



City Commission Work Session Minutes

April 13, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

Present

Mayor Phil Anderson, Commissioners Marty Sullivan, Sheila DeCiccio, Kris Cruzada, and Todd Weaver; City Manager Randy Knight; Assistant City Manager Michelle De Valle and City Clerk Rene Cranis.

1) Call to Order

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2) Discussion Item(s)

b. Old Library Site Discussion

Mayor Anderson noted the commission's receipt of a proposal from Holiday Construction for reuse of the old library. Commissioner Weaver explained the basis of their submittal.

Mayor Anderson reviewed a list of questions to be considered (from the agenda title sheet). He said there is consensus was to release another RFP and thinks the responses should be open to reuse or rebuild and open for a longer period of time.

Commissioner Cruzada agreed and suggested three options: keep the use as is, change/redesign, or demolish the building. He feels these suggestions would provide a number of options for the commission and residents to evaluate. Discussion was held on the three options and a deadline for responses ranging from three to six months. Mr. Knight said staff can bring an RFP to the commission in May.

Commissioner Weaver feels four to six months would be needed for the RFP process. He explained that he would be presenting different suggestions for the building use that may require more time for responses.

Commissioner DeCiccio said she is opposed to an office use and would like to make the site an area for arts and culture as an expansion of downtown and used by all residents, such as the Winter Park Playhouse. She said six months is a long time for RFP responses and prefers a three-month response time but would be amenable to a four-month time frame.

Commissioner Sullivan agreed with the arts and culture use but is not inclined to emphasize it as a required use. Brief discussion followed on desired uses without high parking requirements, i.e. food or office.

Commissioner Weaver said he is not in favor of office as a use due to parking requirements. He proposed putting the history museum on the property and keeping the public restrooms on the first floor with residential units on 2nd and 3rd floors. He spoke about various scenarios to incorporate both uses on the site and explained that the parking requirements for the combined uses would still leave a number of sufficient parking spaces available. Mayor Anderson added that parking requirements must be met for the site, regardless of use, and said he is not opposed to limited office space.

Commissioner DeCiccio noted renovations needed for residential units such as plumbing, electrical, elevators, and stairs. She opposed spending the estimated \$500k on roof and HVAC repairs. She feels if the property had a clean slate and was green energy efficient, it would benefit the city.

Mayor Anderson feels the economics will drive the proposals and spoke about costs to convert the building. Commissioner Weaver added that he feels the city tearing the building down is counterproductive in terms of cost and said a builder can demolish the building for a much less cost than the city. Further discussion was held on suitable a timeline for submittal of proposals and types of uses: arts and culture; incubator space.

Responding to Mr. Knight, Mayor Anderson confirmed the consensus is to move forward with a land lease. Commissioner Weaver asked the commission if a land swap might be considered for the site. Mayor Anderson said if no viable proposals are received, demolishing the building and land-banking the site for a future land swap opportunity, such as the post office, would make sense.

Mayor Anderson feels the location of the old library is the eastern gateway into the city and the size and mass of the building need to be addressed if the building is demolished. In-depth discussion followed on building size, massing and uses under current zoning (R-4) regulations.

Commissioner DeCiccio likes the idea of building over the parking lot which would allow for more parking on the site. Commissioner Weaver said if zoning allows a three to four-story building over the parking lot, he feels an overhead walkway connecting to the Rollins garage should be considered. He added that he supports workforce housing on the site.

Discussion continued on parameters for building scale and FAR. Commissioner Weaver asked whether another building over the parking lot would be acceptable to the commission. Mayor Anderson replied no, and explained he would prefer to have an additional floor on the existing building. He said his preference is to demolish the

building, convert it to greenspace, and landbank it. Commissioner DeCiccio reiterated that she would like to see an arts and culture use on the site.

Commissioner Weaver asked the commission if a return is expected regardless of the path. Mayor Anderson said that the ultimate benefit would be a combination of community benefit and economics. Commissioner Weaver believes a return should not be expected from a non-profit use, but the city should expect a return on commercial use. Commissioners DeCiccio and Sullivan agreed. Commissioner Cruzada added that leasing cost should be factored in as a possibility to replenish some of the overrun costs from the library.

Mayor Anderson said there is consensus on all points except on massing and FAR. He suggested 30% lot coverage and 70,000 sq. ft. as the calculations for the RFP. Mrs. McGillis noted that the 70,000 sq. ft. can only be achieved with residential zoning, and a commercial/mixed-use option would require rezoning to C-3 with 45%-60% FAR allowing for 17 units an acre, which is less than R-4 at 25 units an acre.

After discussion, Mayor Anderson asked staff for a presentation based on designs under C-3 zoning and 45% FAR (60% with a residential component.) prior to approving the RFP. In addition, uses not to be considered would be the same as the previous RFP with the exception of residential and a limited café or coffee shop use.

Discussion was held on repurpose funding (the last question from the title sheet). Mr. Knight said the funds were reallocated at a previous meeting. He noted that roof repair has been done and the A/C is working.

Discussion followed on how to prioritize non-profits in the RFP language. Consensus was to add language stating preference will be given to proposals that maintain the first floor for community benefit. Mr. Moore requested adding scoring for responses having a community benefit component. Mrs. Maier added that the city is likely to receive more responses if the scope is not limited but ranks proposals by desired uses. Discussion followed on the ranking process and parameters.

Mr. Knight will reach out to non-profits to determine interest and ability to fund. Staff will bring the RFP back to the commission at the first commission meeting in May.

a. Winter Park Playhouse Discussion

Mayor Anderson said the TDT grant funding process will be coming up in May and asked if there is a specific path to be considered. Mr. Knight explained the availability, application and process to pursue TDT grant funding.

Mayor Anderson spoke about the current location, lease, and parking for the Winter Park Playhouse (WPP) and asked if it meets CRA criteria of CRA. Mr. Dudgeon said there are economic and social components to the existing CRA plan with guidelines.

Mayor Anderson noted the WPP does a lot of charitable and performance outreach and thinks it could become a CRA venue for other outreach programs. He feels this concept could be presented in an application for TDT funding. He said it doesn't solve the parking issue but would get the project in the pipeline. He asked what would happen if the location changes mid-process.

Mr. Knight explained that when the city applied previously, the grantors wanted the project to be final. He said the city can present options/costs under several options. It was determined that CRA or TDT funds cannot be used to purchase property over the appraised value and discussion followed. Mayor Anderson said he is trying to find a path to the TDT process because he doesn't feel the funds can be used for this project on Seven Oaks Park. He explained that there is a process of discipline dealing with long-term encumbrances on city property that needs to be respected and doesn't see a path to accomplish that by the TDT application deadline.

Heather Alexander said TDT funds are not required but would be beneficial. Mayor Anderson suggested taking the joint TDT application off the table due to the application deadline.

The conversation turned to criteria for Seven Oaks Park. Commissioner DeCiccio feels the city needs to gain community feedback on park activation. Brief discussion was held on the process to determine if the WPP would be put on the park parking lot. Commissioner DeCiccio feels an RFP is needed. Commissioner Weaver is opposed to building anything on the greenspace pad designated in the park plan. He spoke about the size/s.f. based on FAR and other requirements. He spoke about food trucks as an activation idea. He suggested splitting the 10,000 s.f. in half using north 1/2 as green space and south 1/2 for diagonal parking and a one-way driveway onto Orange Ave. as an option for a variety of activation opportunities.

Mayor Anderson asked if there is consensus to open RFP for the site. Commissioner DeCiccio feels the city needs community input before an RFP is issued. In-depth discussion followed on the proposed plan, parking needs, uses, and activation.

Mayor Anderson suggested an open-ended RFP with the following criteria: performance space (can be open to other uses), parking on the property, targeted evening parking, and limited parking daytime parking needs Monday-Friday. He feels the uses should be opened up for coffee shops or bistros. Commissioner Weaver asked if there is a concern about competition for existing businesses. Commissioner DeCiccio has met with existing owners, and they have conveyed their support for more area restaurants.

Commissioner Cruzada spoke in favor of the plan and its benefits as an important part of Winter Park. He said Commissioner Weaver's concept shows opportunities that would allow the space to become more than just a parking lot.

Commissioner Sullivan supports the concept of reusing the space without affecting the green space. He is concerned about the WPP's financial ability to pay for maintenance, which they are not responsible for under their current lease/location. He asked how the concept can be executed, how it can go forward for the next 20 years or longer, and what happens to the site when the playhouse ceases to exist.

Mayor Anderson said the agreement term sheet would grant "air rights" over 15,000 s.f. of parking and WPP would have to build and maintain it and if it falls in disrepair it reverts to the city. Discussion returned to current and potential parking and uses (excluding office use except as an ancillary use), and the s.f. with and without the proposed restrooms for the proposed conceptual plan. Mrs. Maier showed designs of the proposed restroom of 1,000 s.f.

Mayor Anderson summarized that there is consensus for drafting an RFP, and the city will not be making a joint application for the TDT grant funds due to the timeframe for submittals.

Mr. Knight will present the RFP at the first meeting in May.

3) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Mayor Phillip M. Anderson

ATTEST:

City Clerk Rene Cranis