

**CITY OF HAMILTON
COMMITTEE MINUTES**

DATE: August 11, 2020

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council President Claire Kemp,
Councilors Bielski, Pogachar, Mitchell,
Pruitt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor West

NOTE TAKER: Cynthia Fleming, Deputy Clerk

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Matthew Rohrbach, City Planner, Donny Ramer,
Public Works Director and Dominic Farrenkopf,
Mayor

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes from July 28, 2020

Council President Kemp asked if members had any corrections to the minutes. Deputy Clerk Fleming said that the spelling of the last name of the new City Planner I was incorrect and needed to be changed from Bower to Bauer. Councilor Pogachar moved to approve the minutes with the correction. The motion was seconded by Councilor Mitchell. The minutes were approved unanimously.

• **Review Connect 93 Action Plan**

City Planner, Matthew Rohrbach began by saying that the action plan was a collaborative effort made possible through a grant from Community Builders. Mayor Farrenkopf, Public Works Director, Donny Ramer, Councilors West and Kemp along with the public all worked in the creation of this document. The document is meant to be a guide to help the city achieve its goals surrounding the area around Highway 93, Main Street and Marcus Street. Mr. Rohrbach said that this is not a new discussion. This was previously discussed as early as 2004 as recorded in meeting minutes from that year. As part of the process we did a number of public meetings to help understand what some of the issues are. Design workshops were held as well as community surveys that provided lots of good feedback. Several newspaper articles were published about the project to help get create public interest and input on the plan. With input from the community the focus and key issue was the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. The key objectives of the plan are safety, visibility and making the intersection welcoming with a sense of place. Design recommendations to increase safety include shortening crossing distances, increasing visibility and defining safe locations for cars, bikes and people. Features of the designs incorporate pedestrian

refuge islands, bump outs, painting crosswalks and stop bars and adding landscaping and signage. Besides making the intersection more attractive, these features also have the effect of slowing traffic down. The refuge islands shortens the crossings for pedestrians. He told the members that we have worked with the Montana Department of Transportation, (MDT) and we feel that there is a way to make this work. All of these improvements will have to go through MDT. If this plan is adopted we will work with our community partners to begin putting together resources and options for implementation. Councilor Pogachar asked Mr. Rohrbach where they would put snow in the winter. Donny Ramer, Public Works Director responded that the landscaped medium would be a place to possibly put snow. It shouldn't really damage trees or bushes. The worst thing is the salt and the deicer that is used, so when we pick out plants we will need to plant varieties that will hold up to that.

Another design recommendation includes an entrance realignment and creation of a gateway plaza at the Safeway store access off of Marcus Street. Mr. Rohrbach stated that it is kind of a no man's land on the corner by the Safeway store. The plan has been run through the preliminary ringer so to speak with Montana Rail Link, (MRL) the property owner and nothing we have presented has been a non-starter. On the north side of the street there is a lot that is leased by First Security Bank for parking. We have had preliminary conversations and they would be open to us taking over the lease. The bank also owns the lot on the west side of the cidery. The City would coordinate with MRL and the bank and build a possible pilot site that might include food trucks, seating, shade, planters, overhead lighting as a low cost strategy to make this area feel more welcoming Mr. Rohrbach mentioned that one potential source of funds is the organization, AARP, (American Association of Retired Persons). They have money that is used to help fund these types of projects.

Recommendations for Marcus Street improvements include a 10 foot shared used path on the north side. On the south side recommendations would be for a 5 foot sidewalk and adding an 8 foot parallel parking zone. We currently have 1.5 million dollars for upgrades to Marcus. We need to work with MDT and request some design exceptions. If the plan is approved we can start conversations with MDT. In reference to how long the project could take, Mr. Rohrbach said it could be from 2 to 5 years. Right now we would be looking at taking this just to Daly, long term it would be best to extend it to Kurtz Lane. To fund the project, Mr. Rohrbach said that there are grants that have match requirements and we will need to leverage local money.

The next design recommendations is for a Bedford Street Extension. Part of the plan calls for extending Bedford at the existing intersection with Hwy 93 and incorporate into the plan sidewalks and a bike path. It would primarily access the brewery and Vester Wilson field. We have talked to the brewery about these plans and they are on board. Other aspects to be considered is coordination with Safeway and MRL for an improved delivery access. Recommendations also include talking to MRL about using the empty lot next to Safeway for shared business and city parking and to looking at the configuration for access off of Marcus Street and addressing pedestrian access across railroad tracks to businesses and parks.

Councilor Pogachar asked if the timeline for the project has been modified. Mr. Rohrbach responded that it is hard to put a concrete timeline on these projects. Councilor Mitchell commented that the space that borders Bedford and the back access is just a vacant lot and that there is no access to it. Mr. Rohrbach responded that the old Massa lot is owned by MRL who are not in the development business. We are not going to move forward on any of this until we can have conversations with the property owners. Councilor Pogachar offered that in Missoula MRL

has land that is a city park. I am looking at this big area and maybe since they own the land they would be willing to do this. Mr. Rohrbach responded that in Missoula and Livingston, MRL has done a lot of community work. Councilor Kemp said that she is really excited about this project. Community Builder has been awesome to work with. This vision has been talked about for years.

Kent Barbian 110 Cottonwood Court corrected the Connect 93 Plan saying that the items labeled 3 and 4 need to be swapped on those images.

Councilor Pogachar moved to send to Council for approval. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pruitt. Motion passes unanimously.

Recommendation

Send the Connect 93 Action Plan to Council for approval.

• Review Growth Policy

City Planner, Matthew Rohrbach began by saying as he mentioned in the memo the Growth Policy is required to be reviewed every five years and he is preparing to kick off the process. He feels that the likely outcome of the review will be updates to the policy. The Growth Policy is really a tool for informing the planning process. A Community Development Block Grant, (CDBG) to fund someone to work with us on the Growth Policy will probably come up in October. The planning process wouldn't start until next spring. As you know the Growth Policy is a very large document. We would like to slow down a bit and have a values envisioning conversation with the community. In this process we kind of have a sit down and ask community members how does our community want to grow. What are our goals and objectives and are they relevant. As staff we will start providing some analysis of this, but at this time I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce this. Mr. Rohrbach asked if anyone needs a copy of the Growth Policy. He will deliver copies to those members who don't have a copy. Councilors Mitchell, Pogachar and Pruitt would like to get a copy. He would like to bring this back to the Committee and he should have much of the review done by October.

Recommendation

Keep in committee and wait for update.

• Covid 19 Issues

Mayor Farrenkopf began the discussion by saying the he had reached out to the School District and asked how we can help. The School District is doing the best that they can with the resources that they have. Councilor Pruitt said that a School Board member had reached out to her. The member was curious about our resolution. He told her when talking with parents the resolution is helpful. She said that she has talked to business owners who are having difficulty with people not wearing masks and some upset with having to wear masks. She was curious as to what we do if the number of cases goes below the mandated 4 active Covid cases that makes mask wearing mandatory. The Governor's directive is for 4 or more in the County. Mayor Farrenkopf responded that the health officer would be giving recommendations. Councilor Pogachar thanked the Mayor for sending out the press releases from Ravalli County Public Health.

Councilor Mitchell said that he was sorry to see that another resident passed away from this disease. He wondered where we are at with the resolution and do we want it on the website. Councilor Pruitt said that she would like to see the resolution in the newspaper. Mayor Farrenkopf

feels that the governor's words are our resolution. The Committee members discussed the publication of the mask resolution and how and if it should be publicized, concluding that the resolution should be published on the City's website and people can be directed there to read the City's official stance.

Kent Barbian, 110 Cottonwood Court, said that he feels that the City needs to support the governor's mandate.

Recommendations:

Put Resolution #1413 Mask Directive on the City's website.

Non-Agenda Items

Councilor Pruitt asked if everyone else read the letter from Mrs. Wehrly and if we know what signage she is referring to. Mr. Rohrbach said he has not responded to her yet, however, there is signage in the wayfinding plan that will direct traffic to the parks. We also have options to add more signage to all of the parks. All parks will be included in wayfinding signage. The hope is we can get this implemented this year.

Councilor Mitchell observed that the baby swing in River Park needs to be repaired or replaced. Mr. Ramer commented that he will have staff look at it tomorrow.

Councilors Bielski observed that the completed work at East Ravalli Street looks awesome. All committee members agreed and thanked Mr. Ramer for a job well done.

Topics for Consideration for a Future Meeting

- Discussion of Fireworks Ordinance

Adjourn

Councilor Pogachar moved to adjourn. Councilor Mitchell seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.