



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

STUDY SESSION & REGULAR MEETING

MAY 18, 2015

STUDY SESSION

Mayor Bruce Bassett called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

Councilmembers Debbie Bertlin, Jane Brahm, Mike Cero, Benson Wong, and Mayor Bruce Bassett were present. Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz was absent.

AB 5070 2015 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update – Review of Council Issues

DSG Director Scott Greenberg presented the 2015 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update and spoke about the three options for moving forward with the Comprehensive Plan.

Council asked questions regarding the ramifications associated with a delay, the Comp Plan being sent back to the Planning Commission to incorporate the Town Center work, the timeline for getting the Town Center work to the Planning Commission and then to the Council, and additional opportunities for public input.

Council directed staff to prepare a resolution based on Option 3: Delay adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update until after the Town Center work is complete.

The Study Session adjourned at 6:40 pm.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Mayor Bruce Bassett called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

Councilmembers Debbie Bertlin, Jane Brahm, Mike Cero, Benson Wong, and Mayor Bruce Bassett were present. Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz was absent.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

Parks & Recreation Staff Recognition

Parks & Recreation Director Bruce Fletcher recognized the Parks & Recreation Department for receiving the distinguished Marketing and Outreach Award at the Washington Recreation & Park Association conference. They were recognized for the development and production of a six part video series about Mercer Island Parks programs and facilities. Mayor Bassett presented a plaque to the Department.

APPEARANCES

Dave Walter, spoke on behalf of the residents of Covenant Shores, requested that a crosswalk be placed across North Mercer Way. He suggested that there be flags to carry across the street, some kind of warning for approaching cars, and perhaps a flashing light. He also thanked the Parks Department for the walkway going up Gallagher Hill.

Gwenn Loosmore, 6125 79th Ave SE, asked Council to reprioritize the TIP and take care of the school first.

Michelle Goldberg, 2212 78th Ave SE, spoke about the need to take the Comp Plan slow. She also spoke about the moratorium and the Hines project. She stated that Hines has only made good on one promise, the plaza. She asked Council to put Hines back in the moratorium and asked that the level of service not be downgraded.

Cynthia Winiski, 2750 68th Ave SE, spoke about the Hines project. She believes they have reneged on their promises to Mercer Island.

Mark Clausen, 6107 SE 32nd Street, spoke about the TIP specifically in regards to pedestrian and bike facilities. He urged Council to not change the priorities that have been developed over the years, to not engage in reactionary government, and to maintain the safety related projects.

Robert Thorpe, spoke about the TIP and that the Council is on the right track with taking a pause on the Comp Plan. He noted that Mercer Island has the strongest regulations in the state, that the Comp Plan is simply a guideline, and cautioned the Council about a wholesale reduction of densities in the Town Center.

Bob Medved, 7238 SE 32nd Street, commended the Council for choosing to slow down on approving the Comp Plan. He asked Council to do it right the first time and not piece meal. He stated that Hines has foreclosed any opportunity to put a major retailer in the building. He asked Council to get rid of the Hines exemption to the moratorium because they have lacked good faith.

Tom Acker, 2428 78th Ave SE, asked that Hines be included in the moratorium and that transit dollars not go into Hines. He spoke about getting the north end park & ride back and about the visioning committee. He thanked law enforcement for stepping up the bike emphasis patrols and appreciates that Council is starting to listen to the public.

Gary Robinson, spoke about the Mercer Island Library Board meeting and that everything that was fought for has been accomplished. He thanked the Council and noted that working with the community really can do great things.

Ira Appelman, 4436 Ferncroft Road, spoke about being misled by Hines. He asked Council to include Hines in the moratorium.

MINUTES

Special Joint Meeting with MISD Board Minutes of April 30, 2015

It was moved by Bertlin; seconded by Brahm to:

Adopt the Special Joint Meeting with MISD Board Minutes of April 30, 2015 as written.

Passed 5-0

FOR: 5 (Bassett, Bertlin, Brahm, Cero, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Grausz)

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Wong requested removal of AB 5072: Arts Council 2014 Annual Report and 2015 Work Plan. Mayor Bassett moved it to the first item of Regular Business.

Payables: \$187,551.42 (05/07/15) & \$442,297.18 (05/14/15)

Recommendation: Certify that the materials or services hereinbefore specified have been received and that all warrant numbers listed are approved for payment.

Payroll: \$754,936.47 (05/15/15)

Recommendation: Certify that the materials or services specified have been received and that all fund warrants are approved for payment.

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Bertlin to:

Approve the Consent Calendar and the recommendations contained therein.

Passed 5-0

FOR: 5 (Bassett, Bertlin, Brahm, Cero, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Grausz)

REGULAR BUSINESS

AB 5072 Arts Council 2014 Annual Report and 2015 Work Plan

Councilmember Wong asked for a further explanation of the new items in the 2015 Work Plan.

Arts & Events Coordinator Amber Britton spoke about the Arts Council and the Gratitude Graffiti project. She described the project, which takes place around Thanksgiving and gives communities a chance to express their gratitude in a variety of different art expressions. She noted that the Arts Council has developed a sub-committee to try and determine what the best fit for Mercer Island would be. She also spoke briefly about the Art UnCorked event.

It was moved by Wong; seconded by Brahm to:

Receive the Arts Council 2014 Annual Report and approve the Arts Council 2015 Work Plan.

Passed 5-0

FOR: 5 (Bassett, Bertlin, Brahm, Cero, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Grausz)

AB 5074 City Council Vacancy – Options

Mayor Bassett spoke about the City Council vacancy options. He noted that Councilmember Wachs position shall be filled within 90 days. Council directed staff to draft a resolution to appoint the candidate that came in second during the last vacancy process.

AB 5053 Public Hearing: Council Preview of 2016-2021 Transportation Improvement Program

City Engineer Patrick Yamashita spoke about the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He provided background and gave an overview of the TIP. He spoke about noteworthy changes to the TIP, the impact of the Town Center visioning process, the three requests by the School Board regarding the MISD campus and neighborhood, and the Comp Plan Update and the LOS decision. He also spoke about pedestrian safety near the MISD campus, citizen requests for crosswalks, and next steps.

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 8:22 pm.

Robert Thorpe, 5800 West Mercer Way, commented on West Mercer Way and the lack of access points. He asked that a right turn pocket be added northbound along West Mercer Way at SE 46th Street. He spoke about the steep hillside on West Mercer Way between SE 47th Street and SE 48th Street. He thanked City staff for taking out some of the trees and believes there is an opportunity to provide an easement to improve the vision on the corner.

Jim Eanes, 2930 76th Ave SE, spoke in support of building more shoulders around the Island.

David D'Souza, 7201 Holly Hill Drive, thanked Council for improving traffic flow around the north campus. He stated that it is critical to examine the left turn lane from SE 40th Street onto 86th Avenue SE. He asked Council to delay the shoulder projects and update the school area now.

Ian & Lisa Morris, 4505 East Mercer Way, requested that more guardrails be installed on East Mercer Way.

Ryan Sadlier, 8418 SE 44th Street, spoke about the left turn lane onto 86th Avenue SE. He believes it is the most dangerous intersection on the Island and needs to be addressed. He thinks the biggest problem is safety due to oncoming traffic cresting the hill and impatient drivers.

Ira Appelman, 4436 Ferncroft Road, spoke about installing guardrails, the left turn from SE 40th Street onto 86th Avenue SE, and looking into cut through traffic from I-90 in the evening.

Don Sutkus, 3927 86th Ave SE, spoke in support of making a good choice now for the SE 40th Street and 86th Avenue SE intersection. He is concerned about a left turn lane onto 86th Avenue SE heading north because it may increase traffic into the Madrona Crest neighborhood which is a residential neighborhood.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:40 pm.

Council engaged in a lengthy discussion about the left turn at the intersection of SE 40th Street and 86th Avenue SE in regards to traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and I-90 cut through traffic. Council asked about the impact of delaying Town Center street improvements to fund the intersection improvements and which roadside shoulder improvement project, West Mercer Way or East Mercer Way, is more critical.

Following questions of staff and discussion, there was consensus from Council to:

- Identify funding options for the SE 40th Street and 86th Avenue SE intersection;
- Provide ideas for phasing the shoulder projects differently; and
- Consider delaying Town Center street improvements.

Council also asked questions about Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB), the crosswalk study, minimizing I-90 cut through traffic, and the Transportation Manager/Engineer position.

AB 5073 Cross-Connection Control Program Code Update (1st Reading)

Assistant City Attorney Christina Schuck presented the Cross-Connection Control Program Code Update.

Utility Board Chair Ben Levie spoke about developing a reasonable cross-connection code for the City which includes a fair and reasonable response to customers, the City being in compliance with the WA Administrative Code, and how cross-connections are treated in a consistent manner. He noted that the most hazardous situation is waterfront.

Assistant City Attorney Schuck spoke about the WA State requirements to develop and implement a 10 Element Program. She also spoke about the Ordinance and the Policy Goals. She provided a summary of the ordinance amendments, reviewed cross-connection requirements, and spoke about installation, inspection and testing, and certification/survey. She noted the advantages and disadvantages associated with the certification requirement and described the two options for responding to the certification/survey. She spoke about enforcement, the appeal procedure, and next steps.

Following Council questions and discussion, Council directed staff to draft an ordinance that requires certification as opposed to penalties, and that retains abatement as a method of enforcement.

AB 5069 First Quarter 2015 Financial Status Report & 2015-2016 Budget Adjustments

Finance Director Chip Corder presented the Financial Status Report for the first quarter of 2015. He spoke about revenues and expenditures for the General Fund, the status of Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) collected, and the two proposed budget adjustments.

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Bertlin to:

Suspend the City Council Rules of Procedure 5.2, requiring a second reading for an ordinance.

Passed 4-1

FOR: 4 (Bassett, Bertlin, Brahm, Wong)

AGAINST: 1 (Cero)

ABSENT: 1 (Grausz)

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Bertlin to:

Adopt Ordinance No. 15-10, amending the 2015-2016 Budget.

Passed 5-0

FOR: 5 (Bassett, Bertlin, Brahm, Cero, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Grausz)

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Absences

Deputy Mayor Grausz' absence was excused.

Planning Schedule

City Manager Treat spoke about scheduling WSDOT and Sound Transit to provide an update and answer questions about R8A. It was noted that, at the June 1, 2015 meeting, the First Reading of the Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update will be replaced by the resolution documenting the Comp Plan delay, an executive session will be added, and there will be a resolution for the Council Candidate vacancy.

Board Appointments

There were no appointments.

Councilmember Reports

Councilmember Wong attended a Public Issues Committee meeting in which the Committee to End Homelessness presented a report on their latest work plan. He asked Council if they would like to comment on the report. He noted that there was also a presentation on the Best Starts for Kids levy and asked if these items could be placed on the Planning Schedule.

Councilmember Cero spoke about the Renton Airport Advisory Committee Meeting and that the FAA has approved their new airplane. He also spoke about attending the ETP meeting and the PSRC's congestion study. He is looking forward to the May 21, 2015 meeting with State Representatives. He asked about the status of the north end park & ride.

Councilmember Brahm spoke about the elementary school tours. She attended the Arts Council Meeting on May 13, 2015 and noted the repair of the gateway sculpture.

Mayor Bassett spoke about attending the Farmer's Market dinner and an eagle scout ceremony.

ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 11:12 pm.

Bruce Bassett, Mayor

Attest:

Karin Roberts, Deputy City Clerk