Study Session Meeting Minutes – June 22, 2015 Ivan "Ike" Ackerman Council Chambers

A Study Session Meeting of the Waverly City Council was held on June 22, 2015 at 7:00 P. M. at City Hall. Mayor Infelt presided and the following Council Members were present: Waldstein, McKenzie, Neuendorf and Kangas. Absent: Reznicek, Lampe and Gade

# A. Call to Order.

B. Approval of Agenda.

Moved By: Kangas Seconded By: Neuendorf Moved By: Kangas Seconded By: Neuendorf

To amend the agenda by adding "C. Public Comments" and changing "C. to D. Study Session Calendar" is hereby approved.

Yes: 4 No: 0 Absent: 3

The agenda as amended is hereby approved.

Yes: 4 No: 0 Absent: 3

### C. Public Comments.

- Duane Liddle inquired about the area of sod running through the concrete swale at the rugby field and from 24<sup>th</sup> Street over to 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Liddle also commented regarding Urban Revitalization and concerns of eminent domain being used for such.
- Staff informed Mr. Liddle that staffing resources have not changed since last meeting.
- Karen Thalacker spoke regarding the right turn on red at 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE and Bremer Avenue intersection where she was struck by a car in the crosswalk. Ms. Thalacker shared observations by herself and the Waverly Newspapers Editor, that the building on the Northeast corner of the intersection causes sight barriers to drivers seeing walkers, bicyclists, joggers who are traveling east across the bridge, and the white line is far enough behind that it hinders sight for both directional traffic. Something needs to be done for public safety at this intersection.

## D. Study Session Calendar.

- 1. Discussion of the request for a "No Right Turn On Red" sign at 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE and East Bremer Avenue.
  - Ms. Thalacker observed only 1 in 15 cars stopping before the crosswalk so they could see both directions of traffic. This corner poses a safety issue for pedestrians. Drivers get very impatient when cars won't turn on red.
  - Duane Liddle voiced concerns of pedestrian safety, right of way, and suggested bumping the curb out like at Bremer Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street that would allow pedestrians to step out.
  - Staff informed Council that considerations would need to be given for traffic engineering including pedestrians and drivers. No right turn on red could cause traffic stacking, drivers will still encroach on the crosswalk, and there will be raised levels of frustration. Efforts to correct one traffic concern may generate others. Possible lane options when Bremer Avenue is reconstructed could increase visibility. A series of bump outs in the downtown area would require planning and

may be expensive and cause maintenance problems for snow clearing and other unexpected consequences that could occur. D.O.T. survey work is scheduled for July and September once school starts. This will include traffic counts and modeling and cameras in place at this time should help with observing pedestrian activity as well. There will be discussions with the Council, businesses and public.

- Council discussed whether the City can just post no right turn on red or if the D.O.T. needed to approve; that enforcement is key; that sensored lights downtown are to be receptive to vehicles on side street, however, not necessarily to a pedestrian's benefit; that removing parking spaces in front of stores at corners might be helpful; that there are other dangerous intersections; that curb bump outs could help; that the timing of new paint for street markings could change; that the Chamber's Downtown Master Plan called for nodes at every corner; that there is a need for educational campaigning; that adding more signage and count down lights sometimes cause people to speed up; that ADA ramps tend to cause pedestrians to stand to one side or other of the ramp while waiting for signal; that trying something in advance of Bremer Avenue re-build is a good idea; and finally, direction to staff was to come back in a week or two with a couple of ideas for this intersection.
- 2. Discussion and review of a proposed Urban Revitalization Plan to provide incentives for housing renovation and development.
  - City Attorney Bill Werger stated that Urban Revitalization can be used for more than just multiple family housing. Commercial property and single family units located in the core of the City could also be included with Urban Revitalization. The first two subsections of 404 deal with slum, blight and obsolescence; the third deals with buildings and improvements by reason of age, history, architecture or significance should be preserved or restored which could be used for historic districts. Fourth includes areas designated for economic development and fifth includes areas appropriate for public improvements related to housing & residential development. Chapter 404 is very broad and can be used for a variety of things, and direction is needed from Council. This program is not used for eminent domain. This is a tax abatement incentive program and gives the City the right to adopt a plan that results in tax abatement for a certain period of time to those who choose to take advantage of the program. If someone's property is within the designated area they can take advantage of the program but it is not required. There are no penalties for not participating. Chapter 404 allows abatement of all property taxes on new value. The City could allow abatement of just City taxes under a separate program. The City can determine the length of time allowed for abatement under the 404 plan. There was discussion about the use of rebatement rather than abatement. Section 404 uses abatement and there would have to be some other plan to use rebatement such as urban renewal. Werger felt the end result would be the same whether it is a rebatement or abatement. Taxes can be abated for up to 15 years using a sliding scale. The three year total abatement works better for the City since there is less total abatement. It is important to align whatever program is decided on with our strategic planning initiatives. The Economic Development Commission feels this is a good

approach and helps form a policy to add consistency in supporting projects. This program could potentially help those land owners within the Dry Run Creek area to rehabilitate their properties. Council discussion involved using rebatement rather than abatement. It was noted that under the Urban Renewal plan, the County Assessor determines the valuation that taxes are based on. This type of program of using abatement would allow a funding source rather than using general fund dollars for incentives. \$75,000 increased value is the maximum amount that could be used for abatement for single family houses. It was generally decided that Bill Werger should work with a few members from the Economic Development Commission and Planning & Zoning Commission and come back with a draft to propose to Council.

# E. Reports from Boards and Commissions

1. Airport Commission Minutes, May 14, 2015, received into record.

### F. Staff Comments

• City Clerk Carla Guyer brought up the outside agency contributions topic as discussed during most recent budget sessions. This should be brought back for Council discussion at the July 6 Council meeting.

# **G.** City Council Comments

- Councilman McKenzie commented on how well the Gentlemen of the Road Stopover went.
- Councilman Kangas reminded residents that all tree debris created from the storms should be taken to the curbsides and City crews will be picking it up, and so far Waverly is not in danger of flooding, however, there will most likely be high water levels in the low lying areas.

# H. Mayor's Comments

Adjournment

I.

• Delighted in the success of the Gentlemen of the Road Stopover. Thank you to the people of Waverly. There were many positive comments made from visitors. Kudos to those who live here, City crews, Chamber of Commerce, Wartburg College and The W for offering refuge during inclement weather. Great Kudos given to City Administrator Phil Jones for his tireless efforts in coordinating the event.

# Moved By: Kangas To adjourn is hereby approved. Yes: 4 No: 0 Meeting adjourned at 9:11 P.M. Seconded By: Neuendorf Absent: 3 Charles D. Infelt, Mayor

ATTEST:	
Carla Guyer, City Clerk	