

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
March 7, 2011

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) x Hanel, x Ronquillo, x Gaghen, x Cimmino, x Pitman, x McFadden, x Ruegamer, x Ulledalen, x McCall, x Astle, x Clark.

ADJOURN TIME: 9:15 p.m.

Agenda

TOPIC #1	Human Relations Commission Report
PRESENTER	Claudia Stephens
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Claudia Stephens: introduced the board members Gwen Kircher, Patt Leikam and Diane Foley. "Billings Embraces Diversity" signs will to be posted on North and South 27th Street, maybe by the hospitals, etc. Help celebrate Passover.

Public comments: none

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TOPIC #2	Museum Project at Dehler Park
PRESENTER	Shawn Heringer
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Shawn Heringer: Billings Baseball Preservation Society. Seeking Council support to construct a privately funded museum and education center on the east side of the north entrance to Dehler Park.
- Jim Beal: presented museum schematic. \$3.5 million fund raising drive; \$2.7 million construction; \$800k for future operations and maintenance. The Billings Baseball Preservation Society Agreement would be similar to one with the Mustangs.
- Gaghen: sq ft? Jim: 7,000 sq. ft.
- Ulledalen: how far into the concourse? Interfere with anything that is planned for the future? Should you make it bigger? Jim: 10'. Should not interfere. Shawn: will consider expanding but haven't considered it yet.
- Astle: are we looking at five (5) years for completion? Shawn: Three (3) years for fundraising, one and one half (1 ½) years to build.

- Pitman: city is donating the land, are you donating the building to us? Shawn: completed building will be given to the city; we would lease it from city and pay all costs.
- Gaghen: cities are using baseball as an economic draw. Glad we're getting into this. Sponsored an initiative to recognize the Mustangs winning the "John H. Johnson President's Award".
- McCall: great presentation however it would be beneficial to modify the building for other activities. Shawn: we are open and want to work with the city on this project.
- Pitman: put similar safeguards in place with this group as for Better Billings Foundation?
- Tina: certainly, if Council directs it. There's an agreement in the package.
- Clark: still planning to build more at the park, when economy allows it. How tall is the building? It will not go above the clubhouse roof.
- Michael Whitaker: PRPL department and the Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board both approve the project.
- Astle: time limit may not be as important as with BBB because City will retain the land.
- Tina: need guidance from Council: we can put the concept on agenda or a more developed agreement. Put it on the March 28th agenda. Concept and timetable for construction.

Public comments: none

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TOPIC #3	Billings Urban Area Bikeway & Trail Master Plan Update
PRESENTER	Scott Walker
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Scott Walker: oversight committee of staff and stakeholders, met monthly. Two (2) public meetings, public comment period in January, ready to go to PCC in April. Also on the Council agenda March 14th. Trail construction on good pace since 2002. Walkers increased most since 2003. Slight decline in bicycle accidents since 2005; more trails and bike lanes equal fewer accidents. StreetPlan model: high resolution aerial map, layout bike facilities over it. Goals in the plan, as money allows, 115 miles off road, 80 miles of new bike lanes, 9 miles of new bike routes, 13 miles of new bike boulevards. Program recommendations include: Trail/bicycle user counts, bicycle parking recommendations, bicycling skills courses, law enforcement training, diversion/education class, bike month, SmartTrip program, annual report card, etc. The asset management plan is ongoing. PCC recommendation will be determined by the council.
- Ulledalen: vote on trail plan only or wait for asset management plan and vote on both? Rather delay this plan approval for about one (1) month. Tina: remove from consent agenda and delay to date certain or indefinitely.

Public comments: none

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TOPIC #4	CIP FY12-16 Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annexation Policy - Infill Policy Workshop
PRESENTER	Vern Heisler/Wyeth Friday
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Vern Heisler: goes over the process and the displays in the plan. Changes from the draft that were originally posted on the website: Newman Lane, changed some funding on trails. Fiscally constrained except parks. A big document with a lot of projects. Talked about the public meetings and comments. The main topics of discussion were the Inner Belt Loop, the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Library. Public hearing and council action at the March 28th meeting. The Downtown space study will be moved from FY 11 and moved to FY 12. Bruce: a downtown office and work space audit will be conducted.
- Pitman: pull out Inner Belt Loop, leave it in but change funding, how do we handle it?
- Tina: the CIP can be amended at anytime. Dave: FY 12 redesigns the Inner Belt Loop to work with the airport design.
- Ulledalen: keep moving forward but keep talking about route and funding for Inner Belt Loop.
- Volek: could present and hold discussion on revised route on March 21.
- Cimmino: can't take action. Wasted design money?
- Dave: no, eventually we will need two (2) roads. We will need a road on top to develop as building starts.
- Pitman: concern about the changed route is not securing right of way for old route.
- Dave: confusion over which plans are referenced, landowners don't want to sell at this time if there's no road; it is difficult to bond with arterial fee.
- Ulledalen: asked all departments to review their budgets and projects. Like the alternative because it reduces the urgency and burden on Zimmerman Trail.
- Pitman: would like to meet with staff to talk about how to finance this without debt financing. Need more solid answers from FAA and The Billings Rod & Gun Club concerns.
- Dave: this relieves the problem with Billings Rod & Gun Club.
- Binford: want to talk about saving money for the city. Roadway alignment along our west is not a slam-dunk. Answer today from the FAA is no, due to impeding on the approach to the runway. Need to spend some money on design options and see if we can mitigate the concerns.
- Clark: how accurate is this on costs?
- Dave: we are stating the worst case costs. Heard concerns from public and council and have worked hard to find an option. It can be built without bonding. We have the draft report on Zimmerman trail improvement and bridge or tunnel is \$100 million so we'll need to work with the existing roadway, so any extra traffic from the Inner Belt Loop will burden it.

- Hanel: put the realignment of the Inner Belt Loop on the March 21st work session agenda.
- Wyeth: annexation policy amendments, some minor wording changes, 2008 map changes, and lastly reflecting changes to Urban Planning Study requirements when proposals are made to expand the red area on the map. Two (2) documents needed are a resolution to adopt changes to annexation policy and an ordinance to align the code with the annexation policy (Urban Planning Area elimination). There could still be one map change, north of old Kmart. The Infill Policy Workshop is scheduled for April 26 and 27 at the Depot. Montana Association of Planners, HBA and realtors are contributing.

Public comments:

Roy Neese, 2323 Constellation Trail, Heights Task Force chairman: Inner Belt Loop is needed as proved by the Father's Day tornado in June. The City Charter states the city must provide safe routes for the citizens of Billings. Heights Task Force has studied this. HKM looked at this in 2005 and dismissed it due to airport. The Heights Task Force does not endorse the alternative plan. Ask that the Inner Belt Loop right-of-way be purchased and construction be funded with arterial fee bonds.

Tom Zurbuchen, 1747 Wicks Lane: Wicks Lane from Main Street to Bitterroot Drive should not be improved as in the CIP. \$2.3 million of misc road work including stormwater trouble spot reconstruction, arterial road construction and pavement, curb paint markings, specifics to be decided by staff. Hope that you'll remove this spending from the CIP. PAVER uses \$300,000 of arterial funds for overlay – contrary to the ordinance purpose. \$60 million to rebuild the wastewater plant.

Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue: slide that shows Newman School from TIF is incorrect. Would have liked to see the documents that you're studying ahead of time.

Jerry Thomas, 2060 Edgewood Drive: want to see improvements on S. 32nd Street West between King and Gabel. SID 1360 helped develop 500 acres. Lots of other money has been used in the area. There has been a substantial increase in use. There is a dangerous drop south of the BBWA Bridge on the canal crossing on 32nd Street West. This should be a short term priority and Inner Belt Loop and OBL should be long term projects. Dave: Public Works has looked at the road improvements but need right of way and want to assess adjacent properties however there is a large piece of land that is still in the county. The city would have to buy all property on the east side of the road; the other side is in Transtech.

Mark Boyd, 1925 Lake Elmo Drive: negative impression of the alternate proposal for the Inner Belt Loop. Alternative is a panic response and will kill the correctly aligned roadway.

Brenda Boyd, 1925 Lake Elmo Drive: stick to the original alignment for Inner Belt Loop as established. The Federal monies will go away if something is not started soon. We are moving backward in the new plan.

TOPIC #5	TRP/ERP
PRESENTER	David Watterson
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- David Watterson: Technology Replacement Plan. Plan purposes, process.
- McFadden: airport items such as GPS to replace radar – FAA funds equipment in the tower
- Hanel: number of people in the information technology department? 19
- Tina: the information technology department is funded by charges from the departments both within and outside the General Fund and cost allocation, unique to Billings and does provide for use by all the departments.

- Lee Stadtmiller: Equipment Replacement Plan. Plan purposes, process, equipment
- Ulledalen: Federal Funding wish list request was for radio replacements.
- Tina: spent the money for other things, not as high priority because they still work and ask for federal dollars. Cameras and MDTs.

Public comments: none

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Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Roy Neese, 2323 Constellation Trail: I don't read all councilmembers' emails, but am disturbed by some that I have read. I would like to see you treat people better in your emails. Please be respectful to your constituents, even if they are rude to you. Responses about lawsuits, gun to the head, etc.

Ulledalen: did Heights Task Force send people to all CIP community meetings to bring up the Inner Belt Loop?

Roy: yes.

Additional Information:
