

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

June 29, 2020

The Special City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Bronson via teleconference at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Raab, Ptasnik, Johnston, Bronson, Mallory, Temple, and Couture

Absent:

General Business:

- Review and Discussion – Medical Marihuana Ordinance Amendments
 - Mayor Bronson explained that the proposed ordinance reflects the change in the number of allowable provisioning centers to nine with proposed maximums in each district.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Couture commented that he does not think there should be any zoning regulations other than setbacks from churches and schools and let the market dictate where the businesses open.
 - Councilwoman Raab commented that she is not in favor of increasing the number of provisioning centers to nine. She is concerned that Council is negating all the work that the Planning Commission put in to drafting the ordinances.
 - Mayor Bronson explained that we are treating these businesses different than any other type of business.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Couture responded that he does not feel that the Planning Commission needs to vet a business that must adhere to the ordinances and State regulations.
 - Councilman Mallory commented that he is not in favor of increasing the number of provisioning centers to nine, he is especially concerned with the downtown district.
 - Councilwoman Raab discussed her concern with changing the ordinance in the middle of the process and whether all the applicants should be addressed in the order they were received because of a potential location not being permitted.
 - City Manager Eustice explained that a permit can be issued before a location is selected.
 - Councilmembers discussed the appropriate number of allowable provisioning centers and in what districts.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Couture proposed a total of six allowable provisioning centers with a maximum of two within the B-2 District. He inquired with the City Attorney if that would legally be possible.
 - City Attorney Stephen Lindsay responded these amendments would allow for each of the applications to be addressed and treat the provisioning centers as any other business. He further explained that Council can set a limit in any district they want.
 - Mayor Bronson summarized that Council would prefer the ordinance be expanded to a total of six total provisioning centers with a maximum of two in the B-2 district.
 - Councilmembers discussed establishing a timeline for a business to be established once a permit has been issued.

- Mayor Pro Tem Couture proposed adding language in the permit renewal section stating that substantial progress must be made as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- Councilwoman Raab inquired about a permit being transferred or sold from one business to another.
- City Manager Eustice responded that the ordinance requires approval by City Council for a permit to be transferred.
- City Manager Eustice explained the Special Use Permit process at the request of Councilwoman Raab, specifically that it is typically only required with new construction, and why it was initially thought to be a needed requirement in the process.
- Councilman Mallory inquired about the removal of any setbacks from residential areas.
- Mayor Bronson responded that the current Zoning Ordinance addresses situations where businesses border residential districts.
- Councilmembers and City Manager discussed if any other zoning districts would be added to the ordinance including Tourist Service (T-1) or Waterfront Marina (W-M).
- Mayor Bronson proposed the allowable districts to be B-2, B-3 and Waterfront Marina (W-M).

Public Comments:

- Mr. Matt Lahaie commented that tonight's meeting was a great meeting of compromise.
- Ms. Sharen Lange reported that she was listening to the meeting live with potential candidates of City Council.
- Mr. Mike Gridale reported that he is looking forward to meeting again in person.
- Mr. John Costin thanked everyone for the discussion, he is happy to see progress being made. He does not understand how the Special Use Permit went from necessary to unnecessary.
- Mr. Dave Kronberg commented that this is not like every other retail product out there, it is still illegal at the federal level. The Special Use Permit allows the City to influence where these businesses go and it should retain that authority. He also added that the City should be determining how many of these businesses it wants, not how many want to be allowed.
- Ms. Trudy Lofgren commented that she is glad that there is a limit on Main Street.
- Ms. Kristi Kelly thanked everyone for the discussion, she looks forward to seeing the updated ordinances. Good businesses can work in tandem with the community.
- Mr. John Strittmater thanked Council for the hard work.
- Mr. RJ Archambo also wanted to thank Council for the hard work.
- Ms. Linda Rogers commented that as a Planning Commissioner, she feels that any business in B-2 should be vetted by the Planning Commission as part of the Special Use Permit process.
- Ms. Christine Khan-King agrees with other Planning Commissioners that the Special Use Permit should remain part of the application process, it was a solution to the concerns and needs of the community.
- Mayor Bronson will direct the City Attorney to make the discussed changes.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Mayor Mark C. Bronson

Clerk/Treasurer Bridget E. Brown

Councilman Brett Mallory

Councilwoman Sara Johnston

Councilman Vaughn Temple

Mayor Pro Tem Nicholas C. Couture

Councilwoman Diane E. Raab

Councilwoman Ashley Ptasnik