

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on Monday, February 28, 2005, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Mayor Campbell.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Campbell, Knol, McShane, Mitchell.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Bush.

CITY ADMINISTRATION: Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, City Manager Pastue.

PRESENTATIONS RE: OLD COURTHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Council heard presentations from the following developers concerning the redevelopment of the old courthouse:

- Evangelical Homes of Michigan – presented by Denise Bortolani-Rabidoux and Robert Allen
- The Damone Group – presented by Gary Stolicker
- Farmington Development Group – presented by Steve Scheenmann and Mark Andrews
- Triangle Development – presented by Pierre Nona

Council discussed the merits of each proposal. Councilmember McShane stated that the Evangelical Homes proposal was attractive because it provided housing for a population as they age. She also stated that the proposal from the Farmington Development Group would be a great advantage to the community because it would create a new family-friendly community.

Councilmember Knol noted the time and effort put into each proposal and the variety of uses represented. She spoke about the need for new and larger housing stock for young families in Farmington. She stated her preference for the Farmington Development Group proposal, noting that it was both innovative and environmentally friendly. She further stated that she liked the historic look of the plan and that it would fit in well with the surrounding neighborhoods. She indicated that residents of this type of development would support the revitalization of downtown. She noted that the proposal from Triangle Development would be her second choice. She further noted the attractiveness of the Evangelical Homes proposal, however, she stressed the importance of attracting younger families to a community where there is already a higher senior population.

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Councilmember Mitchell stated his approach to evaluating the proposals included a review of the financial benefit of each one. He noted his concern for protecting the surrounding neighborhoods. He stated that all the proposals would be acceptable uses of the property, however, he preferred single or multiple family housing. He discussed the importance of the look of a development and that the proposal from the Farmington Development Group was superior in appearance and character. He further discussed the merits of the other proposals and stated that he is keeping his options open.

In referring to the proposal from Evangelical Homes, Knol stated that she did not like the location of the parking lot on Ten Mile. Pastue noted that the location of the parking lot is due to the developer's desire to retain the existing building.

Mayor Campbell expressed concern regarding the Damone proposal because the City would have no control over the reselling of the property once it is developed. He further expressed concern regarding the Triangle Development due to the proximity of the homes. He noted the high income of potential residents of the Evangelical Homes. He stated his preference for the proposals by Evangelical Homes and the Farmington Development Group, but expressed concern regarding the "fit" of the sites proposed by the latter proposal.

Mitchell discussed the importance of the length of time it would take to develop the property as proposed by both the Farmington Development Group and Triangle Development and the likelihood that they would meet their sales projections.

Knol stated that the evaluation of a proposal should not only include a review of tax revenue and purchase price but consideration should be given to property owners who would support the downtown.

McShane noted the importance of the quality of materials proposed by the Farmington Development Group.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated that the purchase prices offered by the developers are firm.

Discussion followed regarding similar developments in the area to the one proposed by the Farmington Development Group.

Pastue discussed the financial impact of each of the proposals. Discussion followed regarding tax revenue, cost of services and other considerations.

RESOLUTION – LIBRARY ROLLBACK MILLAGE

Pastue indicated that the Farmington Hills City Council is adopting a similar resolution that reduces their millage by seventh-tenths of one mill for a one-year period.

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RESOLUTION 02-05-038 Motion by Mitchell, seconded by McShane, to adopt a resolution to reduce the City of Farmington general operating millage by at least seven-tenths (0.7000) of one mill for at least a one-year period should the dedicated library millage pass on May 3, 2005. [SEE ATTACHED RESOLUTION]. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION – GOVERNOR WARNER MANSION

Mayor Campbell noted that with the Main Street project and other programs in progress it would be difficult for Administration to assume another project.

McShane concurred that whatever programs agreed to by Council regarding the Warner Mansion would need to be implemented by volunteers without assistance from City staff. She stated that she recently toured the Mansion with Dick Carvell, a Mansion volunteer, who cited repairs that were needed. She further stated that she is aware of community members who would be willing to serve on a fundraising committee. She noted that the number of docents at the Mansion is down to twelve. She discussed the agreement with the Church to use their parking lot.

McShane stated that use of the Mansion for exhibits would be difficult for many reasons, but primarily the lack of space. She discussed the need for additional signage to publicize advanced reservations of the grounds. She suggested reactivating Friends of the Mansion and the newsletter; and increasing publication of events. She stated that the creation of a fundraising group would be a positive move.

Knol stated that she would like to see greater use of the Mansion. She noted that in order to increase attendance, there needs to be more uses of the Mansion. She stated other uses could include rotating exhibits, lecture series and afternoon teas. She expressed her desire to preserve the Mansion, but used more creatively. She noted the difficulties in holding events at the Mansion in terms of parking and limited space. She further noted that modifications to the Mansion would need to be made.

Mitchell concurred that a greater use of the Mansion is needed but that there is no easy solution. He noted difficulties of past groups who have attempted to plan events at the Mansion while at the same time preserving its collections. He further noted that Director Horvath has expressed ideas for events at the Mansion. He stated his support of a committee that would address the issues of the Mansion including fundraising and seeking endowments. He further stated that he is not as concerned about raising revenues to offset the expenses of the Mansion because he considers it to be an asset of the community, similar to City parks and other structures.

Knol stated her agreement with supporting the Mansion financially if used more by the community. She noted the increased use of historic property in other communities.

Mayor Campbell noted that many community members make use of the Mansion grounds. He stated that there are only certain elements of the community that really appreciate the Mansion. He noted that new uses of the Mansion might require

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involvement of City staff which would be difficult in the short term. He stated that the City's current priority is the downtown center project.

McShane stated that rather than wait she would be happy to organize a committee that would move forward in addressing fundraising for the Mansion.

Mitchell noted that Council's agreement with Director Horvath recognized that she would not be involved in fundraising. He further noted that if enough docents were available the Mansion could stay open longer affording the opportunity for grant money. He stated his support for a committee if chaired by a councilmember. He further stated his commitment to keeping the Mansion.

Knol cited the need for event planning at the Mansion in order to promote community participation and involvement.

Discussion continued regarding priorities of the community.

Discussion followed regarding the establishment of a committee to review fundraising and events and the submission of names of potential candidates to the City Manager's office. McShane confirmed that the purpose of the committee would be fundraising and events.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

ADJOURNMENT

02-05-039 MOTION by Mitchell, seconded by Knol, to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Arnold T. Campbell, Mayor

Patsy K. Cantrell, City Clerk/Treasurer

APPROVED: MARCH 21, 2005

Susan K. Halberstadt, Recording Secretary