

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Tuesday, July 17, 2018 – 5:35 p.m.

Police Training Room – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Gonzalez, Vice Chairman Andreano, Alderman Witte, Alderman Crawford, and Alderman Smith. Others: Alderman George; Mayor William Aiello; Nicholas DiCerbo, Jr., City Attorney; Fred Saradin, City Auditor; Keri Kerper, Community Development Program Coordinator; Bob Ring, Director of Public Works; Bob Bell, Fire Chief; Jeff Rowley, Police Chief, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings (Tuesday, June 19, 2018)

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2018 meeting was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Witte. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. Master Plan Update

Alderman Crawford explained that after speaking with Mr. Ring, it has been decided to postpone this discussion to the first Tuesday in August to allow for Mr. Ring to incorporate DRI funding information into the update.

b. Discussions

i. OLDC for City-owned Property Management

Alderman Crawford stated that he had a previous discussion with Mayor Aiello and Mr. DiCerbo. There is a number of City owned properties, and the City is scrambling to figure out what to do with them. The City has successfully transferred some for demolition and / or rehabilitation. The OLDC is struggling to find an identity, now that the stadium is finished. Alderman Crawford explained that he feels that the OLDC could possibly take a larger role in the management of City property.

Mayor Aiello stated that it has been suggested that the OLDC could go through the RFP process for the properties. The Council will retain the ultimate authority to determine who purchases the properties and for what purpose.

Alderman Gonzalez explained that there are OLDC's across the county, who do any number of things. Bradner Stadium was the founding objective for this OLDC, but now that the project is over, they need a new identity. Mayor Aiello added that rather than abolish the organization, we could give them a new purpose to keep them going.

Alderman Crawford stated that there is currently an OLDC meeting each quarter, and each meeting entails discussion of basically the same thing. A new purpose would allow the organization to continue. Also, there may be additional funding opportunities that the City is not eligible to apply for due to the 501c3 status of the organization.

Alderman Gonzalez asked what the possible funding could entail, such as funding for renovations. Alderman Crawford replied that it is a possibility. He is trying to think outside the box. When a building costs \$50,000 to demolish, and a house is worth only \$5,000, we need to find alternatives. The Council could allow the OLDC to put together proposals for the City owned houses, and advertise to the public. He would like to get the ball rolling on our end, and possibly invite the members to a later meeting to discuss this possibility.

Mayor Aiello stated that he feels that it is worth looking into further. Alderman Crawford added that at one time, the OLDC was tasked with saving the stadium, and they were successful. They could be beneficial in other ways, too.

Alderman Smith stated that he does not see the harm in having more eyes and ears on the City property issue. Alderman Gonzalez added that he still thinks that the ultimate goal should be to tear down as many as we can, as the City committed to that. Alderman Smith stated that the goal for him as well is to tear down the properties. Renovation and salvage are the least desirable options in his opinion.

Alderman Crawford stated that the committee should think about this option, and leadership from the OLDC can be invited to a later meeting for discussion.

ii. Forest Hills SEQR Reply

A motion to refer the Forest Hills SEQR reply to the Planning Board was made by Alderman Witte, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

iii. TAP Grant Opportunity

Mr. Ring explained that he would like to apply for the latest round of TAP funding. This would be 80% funding with a 20% match for the East State Street project. He stated that we currently have \$1.2 million for this corridor from the DRI, and he would like to ask for an additional \$600,000 in state funding. The project would be fully funded.

Alderman Witte questioned if money would need to be borrowed for this project, and Mr. Ring replied that there is close to \$700,000 between CHIPS funding and his budget. The match could come from available funding. Alderman Witte expressed concern regarding too many projects occurring at once, and Mr. Ring replied that we currently have projects closing out, including the Recreation Center, the Olean Creek Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossing, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Alderman Andreano asked what the TAP funding for the project would include that the DRI money does not, and Mr. Ring stated that the money would go to a shared use bicycle path on one side of the road. The TAP funding requires that the money be used on certain eligible items. He added that the money is reimbursed month by month, and the City would not need to wait until the project is complete to get the money back.

Alderman Crawford stated that he expects there to be an additional need for funding for projects associated with the DRI. Mr. Ring stated that for the most part, the public realm projects are close to fully funded. Alderman Crawford replied that it would be helpful to know how much money the City is on the hook for, and where the funding gaps are.

Alderman Gonzalez asked the committee if they are giving Mr. Ring the go ahead to apply, and Alderman Crawford responded that he is not encouraging Mr. Ring to waste time, but we do not want to apply and not take the funding. Mr. Ring stated that the application is due in mid August.

Alderman Smith asked if 10 feet of sidewalk is the only thing this funding will do, or if this is only an example. Mr. Ring replied that this is just a preliminary plan.

Alderman Witte stated that her concern is that, although there is money in the DPW budget, things come up.

Alderman Gonzalez stated that he is in favor of applying. He feels that the City should be as aggressive as possible with the DRI funding.

Alderman Witte stated that she would like to see a layout of all of the DRI projects, in order to see the total that the City has to commit up front. Alderman Gonzalez replied that it will be millions, but that the vast majority will be reimbursed. Alderman Witte responded that the

reimbursement takes time, and this means that we will be paying interest on money that we borrow up front for the projects.

Alderman Crawford stated that he sees a rough \$150,000 commitment from the City for this potential funding. He asked for ideas for where this funding can come from. He agrees with Alderman Gonzalez, that with the DRI funding, he does not want to shortchange the City's opportunities. If the City can get a \$2 million streetscape project for \$150,000, then it is a good buy.

iv. WIIA Grant Opportunity

Mr. Ring stated that he would like the Council's permission to apply for a water line grant for the Stardust Pump Station. The pump is currently below ground, and he would like to replace it with an above ground building and pump system. He stated that this is a 60% funding grant with a 40% match. He has money in the water fund for the match of up to \$200,000. He stated that this, as well as the Washington Street Project, are the two targeted water projects in the City.

Alderman Andreano stated that she feels that we are spending a lot of money, and we need to stop. She would like to see where the money comes from, and what we need to do to make this happen. Alderman Witte added that we just had a discussion on holding off on grants, and it seems that we are right back at it.

Alderman Crawford stated that we are not talking about creating debt, but using money that we have already budgeted, and attempting to stretch it with grant opportunities.

Mr. Ring stated that there is a certain risk that if we don't get the Community Development Block Grant, we will need to fund the project in different ways. However, \$200,000 is budgeted, and he is trying to double this to \$400,000 with this grant opportunity.

Alderman Gonzalez asked if the \$200,000 in the water fund is spoken for over the next several years, and Alderman Crawford replied that is if we do not get the CDBG award, as the money will be used to fund the Washington Street Project.

Alderman George asked if Mr. Ring can get the finances together for these projects and show the committee. Mr. Ring stated that it is just a matter of time, and both of these projects need to be done. He wants to maximize funding with leveraging money that is already budgeted.

Alderman Crawford asked if these are dangerous situations, and Mr. Ring replied that they are. The old infrastructure could fail, and would leave a whole neighborhood out of water for a period of time. The tank on Stardust is the second in the City.

Alderman Crawford stated that he understands the concerns of the other Aldermen, but he feels that spending money is a part of taking care of a City with an aging infrastructure.

Alderman Witte asked that the committee remember that we can plan ahead, but we never know what is going to happen.

Alderman Andreano stated that she feels that the Master Plan update will be extremely helpful in aiding the decision on what can and cannot wait.

Alderman Crawford asked what the deadline for the grant is, and Mr. Ring responded that the application deadline is in September. He stated that this, as well as the Washington Street Project, is a priority project. Free money could help get them done, as well as help decide which gets done first.

5. Approval of Committee Reports

A motion to approve committee reports was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Crawford. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Gonzalez, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.