

COUNCIL MINUTES

January 9, 1998

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on January 9, 1998 at 7:32 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Wayne Brown
Pat Gilbert
John Giles
Dennis Kavanaugh
Joan Payne
Wayne Pomeroy
Claudia Walters

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Pauline Backer
Wayne Balmer
Neal Beets
Denise Bleyle
Mike Claspell
Dennis Compton
Mike Hutchinson
Lars Jarvie
Barbara Jones
Harry Kent
Ron Krosting
Dorinda Larsen
Rich Lorig
Greg Marek
Jeff Martin
Ruth Ann Norris

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Ellen Pence
Bryan Raines
Andrea Rasizer
Tom Remes
Becky Richardson
Debbie Vickman
Paul Wilson
Mindy White
Jim Wright
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Stephen Beard
Gary Crosby
Dareyl Harper
Bev Hart
Haig Lordigyan
Others

1. Hear and consider a presentation on the Valley Connections Report, related to mass transit.

Transit Coordinator Jim Wright advised that the Cities of Mesa, Phoenix, Tempe, and Scottsdale and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) entered into a fixed guideway major investment study (Valley Connections) during 1996. Mr. Wright introduced Stephen Beard, President of S.R. Beard & Associates, Inc., a consulting agency working with Carter & Burgess to perform the study.

Mr. Beard stated that Valley Connections was created to identify feasible transit solutions to meet the Valley's future high capacity transportation needs. Mr. Beard explained that three Major Investment Studies (MIS) were initiated within the highest travel demand areas of the Phoenix metropolitan region: a fixed guideway system study, the Phoenix/Glendale corridor study, and a study of the Central Phoenix/East Valley area. Mr. Beard advised that the MIS process is a federally mandated process utilized to qualify projects for federal funding. Mr. Beard stated that S. R. Beard & Associates, Inc., is in

the process of making a preliminary recommendation for the review of government agencies and the public. Mr. Beard briefed Council of various mass transit options and recommended the utilization of a light rail transit (LRT) system. Mr. Beard briefly explained the LRT concept and noted that an LRT system must be supported by an expanded bus service. Mr. Beard advised Council that an LRT system may be implemented through the utilization of the railroad right-of-way or arterial streets and outlined alternative alignments. Mr. Beard indicated that the study management committee will meet during February 1998 to discuss the preferred alignment, the technology and future funding sources.

In response to questions from Vice Mayor Gilbert, Mr. Beard advised Council that potential alignments through Sky Harbor Airport have been evaluated and determined cost prohibitive. Mr. Beard explained that the utilization of existing railroad tracks for an LRT system would not be feasible relative to the need to maintain the tracks for freight service but stated that an LRT system could operate within a railroad right-of-way or on arterial streets. Mr. Beard emphasized the importance of analyzing convenience, accessibility, and economic development potential when determining the final location for an LRT system.

In response to questions from Councilmember Kavanaugh, Mr. Beard informed Council of the major differences in financing requirements between an LRT and a commuter rail system (CRS). Mr. Beard reiterated the proposed LRT alignments, explained the proposed Tempe alignment, and noted the commute time from Mesa Drive to downtown Phoenix.

In response to a question from Mayor Brown concerning the narrowing of Main Street and the location of an LRT system in the downtown area, Redevelopment Director Greg Marek advised Council of alternative routes in the downtown area that have been considered by staff.

Vice Mayor Gilbert concurred with Mayor Brown regarding concerns relating to the previously approved project to narrow Main Street, its effects in determining an alignment through the downtown area, and the potential concerns of the merchants.

Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Beard and Mr. Wright for the presentation.

2. Consider a proposal from Crosby Enterprises to redevelop Site 20.

Community Development Manager Wayne Balmer explained that a Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued to obtain proposals for projects that would assist in rejuvenating the downtown area. Mr. Balmer indicated that Crosby Enterprises, Inc. submitted the only proposal and noted that the Redevelopment staff and the Downtown Development Committee do not recommend approval of the project.

Gary Crosby, President of Crosby Enterprises, Inc., presented a rendering of a proposed hotel and described the anticipated amenities, price, and market.

Dareyl Harper, Harper Electric Motor, 449 East Main Street, spoke in opposition to the proposed hotel and suggested that the development of a parking garage would better meet the needs of the neighborhood.

Haig Lordigyan, owner of Schroeder's Organ and Piano of Arizona, Inc., 435 East Main Street, questioned the need to develop a limited service hotel in the downtown area and the applicant's request for City assistance. Mr. Lordigyan expressed the opinion that the development of a limited service hotel at the proposed site would necessitate the need for his business to relocate and cause a decrease in the number of jobs in the downtown area and a decrease in the amount of taxes paid to the City.

Councilmember Payne indicated support of the proposed hotel and spoke of the demand for reasonably priced quality hotels in the City of Mesa. Councilmember Payne advised that a parking garage will be constructed in the downtown area in the near future.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Gilbert, seconded by Councilmember Giles, that the proposal from Crosby Enterprises, Inc. to redevelop Site 20 be denied.

Councilmember Giles stated that he attended a recent Convention and Visitors Bureau board meeting and noted that in the City of Mesa approximately 3,000 hotel rooms in the limited service industry will be added during the first three months of 1998. Councilmember Giles indicated support for the motion to deny.

Vice Mayor Gilbert noted the importance of the limited service hotel industry to the City but concurred with Councilmember Giles regarding the large number of hotels currently located within the City.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Brown-Gilbert-Giles-Kavanaugh-Pomeroy-Walters
NAYS - Payne

Mayor Brown declared the motion carried by majority vote.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of meetings of various boards and committees.

a. Adjustment Board meeting held December 17, 1997

It was moved by Councilmember Giles, seconded by Councilmember Pomeroy, that receipt of the above listed minutes be acknowledged.

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Mayor Brown advised that there were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Friday, January 16 , 1998, 7:30 a.m. - Study Session

Tuesday, January 20, 1998, 5:45 p.m. - Regular Council Meeting

Friday, January 23, 1998, 7:30 a.m. - Study Session

Friday, January 23, 1998 - Utility Committee (immediately following the Study Session)

Friday, February 27, 1998 - Tour of the Flood Control District

Community Development Manager Wayne Balmer provided Council with an invitation from the Mayor of Guaymas, Mexico, requesting Council's attendance at a carnival that will be held in Guaymas from February 19 through February 24, 1998.

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances (maximum of three speakers for five minutes per speaker).

Mayor Brown advised that there were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Items from citizens present (maximum of three speakers for five minutes per speaker).

Mayor Brown advised that there were no items from citizens present at this time.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:26 a.m.

WAYNE BROWN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on 9th day of January 1998. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1998

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK