



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

STUDY SESSION & REGULAR MEETING

JULY 21, 2014

STUDY SESSION

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

Councilmembers Jane Brahm, Mike Cero, Tana Senn (arrived 6:08 pm), Benson Wong, Deputy Mayor Dan Grausz, and Mayor Bruce Bassett were present. Councilmember Debbie Bertlin was absent.

AB 4989 King County Metro Bus Service Reductions

Victor Obeso, Metro Transit Service Development Manager, discussed King County Metro's bus service reductions. He noted that Metro Transit is moving forward with service reductions, that the reductions are shaped by service guidelines, and that the service guidelines set the priority order for reductions. He mentioned that the current proposal is to reduce 550,000 annual service hours and discussed the phasing of the reduction package. He also reviewed the Mercer Island service reduction proposal and the Community Mobility Contracts program. He stated that King County Metro remains committed to looking for new ways to improve service and reduce costs.

The Council asked when the reductions will take effect, what Mercer Island residents can expect as far as bus service, what could be bought back and what the buyback costs would be, if there would be smaller bus or van options, what taxes residents will still pay to subsidize Metro, the possibility of adding additional park 'n ride lots, and, if the City bought their own buses, could those buses use the Park & Ride lot.

The Study Session adjourned at 6:53 pm.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

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

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

SPECIAL BUSINESS

Boards & Commissions Members Service Recognition

Mayor Bruce Bassett recognized the following past Boards & Commissions members for their service to the City of Mercer Island:

YFS Advisory Board (Youth):	Eli Phillips served 2 years
	Ellie Bernstein served 2 years
	Ellena Jones served 4 years
	Chris Goodwin served 4 years
	Peter Welch served 4 years
YFS Advisory Board (Adult):	Niki Ahrens served 3 years
	Rachel Reynolds served 3 years
	Kenneth Urman served 6 years
Utility Board:	Glynda Steiner served 5 years
Open Space Conservancy Trust:	Robert Thorpe served 4 years
Arts Council:	Jane Ditzler served 8 years
Planning Commission:	Adam Cooper served 9 years

REGULAR BUSINESS

AB 4987 Coval Closed Record Public Hearing for a Proposed Sixteen Lot Long Plat (SUB13-009)

Mayor Bassett read a statement regarding the process and ground rules for the closed record hearing for a proposed sixteen lot long plat (SUB13-009).

City Attorney Katie Knight asked questions of the Council regarding the appearance of fairness as the approval of the long plat is a quasi-judicial action. There were no objections to the answers provided by Councilmembers.

Senior Planner Shana Crick presented the Coval 16-Lot Preliminary Long Plat. She mentioned a correction to the agenda bill, noting that native growth protection areas should read tree conservation easements. She discussed the timeline, noted the comment opportunities, and reviewed the City Council findings and corresponding staff analysis.

The applicant Wes Giesbrecht provided information on the project.

The Council asked for feedback from staff and the applicant on the following issues:

- Easements and the Native Growth Protection Area
- Public Input Timeline
- Water Flow and Stormwater
- Ditch/Gravel Shoulder/Asphalt Area on 84th Avenue SE
- Setbacks on the North Side of the Plat
- Construction Hours
- Koi Pond

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Wong to:

Grant preliminary approval to the Coval long plat as detailed in the Planning Commission's recommendation, and discussed in the City Council meeting of July 21, 2014, and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Findings of Facts and Conclusions of Law (as presented in Exhibit 1 of AB 4987) as modified, on behalf of the City Council.

Passed 5-1

FOR: 5 (Bassett, Brahm, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

AGAINST: 1 (Cero)

ABSENT: 1 (Bertlin)

APPEARANCES

Kendall Taylor, 3417 74th Avenue SE, commented on the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update and Scope of Work. She is concerned that current development is incompatible and inconsistent with the existing neighborhood character in terms of average lot size, yard size, and home size, quality of design, and orientation of neighboring homes. She would like an objective definition of neighborhood character added to the Comprehensive Plan so that the City can fulfill its stated promises and goals.

Eileen Mitchell, 2956 74th Avenue SE, would like to see the Planning Commission focus on the character of neighborhoods. She noted that the vegetation and green spaces are diminishing on Mercer Island. She spoke specifically about the development of the 3 homes on the corner of 74th Avenue SE and SE 32nd Street and stated that this development is inconsistent and incompatible with the existing character of her neighborhood.

Tami Szerlep, 7804 SE 40th Street, asked the Council not to lose focus on the library. She asked for assurances that the City is actively standing for and with the City's library community, and that the Council please find a way to stop the failed remodel process and start over.

Carv Zwingle, 6250 East Mercer Way, commented on the efforts made to save the library. He stated that the fate of the library lies in the Council's capable hands and those of staff. He noted that the 1994 Interlocal

Agreement provides a method to withdraw from KCLS and gain control of the library that was built with Mercer Island design, Mercer Island funds, and Mercer Island property.

Bob Still, 4011 93rd Avenue SE, spoke about the petition to separate from KCLS, mentioning the following:

- Mercer Island would gain control of the library building, retaining the drive up book drop, the small meeting room, the enclosed children's area, the vestibule, and the warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- This would prevent library closure of up to a year as unnecessary major renovations would be avoided.
- Residents would still have access to books through interlibrary loans and other contractual agreements.
- Mercer Island would gain control of our own library staff.

Marcia Dawson, 8812 SE 77th Place, mentioned the following in regards to the petition:

- Mercer Island would gain control of its own collection to meet the needs and wishes of the community.
- Mercer Island would gain control of the library hours so that more services could be provided on weekends.
- The City Council would contract with another library system, or a professional library management organization, to run the library.
- Mercer Island taxpayers would save money.

Eric Swenson, 8541 East Mercer Way, spoke about the steps to separate from KCLS, which include:

- Mercer Island votes in November to establish our own library.
- The City Council puts on the February 2015 ballot the opportunity for Mercer Island residents to vote to withdraw from KCLS.
- The appropriate changes in taxing authority would take place.
- Mercer Island residents would buy back the library building from KCLS.
- The City Council contracts to manage the library.

He stated that owning our own library is still the best option for excellence of library services, access to a wide range of library materials, and for lowered cost to Mercer Island taxpayers.

Jim Mitchell, 6925 96th Avenue SE, is concerned about the changing character of the Island. He mentioned that he has a new modular development in his backyard that clearly does not match the character of the neighborhood. He stated that he will have to spend thousands of dollars to block the view of it.

Bart Dawson, 8812 SE 77th Place, stated that the library deserves preservation. He supports a vote of de-annexation from KCLS for the following 3 reasons:

- provides an opportunity to negotiate a satisfactory agreement.
- could become a public newsworthy dispute leading KCLS to decide to improve their public image and finally work with the Mercer Island community.
- could financially be a great step forward.

Jane Eckels, 3413 72nd Place SE, spoke about the significant work that is required to improve and clarify the standards that have to be met to determine what constitutes the character and quality of neighborhoods.

Jim Horn, 9507 SE 61st Place, asked the City Council to direct the Planning Commission, in the updating of the Comprehensive Plan, to uphold the policies of the last 53 years and continue to limit the growth of Mercer Island.

Ira Appelman, 4436 Ferncroft Road, noted that the City must comply with the statute regarding the library petition. He stated that Mercer Island residents must organize to protect the Mercer Island library and Mercerdale Park.

Jerry Gropp, 7858 SE 28th Street, spoke about watching the library being built by two of his friends. He believes this is an opportunity to take back what the City unwisely gave King County. He would like the City of Mercer Island library board to take over control and put the library back together at minimal cost in order to get the best possible result for residents.

City Attorney Katie Knight noted that the City has received the library petition and spoke about the next steps that the City will take.

MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2014

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Senn to:

Adopt the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2014 as written.

Passed 6-0

FOR: 6 (Bassett, Brahm, Cero, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

Study Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2014

It was moved by Brahm; seconded by Senn to:

Adopt the Study Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2014 as written.

Passed 6-0

FOR: 6 (Bassett, Brahm, Cero, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

CONSENT CALENDAR

Payables: \$122,200.35 (07/02/14) & \$355,830.24 (07/10/14)

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

Payroll: \$729,379.47 (07/11/14)

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

It was moved by Senn; seconded by Brahm to:

Approve the Consent Calendar and the recommendations contained therein.

Passed 6-0

FOR: 6 (Bassett, Brahm, Cero, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

REGULAR BUSINESS (continued)

AB 4990 Mercer Island Center for the Arts (MICA) Presentation and Discussion

John Gordon Hill introduced the Mercer Island Center for the Arts (MICA) by reading the MICA mission statement. He noted what will take place at MICA, who will use MICA, and who MICA is for. He mentioned that MICA will be a focal point for Mercer Island, a destination for the region, will revitalize the Town Center, will provide a place to meet, learn, converse, and enjoy, and will be a beautiful amenity to Mercerdale Park. He noted the major spaces, presented a drawing of the concept design, and discussed the various spaces. He mentioned that this facility will fulfill a very strong and identifiable need on Mercer Island. He also spoke about the preliminary timeline for the approach to the project, mentioned that this will be the permanent home for Youth Theatre Northwest, and discussed the fundraising efforts. He noted that the design for MICA will require using a portion of the native planting area, which currently is not usable and a public nuisance.

City Manager Noel Treat noted that the area in question gets very little use and that the Parks and Recreation Department does not have concerns about this plan to utilize the property.

Council asked questions regarding how much additional space MICA is asking for, if the City currently spends any money on maintenance of the Native Garden, and expressed concerns over the vagueness of the request. It was also asked that some indemnification language be added.

It was moved by Senn; seconded by Wong to:

Authorize the City Manager to execute an amendment to the Letter of Understanding with the Mercer Island Center for the Arts to allow for potential use of a portion of the Native Garden area in

conjunction with the Recycling Center site for development of an arts facility.

Passed 5-0

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

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

ABSTAIN: 1 (Grausz)

AB 4984 2014 Planning Commission Work Plan

Principal Planner George Steirer presented the 2014 Planning Commission Work Plan, mentioning that everything in the plan was either approved by Council at the mini-planning session or is a mandated item under City Code. He noted that the work plan includes the minimum necessary to update the City's Comprehensive Plan, essentially to accept the required growth targets under the County wide planning policies. He stated that there should be no needed change in the zoning code or the zoning designations within the City to be able to accept those growth targets.

Council expressed their concern about maintaining language in the Comprehensive Plan and adding language in the City Code regarding preserving neighborhood character.

It was moved by Senn; seconded by Brahm to:

Accept the proposed 2014 Planning Commission Work Plan as presented in Exhibits 1 & 2.

Passed 6-0

FOR: 6 (Bassett, Brahm, Cero, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

AB 4988 Grant and Sponsorship Request for Art UnCorked Event

Assistant City Manager Kirsten Taylor presented the Grant and Sponsorship Request for the Art UnCorked Event. She noted that the combination grant and sponsorship request is to be a major sponsor for \$2,500 and to provide in-kind activities and support.

Council asked questions about what the \$830 will buy the City, if the City could waive the permit fees, adding language that any City out of pocket expenses come out of the Beautification Fund, if the City has sponsored any other events where alcohol has been served, and what type of controls will be set-up to avoid serving underage attendees.

It was moved by Senn; seconded by Cero to:

Appropriate \$2,500 from the Beautification Fund for a local grant to cover costs associated with the promotion and support of the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce and MIVAL sponsored Art UnCorked event as a Town Center Revitalization Program.

Passed 4-0

FOR: 4 (Cero, Grausz, Senn, Wong)

ABSENT: 1 (Berlin)

ABSTAIN: 2 (Bassett, Brahm)

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Absences

Councilmember Berlin's absence was excused.

Planning Schedule

City Manager Treat noted that August 4 will be full and that the August 18 Council meeting is cancelled. Councilmember Senn asked that the City Council discuss the idea of endorsing Initiative 594 at the second meeting in September.

Board Appointments

There were no appointments.

Councilmember Reports

Councilmember Wong encouraged people to attend Shakespeare in the Park.

Councilmember Senn attended the Open Space Conservancy Trust meeting. She mentioned that Robert Thorpe will be helping to coordinate the Boy Scout and Girl Scout projects for the Trust and that they elected a new board chair, Joel Wachs. She also noted that she spoke with PSE regarding the tree cutting issue to increase voltage. She mentioned that the original 20 different route options have been reduced to 11, with only 3 having a lake component. If they do go along the lake, there could be a fairly large tree cutting component.


Councilmember Brahm attended the July 8 Sound Transit advisory group meeting. She mentioned that the group is gearing up to look at the design of and the art for the station on Mercer Island. She also attended the open house put on by Sound Transit and heard several negative comments on the red exhaust pipes. The Arts Council discussed Summer Celebration and all of the summer events, and that the Mostly Music in the Park concerts begin on Thursday. She also spoke about how to get the smart phone app for STQRY.

Councilmember Cero noted that the Clarke Beach dock is being used consistently. He mentioned that the south Luther Burbank parking lot is underutilized and could perhaps be a relief valve for the Park & Ride. He spoke about how the development at SE 68th Street and E Mercer Way happened in 8 hours, which talks to the technology and the finances of building.

Mayor Bassett spoke about the success of Summer Celebration. He mentioned that he and City Manager Treat met with Metro staff members and gave them a list of action items that the City would like feedback on.


ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 11:24 pm.



Bruce Bassett, Mayor

Attest:



Karin Roberts, Deputy City Clerk