

COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

Columbus Convention & Trade Center
801 Front Avenue, South Hall
Columbus, Georgia 31901

March 30, 2021
9:00 AM
Consent Agenda/Work Session

C O N S E N T A G E N D A / W O R K S E S S I O N

PRESENT: Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III and Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen and Councilors Charmaine Crabb, Glenn Davis (arrived at 9:40 a.m.), R. Walker Garrett, John M. House, Judy W. Thomas, Toyia Tucker and Evelyn “Mimi” Woodson. City Manager Isaiah Hugley, City Attorney Clifton Fay, Clerk of Council Sandra T. Davis, and Deputy Clerk of Council Lindsey G. McLemore were present.

ABSENT: Councilors Jerry “Pops” Barnes and Bruce Huff were absent.

The following documents were distributed around the Council table: (1) RAM Broad Street, LLC Development Agreement Presentation; (2) Consolidated Plan and Process Presentation; (3) 2022 TIA/TSPLOST Presentation; (4) SPLOST Update

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor B.H. "Skip" Henderson, III, Presiding

INVOCATION: Offered by Pastor Rob Strickland at Highland Community Church of Columbus, Georgia

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Henderson

MINUTES

1. Approval of minutes for the March 23, 2021 Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilor Davis being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.

UPDATE:

2. An update on COVID-19

Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson gave a brief update on COVID-19 and its impact on the community. He explained though the numbers are rising over the country, the increase in numbers for Columbus seemed to have plateaued. He commented on the mass vaccination site that is still administering vaccinations at the Civic Center and some of the challenges that have been faced during the process.

CONSENT AGENDA

ORDINANCES

- 1. Ordinance (21-015) - 2nd Reading-** REZN-07-20-2104- An ordinance amending the Zoning Atlas of the Consolidated Government of Columbus, Georgia; to rezone certain properties located at the following addresses from SFR1 (Single Family Residential 1) and NC (Neighborhood Commercial) Zoning District to GC (General Commercial) Zoning District with conditions: 4947,4951, 4955, 4959,4963, 4967, 4950, 4946, and 4942 Dekalb Drive; 4333,4339,4343,4347,4353,4357, and 4361 Hancock Road; and 8740, 8732, 8724, 8716, and 8708 Veterans Parkway. (Mayor Pro Tem) (As amended) Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilor Davis being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen thanked Chris Wightman and various members of the Maple Ridge community for taking the time to work through this rezoning. He explained there were two meetings held, and it was a great exercise of the community in working together.

- 2. Ordinance (21-016) - 2nd Reading:** REZN-01-21-0125- An ordinance amending the Zoning Atlas of the Consolidated Government of Columbus, Georgia to change certain boundaries of a district located at 2925 Manchester Expressway (parcel # 069-008-004 / 022 / 023) from GC (General Commercial) Zoning District to LMI (Light Manufacturing / Industrial) Zoning District. (Councilor Crabb) Councilor Crabb made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilor Davis being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.
- 3. Ordinance (21-017) - 2nd Reading:** REZN-01-21-3244- An ordinance amending the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) for Columbus, Georgia so as to revise Table 3.1.1 and amend Chapter 13 – Definitions. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilor Garrett abstaining, Councilor Davis being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

- I. RAM Broad Street LLC TAD Agreement Update – Rick Jones, Planning Director

City Manager Isaiah Hugley explained the purpose of the resolution listed on the Consent Agenda. He stated the approval of the resolution would allow him or his representative to enter into agreement on how the funds would be distributed based on the negotiations between his staff and the developer.

Councilor Garrett made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Woodson.

Councilor Thomas made a substitute motion to table the vote until after the presentation. Seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.

Planning Director Rick Jones approached the rostrum to give an update on the RAM Broad Street LLC TAD Agreement Proposal. He explained the developer is requesting a grant of \$1,764,100 in Uptown TAD Funding. He stated there would be \$352,820 payments over a 5-year period, beginning December 2021 and ending December 2026. (*NOTE: This update was called up as the next order of business as listed on the Work Session Agenda Item 1*)

CONSENT AGENDA (continued):

RESOLUTION

4. Uptown Tax Allocation District Fund Grant – RAM Broad Street, LLC Development Agreement

Resolution (097-21): A resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with RAM Broad Street, LLC for the purposes of allocating Uptown Tax Allocation District Funds for the construction of certain public infrastructure improvements to include construction of a walkway to connect Broadway to Front Avenue for the development known as the AC Marriott Hotel in an amount not to exceed one million seven hundred sixty-four thousand one hundred dollars (\$1,764,100). Councilor Garrett made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting.

HONORING COLUMBUS CITIZENS SERVING DURING WORLD WAR I

Councilor House informed of a project to honor the citizens of Columbus that served during WWI. He advised that we have identified 43 names and encourage others that may know of a person that lived in Columbus and served to please reach out to him.

WORK SESSION AGENDA (continued):

II. Columbus Visitor's Bureau Update - Peter Bowden, CEO

CEO Peter Bowden came forward to give a presentation updating the Council on the recovery efforts being made for the local tourism industry. He explained their focus has been on multi-generational travel and keeping Columbus in the minds of travelers.

Councilor Glenn Davis commented on the importance of sport tourism and the growing popularity of the sport Pickleball.

City Manager Isaiah Hugley responded to Councilor Davis' comments, explaining there are funds received by an anonymous donor for a pickleball court that have not been expended yet.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Have Parks and Recreation to look at the flooding issue at the dog park on South Lumpkin Road. *(Request of Councilor Woodson)*
- Have Deputy City Manager Hodge to contact her regarding some issues she notated while visiting various parks and walking trails. *(Request of Councilor Woodson)*

III. Uptown Columbus Update - Ed Wolverton, President & CEO

Ms. Helena Coates, Uptown, Inc. Chairperson came forward to begin the update on Uptown Columbus. She explained Uptown, Inc. was responsible with the appointment of Mr. Ed Wolverton, President & CEO, and she gave recognition to his contacts in the downtown development industry.

Ms. Leah Braxton approached the rostrum to give an update on the Business Improvement District, which was formed in 1999, has 14 board members, 9 ½ ambassadors with a budget of \$640,000. She explained the focus areas are cleaning, safety, beautification, and marketing.

Mr. Ed Wolverton, Uptown Columbus President & CEO came forward to introduce himself as the new Uptown Columbus President & CEO. He shared his twenty-five years of experience with River Cities and the similar traits these locations shared with Uptown. He discussed the various hotel projects, other development projects, and the importance of residential development in the Uptown Area.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Update on the Marriott Hotel Expansion Project. *(Request of Councilor Woodson)*

IV. George Washington Carver Victory Garden & Farm: Growing Hope and Reclaiming Our Community - Ronzell Buckner and Irene Shaver

Mr. Ronzell Buckner, Turn Around Columbus approached the rostrum to begin the presentation on the George Washington Carver Victory Garden & Farm. He explained the various projects that have been done throughout the city to reduce violence and crime, and explained the next plan is to develop a 10-acre garden farm on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Outdoor Learning Trail.

Dr. Irene Shaver came forward to present the design for the garden farm as professionally designed by Realm and Ed Hoffman of Columbus, Ohio. She explained the next steps for the next five years are five to eight acres of food production and orchards, creation of forty youth jobs, city-wide education programming, and community events and nutrition education.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Look at helping the project by allocating funds to be received from stimulus package, which mentions the funds are for racial equity and support of underserved communities. (*Request of Councilor Tucker*)
- Promote project on CCG-TV once complete. (*Request of Councilor Thomas*)

V. Consolidated Plan Update - Rob Scott, Community Reinvestment Director

Community Reinvestment Director Rob Scott came forward to discuss the HUD Consolidated Plan and the process of developing this plan. He explained the plan is regulated by federal law and regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the City to be able to receive federal funding for affordable housing and community development initiatives. He stated the single document plans and sets the requirements for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME).


VI. TSPLOST Update - Rick Jones, Planning Director

Planning Director Rick Jones approached the rostrum to give an update on the upcoming TSPLOST for 2022. He explained the Transportation Investment Act was approved by Georgia Legislature in 2010, allowing planning regions to use a one percent sales tax for transportation improvements for ten years. He stated as of 2021, five of the eight approved projects have been completed with the remaining three under design or construction. He explained the “all or nothing” election is scheduled for March 2022 and no county or government may opt out. He stated if approved, it would go into effect January 1, 2023, and all cities and counties will only have a ten percent match for all future Local Maintenance and improvement (LMIG) from GDOT.

VII. SPLOST Update - Pam Hodge, Deputy City Manager

Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge came forward to give an update on the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), giving the timeline for the 2021 SPLOST that will be part of the Special Election in November. She stated if approved, the temporary increase to nine percent would be for nine months, from April 2022 to December 2022. She explained the two options for the Government Center, one option being to renovate the existing tower with an addition, and the second being to construct a new complex on the existing campus site.

With there being no further business to discuss, Mayor Henderson entertained a motion for adjournment. Motion by Councilor Woodson to adjourn the March 30, 2021 Consent Agenda/Work Session, seconded by Councilor House and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Mayor Pro Tem Allen and Councilor Garrett being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Huff being absent for the meeting, and the time being 1:03 p.m.



Sandra T. Davis, CMC
Clerk of Council
Council of Columbus, Georgia