

**CITY OF WINTER PARK
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
December 18, 2006**

The meeting of the Winter Park City Commission was called to order by Mayor David Strong at 3:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 401 Park Avenue South, Winter Park, Florida.

Members present:

Mayor David Strong
Commissioner Douglas Metcalf
Commissioner Barbara DeVane
Commissioner Douglas Storer
Commissioner John Eckbert

Also present:

City Manager James Williams
City Clerk Cynthia Bonham

Presentation by Mayor Strong and Central Park Station Partners LLC of proposed settlement plans and terms regarding the Post Office property (Carlisle site) at 300 N. New York Avenue.

Mayor Strong announced disclaimers that he had hoped to have documented agreements that he could present to the Commission but that did not happen. He addressed the variety of verbal agreements that have been reached and there were drafts of documents that had been presented and reviewed. He explained that none of these are final and they are all subject to revision between now and January 16, 2007. He stated that he and the developer would do their best to have language they can agree on and present the Commission theoretical final documents.

His second disclaimer was that the plan he was presenting was between him and Mr. Ross, the representative for the Carlisle Development Group. His third disclaimer was that his plan anticipates new locations of existing facilities in the City of Winter Park. He asked at the end of the presentation for architects/planners and other professionals to comment or determine if his ideas are technically available, feasible and realistic. Mayor Strong explained that a decision needs to be made by January 16, 2007, there will be public input between now and then, and there will be final documents by that date (presumably); if there is no decision on a proposal, the Carlisle Developers will make a presentation on their existing plan that will be considered by the Commission.

Mayor Strong presented the proposed settlement plans and terms. He stated the basic transaction between the City and the Carlisle Development Group/Central Park Station Partners was that he proposed the City acquires the developer's interest in their existing contract with the US postal service. The Mayor explained the post office was agreeable to the assignment, receptive to some of the changes he was seeking, and they will finalize an amendment with Central Park Station Partners by January 16 (presumably). He gave a brief description of the agreement with the Central Park Station Partners and the post office and the transaction between the City and the developer, assuming the post office agrees to some of the amendments to the existing contact. Mayor Strong stated that if this transaction was made, he believed the post office and the Winter Park Library should be relocated to the State office building site.

The second part of the proposal was that the library site/building be sold to finance the construction of the post office and the new library. He stated it was his opinion that the existing post office; the temporary facility and municipal parking lot 'A' on the west side, become a part of Central Park in the future. He stated this was a five year plan in order for these things to be accomplished. Mayor Strong suggested City Hall will accommodate the Cultural Center in the center part of this site; build a 50,000 square foot City Hall at this location; and it will require a parking deck at the west end of the property.

Mayor Strong believed this plan will put the controversy regarding the Carlisle behind us; and it will force us to focus on the future; it will bring us together to address the needs of a variety of constituents; it will allow the Commission to expand the tax base; evaluate our growth options and ensure the financial stability of the future of Winter Park.

Mayor Strong stated that \$5,300,000 would be required to pay the Carlisle Developers and to pay the post office \$200,000; \$100,000 has already been deposited. He explained that up to \$5,500,000 will be for the acquisition of the developer's interest and the post office's required payment.

He then announced a program calling for the participation of 55 people for the acquisition of the Carlisle site; whereby institutions or 55 people contribute \$100,000 per individual. Mayor Strong stated that he and his wife will commit to contributing \$100,000. He stated this was his preferred way of concluding this transaction and funding this deficit. He explained there were other ways of doing this such as possible cultural and park grants and other potential sources but he personally viewed this as a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute to the character of Winter Park for an extended period of time.

He spoke about the Cultural Center's location and funding. He explained that if the City could find a site to locate the structure, the funds would be the Cultural Center's burden and they could do this through grants, charitable contributions, etc. and would not be a City burden. He stated it would be his expectation that the City lease the land to the Cultural Center.

He explained if the new City Hall is 50,000 square feet there would be no funds available. He believed that it should be rebuilt within the next 5 years and to upgrade the size and quality of City Hall to more modern standards. Mayor Strong asked the architects in the audience, on a volunteer basis, if they would evaluate between now and January 16 if it is possible to construct 73,000 square feet of post office and library on the State office building site with required parking. He stated the second issue was to confirm with the architect if they can build a Cultural Center (25,000 sq. ft.), City Hall (50,000 sq. ft.) and sufficient parking on the site we are on now.

Commissioner Eckbert thanked the Mayor for his efforts and he was interested in seeing more details as they develop. He asked if Rollins was a potential buyer of the library property. Mayor Strong stated that no discussions have occurred with Rollins at this point but they have indicated interest.

Commissioner DeVane thanked the Mayor for moving forward with this matter. She asked he consider separating the City Hall site redevelopment and the Cultural Center from this because there were other locations to consider. She applauded the Mayor for 55 people to contribute \$100,000, but encouraged him to consider asking for 100 people at \$50,000 to make it more affordable. She asked that they include in the negotiations that they require the developers collectively, singly or any combination with or without others, to not engage in any future projects in the City limits of Winter Park.

Mayor Strong disagreed and stated that the developers in this case would not be here today if they knew all the controversy this was going to cause. He stated developers will go where they are welcome and he believed that they could do something the City will like and he does not want to preclude them from participating in the City.

Commissioner Eckbert asked if the contract with the post office includes the actual purchase of taking title of real estate. Mayor Strong concurred. He asked if this triggers the referendum language in the City Charter. City Attorney Cheek responded to his question.

Commissioner Metcalf asked what alternatives or other options for settlements were discussed between the Mayor and the Carlisle developers. Attorney Cheek stated that these discussions were during the mediation and are confidential and advised the Mayor not to discuss it at this time. Mayor Strong stated that other alternatives were explored and this was the only proposal they both agreed on. He clarified that under the current proposal the property the post office is on would become City property.

Commissioner Storer thanked the Mayor for taking the initiative to put this issue to rest. He addressed Mayor Strong's proposal being encompassing and covering much of what they have been discussing for years with a lot of community input. He commented there would be a parcel that is under City ownership/control that will be converted to non-City use such as the post office or library which would trigger a referendum if they sold a piece of property for that. He stated this concerned him because this has value and if it goes for anything other than a park it would require a referendum. He addressed having experience in doing complex multi year deals like this involving public and private facilities. He spoke about this obligating future Commissions and citizens to this 5 year master plan that the Mayor outlined. Mayor Strong addressed the Commission's questions and concerns.

Commissioner DeVane asked for clarification of the two part solution. She stated that phase 'A' was to acquire the development rights of a maximum of \$5,300,000 plus an additional \$200,000 to the post office. Phase 'B' was figuring out what needs to happen with the post office, library, City Hall and State office building site and how the Performing Arts Center will be incorporated into the City. She said she liked the Mayor's proposal but believed there may be other proposals out there. She stated that phase 'B' needs to have community conversation, there could be property swaps, and there are many creative things that could happen once they pass the first hurdle.

Commissioner DeVane said it was critical that on January 16 they have an idea of how well received the 55 or 100 people are within the community. She asked if they could have another meeting after January 16 to make the actual decision. There was a discussion among the Commission about the post office, the library, park space, the Carlisle and what would require a referendum.

Mayor Strong stated that the Commission should be prepared to make a decision on January 16 and asked Mr. Ross, representative for the developer, to consider giving them more time to consider this issue. He explained that Communications Director Clarissa Howard would draft the communication notice for the Carlisle public hearing scheduled for January 16, 2007 and the Commission can make revisions to it between now and December 27. Ms. Howard stated this will be mailed to residents on January 8, 2007.

Mayor Strong adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cynthia Bonham", written in black ink.

City Clerk Cynthia Bonham