



February 25, 2016

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
Comprehensive Emergency Plan
Workshop
City Council Room
5:30 PM

PRESENT: Joanne Yepsen, Mayor
Michele Madigan, Commissioner of Finance
John Franck, Commissioner of Accounts
Anthony Scirocco, Commissioner of DPW
Christian Mathiesen, Commissioner of DPS

STAFF PRESENT: Joe Ogden, Deputy Mayor
Lynn Bachner, Deputy Commissioner, Finance
Maire Masterson, Deputy Commissioner, Accounts
Eileen Finneran, Deputy Commissioner, DPS

Vince DeLeonardis, City Attorney

Peter Martin, Supervisor

EXCUSED: Tim Cogan, Deputy Commissioner, DPW

RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The proceedings of this meeting were taped for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Yepsen called the workshop to order at 5:36 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Yepsen opened the public comment period at 5:38 p.m.

Rick Fenton of 23 Lefferts Street and member of Citizens for High Rock stated they are going to hold a forum at the library to discuss where they are and advocate for the selection of a developer. He stated the elephant in the room is the proposed City Center parking garage. The lot was recently appraised at \$2.9 million and the proposed lease to the City is \$50,000. They hope they pick a developer and move forward.

Darlene McGraw of Saratoga Springs stated you can find a parking spot even when there is an event at the City Center.

Mark Lawton of Nelson Avenue stated he feels there should be a similar meeting of full disclosure of all details between the City Center and the City.

Mayor Yepsen closed the public comment period at 5:43 p.m.

Technical Review Committee Report (copy of presentation materials attached)

Mayor Yepsen advised each member of the Council appointed a person to the Technical Review Committee.

Joe Ogden, deputy mayor, introduced the members of the committee as Bill Springnether (appointed by Commissioner Franck), Tom Roohan (representing the City Center Authority), Fire Chief Bob Williams (appointed by Commissioner Mathiesen), Larry Novick (appointed by Commissioner Madigan), Rod Sutton (appointed by Scirocco), Brad Birge, and himself.

Joe advised the City received 2 proposals: one from Hyman Hemispheric and one from Paramount Realty Group. The Committee created a matrix on the following key areas: personnel, amount of type of parking; office/retail; housing; downtown integration; civic space; jobs; market & assessed value; tax revenue; finance; purchase price; traffic; and engineering.

Both respondents were provided a list of questions and both responded to those. Hyman is proposing they purchase the land for \$2.6 million and Paramount is proposing a 30 year lease.

Larry Novick stated both proposals indicate a total of 600 - 650 parking spots which is under the number of spots needed. They hoped the RFP it would open up a dialogue with the City and the City Center. Both proposals have traffic issues coming off High Rock that will have to be dealt with.

Tom Roohan reminded people that the lot between the Collamer Building and the Algonquin is currently under contract. There are spaces there that will go away. There is a lot of potential in the Saratogian lot and there will be something happening there in the near future.

Brad Birge stated the parcel is currently under utilized. The respondents had different approaches. Neither applicant provided much of a diagram or description of elevation of the Maple Avenue section.

Bill Springnether stated their concerns about engineering wouldn't necessarily kill the project but could alter the project and cost. There are potential complications with bedrock and water. We need to find out if this was factored in to the proposals.

Chief Williams stated both projects have one entry point and one exit point off High Rock. The area is already stressed and being there was no traffic study provided, they don't know what the impact will be with pedestrian and traffic flows. It may require losing street parking for turning lanes. He recommended a traffic study.

Rod Sutton stated the financing portion of their review included how the project will be financed and how future revenues may or may not support the overall project. The Hyman proposal does not provide detailed information on the project financing or details on the development budget. The Paramount proposal did provide a detailed development budget.

Joe Ogden thanked his colleagues on the Committee for all their work and the applicants for their time on these proposals.

Commissioner Franck asked the Committee how many parking spots the City Center stated they needed for themselves.

Larry Novick stated they were looking for a net gain of 300 spaces.

Commissioner Franck asked Larry Novick in his development experience; what is the number of parking spaces they calculate per residential unit.

Larry Novick indicated 1.5 spots per unit. They use the parking guidelines in the zoning code.

Commissioner Franck asked Larry Novick what cap rate they go with for commercial property.

Larry Novick indicated they would like to get to 6 1/4 but it is 6 1/2 - 7.

Commissioner Franck confirmed there will not be any taxes on this property.

The Committee confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Madigan advised the lease agreement is not done yet or ready for Council review in draft form. The amount mentioned is for 1/3 of the parking lot and does not take into account the sale tax revenue for paid parking and any shared revenue the City Center may share with the City. She will have more information at the next City Council meeting about the lease.

Commissioner Franck stated he was under the understanding the lease was for 2/3 of the lot; not 1/3. That changes a lot of his thinking.

Commissioner Madigan stated we will maintain our rights to develop that middle portion.

Commissioner Mathiesen stated the City Center acknowledged freely that the middle third would be available to do a mixed use project. The City Center would have the right to maintain a right-of-way into the garage.

HYMAN Proposal

Jeffrey Hyman stated this is the first they are seeing the report. His team will review it and come up with a response. He did make a number of attempts to engage in dialogue and hopes this meeting will provide responses to his outreach. He did make a couple direct phone calls and e-mails to the City Center and did not receive any responses. He ended up sending a FOIL request.

Mayor Yepsen stated the financing of parking is never easy. She asked Mr. Hyman how he plans to increase parking from the response originally provided based upon the discussion tonight and how it will be paid for.

Mr. Hyman stated it will be a function of his ability upon engagement with the stakeholders. They can increase the numbers but doubts they can get to the numbers professed here.

Mike Phinney of Phinney Design Group stated he has looked at this property 4 times since 2004 through every RFP issued. He heard there may be a new RFP. No one in this room can say exactly what their needs are. They should meet with all stakeholders to determine that. One of the goals is to attract employers that will bring several hundred employees to the City.

Commissioner Mathiesen confirmed an entrance and exit on Maple Avenue can be done.

Mike Phinney advised it could be done.

Commissioner Mathiesen asked if a parking garage could be built on the narrow lot opposite the hotel.

Mike Phinney state they quickly studied that and it could be done as a 1-story deck. It would have to be studied in more detail to do a multiple deck.

Mayor Yepsen asked Mike Phinney what size office building he was imagining and where it would be placed.

Mike Phinney stated they envisioned an anchor tenant.

Paramount

Rich DeVito of Paramount advised they met with Mark Baker to see if there was a way to meet their common needs. They were told that wasn't going to be possible. They even asked where the number came from for the 250 parking spaces in the RFP. Mr. Baker told them he didn't know; he didn't come up with that number. They asked about the viability of the north Maple lot as another parking area. Mr. Baker stated that it had been studied and wasn't feasible from an engineering point of view. They did their own study, measurements, and sketch and came up with an additional 300 spaces. This is a lease so the value of the lot doesn't go away.

Susan McCann of Community Builders advised there are ways their proposal conforms to the Comprehensive Plan. A driving need in the Comprehensive Plan is to provide housing for the full range of people that live in Saratoga Springs. They provided a full range of housing in their proposal. They can be financed; they do these developments all the time.

Commissioner Mathiesen asked if it would be possible to entrances and exits from Maple Avenue as well as High Rock.

Rich DeVito stated it is possible; however, it would sacrifice some parking spaces.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Yepsen adjourned the workshop at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ribis
Clerk

Approved: 4/5/16
Vote: 5 - 0