

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP OF THE CITY OF REDMOND WAS HELD MARCH 2, 2021, VIA GOTOMEETING.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Jon Bullock – Krisanna Clark-Endicott – George Endicott – Clifford Evelyn – Ed Fitch – Jay Patrick – Shannon Wedding

MEDIA PRESENT: None

Mayor Endicott called the workshop to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS

A. City Council Committee/Commission Follow Up Discussion from February 2, 2021

In terms of the Council rules, Mayor Endicott spoke to sections that addressed Council Liaisons. In response to comments from Councilor Evelyn regarding commission/committee appointments, Mayor Endicott explained this pertains to the Council serving as liaisons to these commissions/committees. Councilor Fitch opined that Councilor Evelyn was referring to a vote on the liaison positions. Councilor Wedding stated that in the past two weeks, she attended meetings of the committees to which she was appointed as liaison. She was welcomed and told they definitely want her involvement. Councilor Fitch stated that he is not opposed to liaisons serving on committees and commissions, but he thinks it is important to have joint meetings in order to fully collaborate.

Mayor Endicott reminded the Council he had committed to reaching out to the chairs of the City's commissions/committees regarding Council liaisons' attendance at their meetings, whether they would like to have joint meetings with the Council on occasion, or if they would like to continue with periodic presentations to the Council. He reported that he spoke with eight of the nine the committee/commission chairs and all but one said it would be valuable to have a liaison involved. He added they were all supportive of an annual report to Council by the chair and indicated that there have been instances of joint meetings in the past that were also helpful. Mayor Endicott added the chairs preferred ad-hoc meetings rather than scheduled meetings. Councilor Patrick concurred with ad-hoc joint workshops and voiced support for more interaction so that commissions/committees more readily understand the position of the Council. Councilor Bullock opined the issue is not the value of liaisons but what the rules say and whether those rules reflect the values and expectations of current Council members. He raised several concerns about the rules and how they are to be implemented. Councilor Clark-Endicott stated the conduct of the liaison is clear and there is no need to form a committee to further examine the liaison role. She spoke from her experience, stating that as a liaison, she is building relationships with volunteer citizens who are serving on the committees/commissions. Councilor Bullock suggested there be more specificity in the rules, citing for example, what would be the expectations around a Council member, who is not the liaison, attending a committee/commission meeting to make citizen comments. City Attorney Keith Leitz explained the difference between the Council and legislative body in terms of the Council rules, stating that each legislature is a new entity, but Council is an on-going body with new members. Councilor Fitch opined each Council should review the rules in place and ascertain whether they want to adopt them or modify them. He expressed concerned that Council members do not get to weigh in on what is important to them.

By a show of hands, Councilors Bullock, Evelyn, and Fitch were in support of creating a sub-committee to review the Council rules.

Mayor Endicott will work with City Manager Keith Witcosky to create a plan for identifying how Council members can address the Council with their ideas, on a periodic basis, in order to determine if there is sufficient support for further discussion on the topics raised.

B. Quartz Park Update

Parks Division Manager Annie McVay requested direction from the Council regarding the Quartz Park project, since design is nearing 60 percent and the estimated construction cost is higher than initially anticipated. Ms. McVay provided background on the public process, noting that the two most requested items were a parking lot and restroom.

Amenities in the current design include a parking lot, restroom, play structures, paved pathways, bike skills area, irrigation/landscaping, open lawn area, game area, and enhanced crosswalk. The park size is estimated at 7.9 acres. Ms. McVay stated that in April 2020 the low confidence budget estimate was \$1.5 million and in January 2021 the moderate confidence estimate range is \$2.7 to 4.0 million. She is requesting the Council's direction on whether to proceed with the current design and construct this summer or delay the bid until fall 2021 with construction in 2022. Two cost-saving options would be to remove the area south of Quartz Avenue and the restrooms.

Councilor Fitch asked if there is an upper limit to the amount that will be spent and wondered about what the trade-offs are or will be if this project proceeds. Councilor Bullock asked if there had been exploration of financing this project; Ms. McVay said they have not looked into financing. Councilor Patrick requested a list projects that will not be done if this project proceeds. Mayor Endicott asked about the involvement of the Parks Committee; Ms. McVay indicated the committee was supportive of the price increase and the design of the park. As liaison to the Parks Committee, Councilor Bullock reiterated Ms. McVay's statement that the committee supports this design and price increase, noting there is a desire that "we do this park right and we do this park well" and for it to be a key amenity in that area. He agreed that it is important to look at project trade-offs but advocated for this being a strongly supported project at its full capacity.

City Engineer Mike Caccavano stated that Quartz Avenue is a major collector but adding a park in the vicinity would not impact its function as a collector because the park is surrounded by neighborhoods. He said that there are several options to address pedestrian safety as well.

Mayor Endicott asked Ms. McVay to report back with other park projects that could be negatively impacted if this park is fully funded at the current estimated cost.

C. Housing Dashboard

Deputy City Manager John Roberts stated that affordable housing is the key issue in Redmond so that people can afford to live here and work here. He pointed out that one of the goals of Council in 2020 was to determine where the City is in terms of affordable housing and where the City needs to go. He said that hiring Housing Coordinator Rebecca Batzel has made it possible to address these issues more fully.

Ms. Batzel provided a presentation on affordable housing, inventory, and production goals. She stated that Affordable Housing has been designated as a Council goal for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 and then proceeded to define concepts and terms. Ms. Batzell reported that 33 percent of households in the City fall into the category of Severe Rent Burden which means that 50 percent or more of their income goes for housing. She calculated that, to keep up with current population predictions for the next twenty years, there will need to be 8,466 new units built or 423 per year. With the possibility of accelerated growth, Ms. Batzel stated that an additional 4,800 units will be needed. She identified low wages and increasing rents as two factors and described the following staff recommended strategies for the next one to three years:

- Policy development
- Land banking
- Increased waivers for System Development Charges (SDC)
- Affordable Housing Fund

Staff addressed questions regarding how to keep housing affordable after it is built and whether programs are available that combine affordable housing with daycare components.

Councilor Bullock commented on the cost of land and hopes the City will pursue a strategy of land banking or acquisition of land that can be developed with deed restrictions.

OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Prepared by Kelly Morse, City Recorder

APPROVED by the City Council and SIGNED by the Mayor this 14th day of July 2021.

/s/ George Endicott
George Endicott, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Kelly Morse
Kelly Morse, City Recorder