

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
MARCH 28, 2016 – 6:00PM

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Massey at 6:00pm.

Council Members Present: Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey, Rich and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Manager Boyer, Assistant City Manager Mekjian, City Clerk Smith, Directors Gardiner and Randle, Planning Consultant Arroyo and City Attorney Joppich

DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS REGARDING BUSINESS AND OTHER LICENSING:

City Clerk Smith explained that back in 2000, the City repealed Chapter 8 dealing with general business licensing and after that time, staff had discovered that there were other areas of the code dealing with licensing procedures that appeared to be outdated. She stated that staff met with Attorney Joppich to review the code of ordinances and to outline proposed recommendations for Council.

Attorney Joppich reviewed his letter that outlined sections of the code of ordinances with regard to various types of licensing and the proposed recommendation by staff for each section. He explained that any changes made would come back to City Council in the form of an ordinance amendment.

Councilmember Steckloff inquired about Hookah businesses and if a license is required. Attorney Joppich responded that they are not currently licensed but he is reviewing the issue of Hookah businesses in the community. Ms. Steckloff suggested including Vape businesses as part of that review.

The general consensus of Council was to bring back ordinance amendments to City Council for consideration as outlined by staff and Attorney Joppich.

DISCUSSION ON SIGN REGULATIONS:

Director Ed Gardiner explained that there has been a major Supreme Court decision that will affect how the city regulates signs and ordinance amendments will be required in light of this decision. He stated that staff has met with Attorney Joppich to discuss the issue and he wanted to bring the matter before Council to first make them aware of the court decision and how it will affect regulations as well as to make sure Council agrees with the direction of staff since there will be extensive changes recommended.

Discussion was held on real estate signs and past discussions regarding allowing for larger signs in order to eliminate the need for temporary lease signs. Attorney Joppich confirmed that the city can still regulate the size of signs.

Planning Consultant Arroyo confirmed that they will be reviewing this as part of the overall ordinance changes.

Mayor Pro-Tem Knol stated that she would like the city to pursue that option.

Councilmember Bruce inquired about regulating signs with obscenities. Attorney Joppich confirmed that the city can regulate content to some extent.

Councilmember Rich commented that the concurring opinion mentioned in Attorney Joppich's memo seemed to indicate that the city could regulate the number of signs by mile of roadway. She inquired if this could be used to eliminate clutter along certain roads.

Director Gardiner stated that it could but he feels that would be difficult to do only in certain areas.

Mayor Massey stated that he appreciates the information provided and it is his understanding that Council will see future code amendments before them for consideration.

Attorney Joppich stated that the proposed amendments would affect both the city code and zoning ordinances so he and staff have been working on this issue with Planning Consultant Arroyo and the Planning Commission to draft a set of ordinance amendments for Council consideration.

Director Gardiner inquired if Council would like to review the draft ordinance amendments at a study session prior to the ordinance amendments being brought before them for a public hearing.

Mayor Massey confirmed that he would like Council to review the draft ordinances at a study session meeting.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Director Gardiner updated City Council on the city's rental housing program noting that over 1,500 non-homestead units were identified and used as a basis to send out letters regarding the program. He stated that 1,300 notices have been mailed to date with 403 certificates issued, 239 letters returned or deemed non-rentals and 619 no responses. He noted that of the 403 units inspected, 55 re-inspections were required with 3 tickets issued. He feels that overall the program is helping to clean up the homes and homeowners are doing additional minor repairs in anticipation of the inspections.

Mayor Massey commented that he has heard from residents regarding the improvements within their subdivisions due to this program. He brought up the issue of duplex homes.

Councilmember Bruce inquired if the program could be expanded to include duplexes.

Mayor Massey suggested getting through the 3-year phase that was originally identified and then revisit the issue of expanding the program.

Councilmember Bridges inquired if there was a registration fee and any feedback from homeowners. Mr. Gardiner responded that the fee is \$140 and his department has heard a number of complaints from the homeowners, but it has helped to clean up the subdivisions.

Mr. Gardiner also provided updates on the following:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding provided for improvements to Olde Town Park and sidewalks. He noted that the public hearing for the CDBG funding is on the Council agenda for April 25, 2016
- Additional tree plantings have occurred including 108 plantings; 32 with grant assistance
- Zoning efforts to address illegal signs within the right-of-way
- Weed Cutting Program

- Property Maintenance/Nuisance efforts

Mr. Gardiner mentioned the following major projects within the city:

Commercial Projects

- Designer Shoe Warehouse expansion
- All State Insurance expansion
- JRSJ Law building expansion
- GenTherm
- Purchase of former Dana Corporation Building by Sumitomo
- Google Call Center
- TRW expansion into the Arboretum Building and also maintaining their building on Research Drive
- Holiday Inn Express that opened in 2015
- Courtyard Marriott currently under construction with a full-service Holiday Inn to follow
- Beaumont/Botsford expansion
- Sarah Fisher PUD
- Storage Facility PUD
- Drake Road movie theater
- Serra Toyota
- Harley Davidson expansion and move to the former Sam's Club property
- Manor of Farmington Hills senior facility
- Proposed rezoning of St. Alexander's Church

Residential Projects

- Wooddale Elementary property site condominium plan
- Whispering Meadows development
- Halsted Hollows North development
- Orchard Lake Road development

Mr. Gardiner stated that other issues that will be brought back to City Council will include the sign ordinance amendments discussed earlier and amendments to the telecommunications ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further discussion, Mayor Massey adjourned the study session at 7:25pm

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk