



## **Minutes for Mayor and Council Work-Session**

**Date: January 29, 2008**

**Place: One Municipal Place Mount Rainier, Md. 20712**

**Presiding Officer: Mayor Malinda Miles**

**Councilors present: Bryan Knedler, Pedro Broines, Jimmy Tarlau and Alta Morton**

**Staff present: City Manager Jeannelle Wallace, Asst. City Manager Michael Jackson, Chief Michael Scott and Treasurer Vijay Manjani**

### **Review of Agenda**

**Moved to approve agenda as presented**

**Council member Morton**

**Second Council member Knedler**

**Vote 4-0**

### **Founder of X2-REP:**

**Asking for a budget for some of the youth in this area to be heard seen and represented in a productive venue, knock down the violence and give the youth that has nothing to do something to do.**

### **Mayor Miles:**

**We are asking youth groups within our city to start giving us a budget  
If you are interested in providing programs for our youth now is the time to start putting it together and give it to Mrs. Wallace.**

### **Council member Tarlau:**

**What area does your group service?**

### **X2-REP:**

**We service the Prince Georges County area such as Surattsville, Central and Takoma Park.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**How many people from Mount Rainier are involved now?**

**X2-REP:**

**At this time none, but we do have youth now coming to Artmosphere Café' coming to see what we are doing. We do have a plan of attack and a soft program that's going on now.**

**James Pringle (Prince George's County Redevelopment Authority)**

**We would like to become a partner with Mount Rainier and their businesses. They have recognized parking problems and are looking for short term and long term solutions. They have identified four sites that can be temporary immediate solutions. All of these properties are privately owned. North is 33<sup>rd</sup> street this lot is about 8000 square feet and we think it could produce about 25-30 surface parking spaces. We have had some discussions with the owner and he is not opposed to it. There have been no specific negotiations because we want to know the will of the city. The site at the very bottom is across the street from Artmosphere Café its existing surface parking for non-conforming use of the church.**

**Council member Briones:**

**How many spaces approximately?**

**James Pringle:**

**It is about 10-12 spaces. The other site is the site of the doctor's office and that seems to be a couple or three years out in the time frame but the location and size is very attractive. Another surface is across the street from the bus terminal and it's a huge piece of land that we could see being developed as structured parking with retail commercial mix use. It has great potential for long term. There has been a lot of discussion and not much action and we are trying to get something on record. The redevelopment Authority has funds not a great amount but they would be interested in contributing towards solving the parking problem given discussions and some direction.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**We have been looking at parking especially in the downtown area and I'm not sure if the Council is ready to address this tonight. One of the problems is whether or not the city can get some matching funds. The city was prepared to move but we didn't**

**have the money. We are ready to move but can we get to the table and work out terms and conditions.**

**We were told that selling the house that RDA purchased would give us \$300,000.00 for it.**

**James Pringle:**

**We can't sell it because we paid \$400,000.00 for it.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**Is there a reason why you didn't consider the old bluebird cab property which is just across the street it's the same owner as the 33<sup>rd</sup> and Perry Street property.**

**James Pringle:**

**Is there existing structures there?**

**Council member Knedler:**

**No, it's a vacant lot.**

**James Pringle:**

**I'm not familiar with it. What's the size of it?**

**Council member Knedler:**

**It's a little larger than the Antiark Baptist Church but the other thing that's attractive about it is that the empty area behind all these properties on this block of Perry Street so you would have access to all of those properties and you could do about 30 cars back there.**

**Has there been any movement on working with the Metropolitan Church of God working there parking lot that they have been trying to build on 34<sup>th</sup> Street.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**Jeannelle would you please set up a date for us to meet?**

**Council member Morton:**

**Thank you for coming out and my question is where is this going to end up? You said you have limited funds and we have limited funds how can we make any of this happen?**

**James Pringle:**

**We have funds to do surface parking. If we could work things out then we have that kind of budget that we can work with but as far as land banking and structural parking we could come together and work on a plan but the funds are not coming from the Redevelopment Authority.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**If you have money for surface parking then what can we do to move on it? Anything or something is good so lets sit down and find out about the money but I'm not sure what you want from us. It sounds great so let's do something.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**The first one I want to do is in the 4000 blk. of 34<sup>th</sup> Street. There's an instant need there right now that could be met. The lot has been there and has been looked at from when I was on the Council in 1987.**

**James Pringle:**

**What is the will of the owner does the owner want to joint venture or does he want to sell.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**There is a new owner now so hopefully we can meet with that owner and see if he wants to go where we want to go and I think that we can prioritize these properties so once we meet you will have a direction of where we want to go.**

**James Pringle:**

**You understand that if the owner doesn't want to throw in his property than option number one is gone.**

**Council member Briones:**

**We have \$280000.00 but it's dwindling. Maybe we can do a partnership with those owners to have our parking behind their properties.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**We need to have a list before we have a meeting but do you expect us to find out from these owners whether they are interested or not or is that something that RA is going to do?**

**Mayor Miles:**

**You have already talked to an owner and RA is ready to move on it and you want to know if the Council supports or opposes it as that parking is a beginning start to our surface parking.**

**James Pringle:**

**Correct, I'd like to point out that RA has no agenda we've just done that research and think we can get that boat to float.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**We understand that you could do your bet with the owner.**

**#1. On 234<sup>th</sup> Street south have you talked to that church and what is the status of that lot so we can understand how much you have done.**

**James Pringle:**

**We've had discussions with their board expressing the option that we were looking for some temporary service parking and that we would be interested in making some kind of financial arrangement that they would be inclined to use the space and make it available for parking during their non activity hours.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**What did they say?**

**James Pringle:**

**They were interested in the discussions.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**So, they were talking about metered parking during non church event times?**

**James Pringle:**

**Yes**

**Council member Morton:**

**What would RS do in conjunction with the city in regards to safety such as lighting?**

**James Pringle:**

**The RA is facilitators not landlords. Your issues are legitimate but the RA won't be responsible.**

**Council member Briones:**

**Maybe we need to come up with a priority of sites and we have three or four more sites in addition so we need to prioritize and staff needs to get back with you and move ahead on this.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**You have already talked to the owner at 33<sup>rd</sup> a Perry Street and that's at the top of your list but I think if you could talk to him about his other lot which is across the street. I want to make sure that my constituents here that we won't do anything with that lot without talking to them.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**We've heard about the one at 33<sup>rd</sup> and Perry and the one on 31<sup>st</sup> Street so, the one that is called Chuck's Liquor you said that that would be a good idea about structured parking have you talked to or what discussions have you had and what is the status.**

**James Pringle:**

**We haven't had any discussions we just notice that it is a vacant piece of land and ideally situated and in private hands.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**The 3500 blk. of Perry Street the doctors parking lot have you had any discussions with him?**

**James Pringle:**

**No, we have not had any discussion.**

**Council member Briones:**

**This is the first step in moving forward in moving forward and pushing those envelopes and purchasing those properties. We have a draft resolution from our attorney and to discuss legal possibilities to do so and we are in a strong position to do that. This is the first step having this on a work-session agenda and the city manager is preparing a detailed report on the status of those properties. The first step would be to declare and find that those properties are blighted. We are on track to develop those properties and will use all of our legal authorities to do so.**

**Council member Morton:**

**We are not looking to propose eminent domain but it is a tool in completing the urban renewal plan and removing the blight. We are pulling together a list of properties within the planned area to suggest how we would like to move forward.**

**Linda Perlman (City Attorney)**

**We may have a public hearing at some point to fulfill the Character requirements. It's not saying the City wants to exercise eminent domain it's saying the City wants to acquire these properties. Eminent domain would be at the end of the process. The purpose of the resolution is to fulfill the Character requirements as to how you initiate an urban renewal project.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**I think we all want to see this area of Rhode Island Ave. Developed as quickly as possible and consistent with what our town and residents want. Some of the property owners are here and would like to speak to see where we are going with this.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**I'm not totally ready and I wasn't sure this was going to be on the agenda. We received a letter from the Bass family and I will give each one of you a copy and a copy to our attorney for review.**

**Council member Briones:**

**We have received legal advice and I'm prepared to have those attorney's come and brief the Council.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**This is not saying that we are going to use eminent domain but there's a legal process to be followed if we chose to do that. I would rather go through with the legal process now then to wait until we need it.**

**Dallas Evans:**

**There were offers sent out to the owners of the 3200 block of Rhode Island Ave. The date of those offers expired November 29, 2007. We have no formal responses to the offers. There have been some telephone conversations but that's the extent of it.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**What do you see as the next step?**

**Dallas Evans:**

**Exactly what you're doing this evening.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**What do you see happening in the next 6 months to a year?**

**Dallas Evans:**

**I'm not at a point to speculate what's going to happen over the next 6 months and to publicly lay out a strategy at this particular time.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**We need to have some kind of strategy on where we're going with this.**

**Dallas Evans:**

**The Council has appointed to members of the Council to work with this as a work group on this matter and I'm sure you are informed.**

**Council member Briones:**

**This is a real estate deal and to reveal his entire hand is to under mind us.**

**Larry Taube: (Attorney for Mr. Holland developer)**

**I'm here to listen tonight and take information.**

**Mr. Shaft: (Business Owner and resident)**

**The problem is communication we need to all sit down and have a discussion.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**Are you saying that no one from Landmark has contacted you?**

**Mr. Shaft:**

**No I was contacted**

**Council member Briones:**

**My concern is for four years we've heard about the Circle Café, surely it doesn't take that long to raise the capital or build.**

**Larry Solomon: (Thrifty Car Rental)**

**I came to observe and I'm a player in the two block area. I'd like to have more knowledge about what's going on.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**I suggest we do a first reading next week and two weeks between readings schedule the public hearing for 2-26-08.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**Can we get a final draft of the resolution in front of us?**

**Mayor Miles:**

**Yes, we will have one to go over and make changes.**

**Vijay Manjani: (Treasurer)**

**I have prepared a six month report. This is what we have spent for six months.**

**Council member Tarlau:**

**Where is the \$90,000.00 and why 90,000.00.**

**Vijay Manjani:**

**This budget is for the whole year we have not spent \$90,000.00 right now but once we do the budget amendment we have to do it for the whole year.**

**Jeannelle Wallace: (City Manager)**

**This takes into account the pay raises that were incorporated that weren't budgeted.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**Mr. Knedler's concern is that we have been spending and he wants to know where the money is coming from.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**Are we on track with the revenue that's coming in where we should be?**

**Vijay Manjani:**

**Yes we are on track.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**Have you received any word for the county n or state government that we might not get as much as they predicted because of the down turn in the economy?**

**Vijay Manjani:**

**They have not given us anything specific.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**Has there been any comment about the income tax revenue?**

**Jeannelle Wallace: City Manager**

**We just got a big check for tax.**

**I would like for the Council to get us the Council priorities for FY 09.**

**Council member Briones:**

**We need to give ourselves zoning authority>**

**Mayor Miles:**

**We will not get zoning authority,**

**The Council members are thinking about their priorities and will submit.**

**Chief Scott:**

**Please give us some direction on the outstanding parking tickets.**

**For the sentinel we need to start that money with the FY09 budget.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**We need to put an appeal out for persons with old photos, old information etc. to come forward and we need a line item to start addressing that.**

**Council member Briones:**

**Where are we now with staffing?**

**Chief Scott:**

**We have 16 and two vacancies left. I am going to ask for an additional 3 full time persons to keep that station.**

**Jeannelle Wallace:**

**Are you interested in keeping the tax rate at the same rate?**

**Council member Briones:**

**I'm not going to support lowering the tax rate because it has made us financially secure.**

**Council member Knedler:**

**I would support dropping the tax one penny.**

**Character Amendment: Jimmy Tarlau**

**I feel that signing a petition should be looked at.**

**Mayor Miles:**

**We are going to clean up some other things in the character and I will let you know.**

**Move to adjourn**

**Council member Knedler**

**Second Council member Briones**

**Vote 4-0**

