

MEMORANDUM

TO: Record
FROM: Susan Bishel, Public Relations Coordinator
SUBJECT: May 29, 2018 City Council Planning Session Minutes
DATE: May 30, 2018
CC: Mayor and City Council, City Manager, City Clerk, Department Heads

The Planning Session took place in the Council Chambers, Wheaton City Hall, 303 W. Wesley St., Wheaton, Illinois. Those attending the Planning Session included: Councilman Barbier, Councilwoman Fitch, Mayor Gresk, Councilman Prendiville, Councilman Rutledge, Councilman Scalzo and Councilman Suss. Also in attendance were City Manager Dzugan, Assistant City Manager Duguay, Director of Planning & Economic Development Kozik and Public Relations Coordinator Bishel. The session began at 7:04 p.m. following the conclusion of a City Council Public Hearing and concluded at 7:50 p.m. The following items were discussed:

I. Call to Order

The Wheaton City Council Planning Session was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Mayor Gresk following the conclusion of a public hearing.

II. Approval of May 14, 2018 Planning Session Minutes

The Council approved the May 14, 2018 Planning Session Minutes.

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

IV. Special Service Area 7 Replacement

City Manager Dzugan stated the City Council previously expressed the desire to create a replacement for Special Service Area 7 upon its expiration. He sought direction from the Council on the term and rate they would like to use for a new proposed special service area, in addition to what the boundaries would be.

City Manager Dzugan reviewed the basic rules of an SSA and stated that all of the City's previous special service areas have been set by a maximum tax rate. He stated an SSA has an objection period, in which an SSA can be voted down if 51% of electors and owners object. If an objection stands, the SSA can't be proposed again for 2 years. Also, each property owner only receives one vote, regardless of how many parcels they own.

In reviewing the purpose of SSA 7, City Manager Dzugan stated its purpose is to promote business in the downtown area by means of advertising or marketing. The Council could consider adding other services it provides in the scope of a new SSA, and he outlined approximately \$400,000 out-of-pocket annual costs the City incurs to provide services in the downtown area.

The boundary of the replacement SSA could be altered as well. City Manager Dzugan showed examples of potential boundaries if the Council desired to include the Wheaton 121, Wheaton Place, Courthouse Square and other downtown condominiums. He also outlined how the addition of some or all of these properties would have on the amount of revenue collected. Finally, City Manger Dzugan reviewed scenarios for how much would be generated if the new SSA maintained the same rate of 0.45% of assessed value, which could generate as much as \$363,000 if the same rate is maintained and all of the proposed additions to the SSA boundaries are included.

Several Council members expressed concerns about the effect including the condominium owners in the SSA would have on condominium owners' property taxes. Council members expressed concern that including these owners in the SSA would substantially raise their property taxes, but they believe they would not benefit as directly as downtown businesses would from the SSA's services. Several Council members expressed support for including the apartment buildings in the proposed SSA boundaries, as the increase would not have as direct of an impact on renters.

Council members expressed support for the services the DWA provides to the community. Some Council members stated they would be concerned that adding condominium owners to the SSA could create a greater likelihood of the SSA being voted down by objectors.

Council members expressed support for keeping the rate at a maximum of 0.45%. City Manager Dzugan stated they can always levy a lesser amount, but the levy can't be raised any higher than what they set in the ordinance.

Jim Mathieson of the Downtown Wheaton Association stated the initial thoughts on including additional properties was because it would be providing for more services than just those that the Downtown Wheaton Association. He also stated the Downtown Wheaton Association board saw these services as beneficial to both businesses and residential property owners, so they believe the costs should be shared with all who benefit. In addition, an SSA with more property owners contributing could potentially lower the rate for property owners.

City Manager Dzugan stated he would provide the City Council with figures for if the 3 apartment developments were included in the SSA boundaries but not the condominium buildings.

V. City Council/Staff Comments

Councilman Sues thanked the American Legion and the civic organizations, scouts and schools who participated in the Memorial Day Parade. He requested that the City formally recognize the organizers from the American Legion for their work.

Councilman Scalzo thanked the Downtown Wheaton Association's board for all of their work throughout the SSA process.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Draft Minutes