too many demolitions in the City and neighborhoods are left with code enforcement issues. She also asked for consideration to tighten up the rules with building permits so they cannot demolish unless they are committed to build. Building Director Wiggins stated he would review this and bring back recommendations.

Commissioner Metcalf commented they need to discuss the post office site and they need to have a plan in place. Mayor Strong stated he is going to present his plan at a public meeting toward the end of the month and hoped to get some feedback from the post office at some point during this process.

The meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m.



Cynthia S. Bonham, City Clerk