

CITY OF BATAVIA – CONFERENCE MINUTES

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2017

Present were Council President Jankowski and Councilpersons Canale, Bialkowski, Viele, Briggs, Pacino, Christian, McGinnis and Tabelski.

Call to Order

Council President Jankowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Council President Jankowski led the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Jim Owen, 2 Redfield Parkway, noted that the pillars on Redfield looked good from the street but up close you can see that the mortar is falling out. He noted they are 105 years old and he would like to see them replaced by the spring.

Jim Fitch, 3 Redfield Parkway, remarked that the pillars are the gateway to the VA Hospital and considered one item even though there are multiple owners. He noted that he would hate to lose the pillars and the character they bring. He wants to preserve a piece of history in Batavia.

Kathy Owen, 2 Redfield Parkway, passed around photos of pillars in Oakfield and how they were restored. She referred to the Redfield pillars as the ceremonial entryway to the VA and noted that you don't see this type of stonework too much anymore.

Don Fryling, 6 Redfield Parkway, supported repairing the pillars and felt they added style and class to the street. He asked Council to please repair them.

Council Response to Public Comments

Councilperson McGinnis supported the restoration project. Councilperson Christian stated that the only thing that bothered her was that some of the pillars were on private property and wondered if there were any other properties that had anything that significant on them that may need repair at some point. Mr. Molino was not aware of any other such situations. Councilperson Briggs asked if a study would include a timetable for repair and Mr. Molino noted that Council could set the scope of work to be done. Councilperson Viele noted that he supported getting it fixed but felt a study was a waste of time and money. He suggested just hiring a mason to get it done. Councilperson Pacino asked who did the work in Oakfield because the restored pillars there looked great. Council President Jankowski thought a study would address other issues beyond just mason work.

Communications

None.

Council President's Report

Council President Jankowski announced the next regular City Council Business and Conference meeting to be held on Monday, December 11, 2017 at 7:00pm at the City Hall Council Board Room, 2nd Floor, City Centre.

He also announced the next informational meeting for DRI – Request for Information on Projects would be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 at 2:00pm.

Redfield Parkway Pillars

Mr. Molino noted there was an issue with the ownership piece in that there are four structures with three owners. He noted that two were private owners and the other was the City of Batavia. He noted that the City could either get a permanent easement and take responsibility for the upkeep, have the private owners give or sell the land to the City, or work with all three owners. He noted that the other issue is what to do with the pillars. He felt that “study” may not be the right word but an evaluation was needed. He didn't want just any mason to fix it, wanted to maintain their structural integrity, and have them fixed properly. He explained that scope of work needs to be clearly defined. Mr. Molino noted that the quotes from 2012 had a wide price range indicating that the scope of work needs to be more clear. He stated that if Council wants to do it, it should be done the right way and thinks we need an expert to give us a good cost estimate. He noted that he discussed this issue with the City Historian at length and don't think it would qualify as an historical landmark or historic place. Councilperson Bialkowski felt the easement was the easiest fix, noted the parkway association is the oldest street association in the City and they were very active. He noted that the association does a stellar job and do everything the Council is trying to promote regarding neighborhoods so recommends moving forward to get it done. Councilperson Canale asked how we can best protect the pillars that sit on private property so that a new owner doesn't decide they want them removed. Mr. Molino stated that he would have to discuss with the City attorney. Council President Jankowski suggested Mr. Molino look into the issue further and get some hard costs for repair. Mr. Molino would look into the cost of an evaluation for Council to authorize and move forward.

Prosecutorial Agreement with Genesee County

Mr. Molino noted that the City has had this agreement since 1993 to partner with the DA's office for police court matters. He suggested a two-year agreement and felt it was a management cost for good service. He noted it was a better value than contracting out and paying an hourly rate. Council agreed to move the item to the next business agenda.

2017-2018 STOP – DWI Award

Chief Heubusch noted that the police department received a grant towards DWI enforcement, training and supplies. He noted this was an annual grant from the County. Council agreed to move the item to the next business agenda.

Governor's Traffic Safety – Car Seat Grant

Chief Napolitano noted that the fire department received a grant for \$24,000 for car seat installation. He noted that the grant allows for small equipment purchases, training and supplies. Council agreed to move the item forward to the next business agenda.

Appoint Members to Various City Committees/Boards

Council agreed to move the names to the next business meeting for appointment.

HPC Recommended Signs for Historic Districts

Mr. Worth noted that two historic districts were identified within the City and looking to put up signs acknowledging the entering and exiting of such districts. He noted that costs were a lot higher than anticipated so requesting putting funds in the budget for appropriate signage. Councilperson Bialkowski asked if the signs were going in the parkway, did the homeowners have the right to say no. Mr. Worth responded that the City could put them in but wanted Council to be aware before anything was done. Council agreed to bring the item up in the budget.

TIP Project, Preventive Maintenance of Six Streets Supplemental Agreement #1

Mr. Worth noted that this was a new agreement from the state to accept Marchiselli funds for street projects. Council agreed to move the item to the next business agenda.

Natural Gas Commodity Purchase

Mr. Worth noted that they would be going out to bid for a three-year natural gas commodity and the winner would be presented at the next business meeting. Council agreed to move the item to the next business agenda.

Schedule Public Hearing for the Round 5 Restore NY Communities Initiative Municipal Grant

Mr. Molino noted that the City has applied for and been successful in the past with the Restore NY grants with a \$1.5 million award for Masse Gateway project in 2011 and \$500,000 for Ellicott Station. He noted that Round 5 is coming up and considering the Engine House as the County is looking to surplus that property. He noted that a letter of intent was sent to the state and they will allow the City to apply for the funds. He explained that the application would be for \$1 million, there is a developer interested in the project and if awarded, the City would pass the funds on to the developer. He noted that this property could then be put back on the tax rolls since it is currently owned by the County and thus not a taxable parcel. Councilperson Christian noted that she has a lot of problems with these projects because they are non-profit and don't pay taxes. Council President Jankowski explained that this wouldn't be a non-profit and thus would pay taxes. Councilperson McGinnis felt we needed to concentrate our efforts on single-family home and not mixed use property which the Engine House would be. Councilperson Bialkowski had a problem with the process and was concerned that he found out about this project after

it was in the paper. Mr. Molino noted that the information was in the Council packets that went out Wednesday night before Thanksgiving. He explained that the media can write about whatever they want to that's in the agenda but Council also had that information in their packets. He also noted that the County can sell to whoever they want and the City doesn't have any say in that and that any redevelopment just has to abide by zoning code. Mr. Molino stated that most downtown apartments are rented before they are completed because there is a demand for them. He noted that this type of development contributes to the downtown neighborhood where there are people walking around downtown even after business hours because they live there. He also reminded Council that any new developer still has to get approvals for all steps of their development. Councilperson Canale noted that he shared Councilperson McGinnis's concern about rental properties but had relatives move in from out of state and commented that there are no good, average rental properties around so there is a demand for that type of housing. He noted that millennials are specifically looking for this type of housing. Councilperson Pacino noted that people want to rent something cool and don't necessarily want to purchase a house. Councilperson Briggs asked why, if the County owns the Engine House, can't they try to do something with it. Mr. Molino noted that BDC, GCEDC and the County *can't* apply for Restore NY but the City can and the County is doing something by declaring the property surplus so it can be developed. The City can help that happen by applying for funding for a developer to use and that money does not go back to the County. Mr. Molino assumes other entities will work together to see the project through. Councilperson Tabelski summarized that the County has a large building that is empty and they are trying to do something with it. He reminded Council that this resolution is just to schedule a public hearing and not to vote on the project itself. Council agreed to move the item to the special business agenda.

Six Month Review and Budget Amendments

Mr. Molino noted that the departments do a review to see where we are mid-way through the fiscal year and he didn't see any amendments needed to the budget right now. He noted that sales tax is better than expected and they are going to watch the legal fees related to the mall but that was coming to a close.

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Conference Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Heidi J. Parker
Clerk-Treasurer**

11/27/2017