



CITY OF NEWARK PLANNING COMMISSION

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Various Teleconference
Locations
7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

A. ROLL CALL

Chairperson Aguilar called the meeting to order, via teleconference, at 7:35pm. Present were Commissioners Becker, Fitts, Otterstetter, and Vice Chairperson Bridges (all via teleconference).

B. MINUTES

B.1 Approval of Minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of February 11, 2020.

MOTION APPROVED

Commissioner Fitts moved, Commissioner Otterstetter seconded, to approve the Minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting on February 11, 2020. The motion passed 5 AYES.

C. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

D. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

F. STAFF REPORTS

F.1 Presentation of the 2020-2022 Capital Improvement Plan and finding in conformance with the General Plan – from Assistant City Engineer Imai.

Chairperson Aguilar asked for the timing of completion of the design work for the Thornton Avenue Complete Streets project. Also, when design is complete, what is the timeline to have construction completed? Assistant City Engineer Imai stated

the design of the project is recommended for funding in the second fiscal year of the budget, July 2021. Imai stated it could take a year for the design to be completed. Construction cost estimated at \$14M and additional funding will need to be secured. Funding for construction is currently not recommended with this current CIP. Chairperson Aguilar asked if funding for the construction, is coming from the gas tax fund. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated that it could but the funds can also come from measure B, measure BB, bicycle and pedestrian grants as well.

Commissioner Becker asked if the funds for the Citywide Crosswalk Evaluation and Modifications project is only for a study or if it's for actual modifications. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated the initial \$300,000 would allow staff to review various crosswalk locations that were identified to have repeated incidents. The remaining funds from the initial \$300,000 could then be applied to actual modifications. If the same improvements can be done for several intersections, the City could apply for highway safety improvement funds to cover the cost of the actual modifications.

Vice Chairperson Bridges expressed her appreciation for the detailed description of the street improvement projects.

Commissioner Fitts asked if Thornton Avenue currently meets the width requirements for having a legal bicycle lane because it appears to be too narrow, and if the project for street widening can be expedited. Assistant City Engineer Imai noted the request and will take a look at our options. The street improvement projects are less intrusive and will require less right of way for the improvements to be completed. The number of lanes will be kept the same, so the bike lane can be installed within the existing right of way.

Commissioner Fitts asked if the project includes any k-rail and/or concrete barriers that would separate the pedestrians and bikers from automobiles. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated the walkway and/or bike lanes will be separated from the auto lane by buffers but hard barriers will have to be reviewed since they cause more traffic incidents. Staff will need to reach out to the cycling community for input.

Commissioner Becker asked what a Barn car is. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated it is a spare car.

Commissioner Otterstetter asked for more details regarding the Quiet Zones Study. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated the study would review each railroad crossing to see if it can meet certain safety criteria to deem it a quiet zone. The intersection would need to allow vehicles to safely approach a crossing when a train is approaching without the train sounding their horn. Improvements to these crossings are extensive and can include additional gates and medians along roadways. There is a checklist of items in order to pass Federal guidelines so that a train will not need to sound their horn when approaching an intersection. Commissioner Otterstetter asked if it is worth it to conduct such a study since bypassing Federal regulations is difficult and asked if there are funds to complete the improvements. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated that the City would need to

acquire additional funds for the improvements if staff deems quiet zones are necessary. The study is step one to determine if quiet zones are necessary.

Chairperson Aguilar asked for clarification on whether the Dumbarton TOD station is part of the Citywide Rail Station Alternatives Study or is the study to identify other locations for a station. Assistant City Engineer Imai stated the study would be for both. The study would look at existing commuter lines to determine the best locations for transfer stations within Newark.

Commissioner Becker asked if the street work at Dering and Newark Blvd is the barricade for Foxwood. Assistant City Engineer Imai confirmed that it is and should be completed in about a month.

Chairperson Aguilar agreed that the presentation was very well put together and asked if it would be available to the public. Assistant City Engineer Imai confirmed that it would since the presentation is part of the City Council packet. It will also be available on the City's website.

Commissioner Bridges moved, Commissioner Becker seconded, to find that the 2020-2022 Capital Improvement Plan is in conformance with the General Plan. The motion passed 5 AYES.

F.2 Overview and Update of Community Development Projects Under Review and/or Construction (Presentation only) – from Community Development Director Turner.

Community Development Director Turner (CDD) gave an overview of the projects under review and/or construction. CDD Turner stated although there is a pandemic that is negatively affecting our economy, the pandemic has not slowed down project review in Community Development.

Deputy Community Development Director (DCDD) Interiano provided details for the Fircrest office building project.

Commissioner Becker asked if the City is still requiring Brookfield to submit a master plan for the entire NewPark Mall development since there were previous concerns of constructing residential homes so close to the mall. CDD Turner stated the Phase A residential plan is part of the master plan and revision to the master plan are part of the preliminary review.

Chairperson Aguilar asked which portion of the mall the residential building will be placed. CDD Turner stated it will be the area in front of the former Sears building.

Vice Chairperson Bridges asked if the Hyatt House hotel would result in the removal of the Nijo Castle and Chuck E Cheese restaurants. DCDD Interiano said the Hyatt House would only take over the Nijo Castle location and would not affect the building where Chuch E Cheese is currently loacted.

Commissioner Becker commented that for the Timber Street Affordable Housing Project, it would be nice for the City to have a truly affordable housing development and not just senior housing.

Chairperson Aguilar stated since the affordable housing project would need to be rezoned to high density, will the rest of the block should be rezoned as well to ensure continuity in the aesthetics of the block. CDD Turner stated the entire block is already zoned as medium density and only the affordable housing site would need to be rezoned to high density.

Vice Chairperson Bridges asked if the senior housing can include 2 bedrooms as well as 1 bedroom units. CDD Turner stated staff can discuss this with the developer, but the larger units may result in fewer units overall. DCDD Interiano stated staff have ongoing conversations with developers that there is a preference to have a diversity of the types of projects such as family sized units and affordable units.

Commissioner Fitts asked if the hotel within the Bayside Newark TOD area that was previously approved across the street from the senior housing location could be tied to the project at the corner of Willow and Enterprise. CDD Turner stated that it could not be done as the hotel site is already entitled and approved, and there are different property owners and developers.

Chairperson Aguilar commented that the area for the Dumbarton TOD station next to the FMC Willow Project seems quite small. Chairperson Aguilar commented that we want to make sure that Newark doesn't lose the opportunity to build a station at that location. So it is vital that the residential designs should leave enough space for the station.

Commissioner Becker asked where the Old Town Newark Project is located exactly. DCDD Interiano stated it's the vacant lots between Olive and Mulberry.

Chairperson Aguilar asked for clarification that Hyatt Place is replacing the rehabilitation center. DCDD Interiano and Commissioner Becker confirmed that it is.

Commissioner Fitts asked if the Harbor Point - Bayside TOD development has been approved and entitled and if there are any other developments in that area that are coming down the pipe line. CDD Turner stated that the only undeveloped area is the Honeywell property.

Chairperson Aguilar commented that he appreciates the update and finds it helpful to have updates on current projects.

G. COMMISSION MATTERS

G.1 Report on City Council actions.

CDD Turner stated that during the City Council meeting of May 28, 2020, the City Council upheld the Planning Commission's decision to approve a Conditional Use Permit for Fitness 19.

CDD Turner stated he will be giving a presentation on the Census at the upcoming City Council meeting on June 11.

Commissioner Fitts asked when staff anticipates the next Planning Commission meeting and when staff will actually meet in the Council Chambers.

CDD Turner stated the next Planning Commission meeting will be on June 23 but via teleconference. However, meeting in person is difficult to predict since it would be dependent on the Alameda County Department of Health's guidelines.

Commissioner Otterstetter thanked staff for the two wonderful presentations.

Vice Chairperson Bridges asked if staff has hired new staff. CDD Turner stated there was an approval to fill the Associate Planner position and the new staff member is coming on board as of July 1. However, with budget challenges, CDD will not be filling the Senior Planner or the Community Preservation Manager positions.

Commissioner Becker thanked staff for the excellent presentations and all of staff's hard work during the pandemic. He praised staff for continuing to do excellent work despite being short-staffed. CDD Turner acknowledged Administrative Support Specialist Tran for her work with the Census outreach.

Commissioner Fitts thanked staff for the presentations and commented that it's nice to see that development is still going on despite the pandemic.

Chairperson Aguilar thanks staff for the presentations and appreciates the information.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Aguilar adjourned the regular Planning Commission meeting at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



STEVEN TURNER
Secretary