

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**December 9, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor

Mayor Vinis opened the December 9, 2019, work session of the Eugene City Council.
Councilor Zelenka arrived at 5:45pm.

1. Committee Reports and Items of Interest

- Councilor Semple – expressed frustration that the City does not have any more shelter beds than it did last winter and that a lot of money was being spent in the meantime moving homeless protesters around the city.
- Councilor Taylor – announced that she would retire from City Council in January 2021; shared information about Lane Regional Air Protection Agency's work on the Cleaner Air Oregon initiative.
- Councilor Clark – expressed appreciation for Councilor Taylor's many years of service.

2. WORK SESSION: Town Square Project Update

Urban Development Manager Will Dowdy, Francesca Gambetti of Shiels Oblatz Johnsen, and Ian Gelbrich of FFA Architecture and Interiors gave an update on the project's recent developments. They also presented initial information on the topics of leasing a portion of the office space, potential underground parking, sustainability certification, and seismic standard options for a future Town Hall building.

Council Discussion

- Councilor Clark – was not supportive of the chosen site for a future City Hall; urged his fellow councilors to decide on a budget first before considering design values.
- Councilor Zelenka – said he thought it made more sense to decide on the features of the building first and then on a funding plan; supported voting on the topics that same night.
- Councilor Syrett – said she wanted more information prior to voting, including information about the viability of renting office space in City Hall.
- Councilor Taylor – supported underground parking, community use of the City Council meeting rooms, and a life-safety level of seismic supports in the City Hall building.
- Councilor Semple – said she was leery of renting office space when the City did not anticipate having enough space for all its own offices in City Hall; strongly supported opening the council chamber for community use; wanted an orientation toward sustainable design while being mindful of the cost.

- Councilor Pryor – requested a summary of the previous values work done; voiced concern about the complexity of adding more floors for rent; said he would like an alternative to \$9M underground parking; supported public use of council chamber; encouraged trying to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver level; said he wanted to build to a standard that would make City Hall usable after an earthquake.
- Councilor Yeh – expressed interest in knowing more about the reasoning behind the proposals; supported of above-ground parking for the costs; agreed with Councilor Clark that she would like to decide on a budget first, but noted that some costs may pay for themselves and asked staff to account for that; said she wanted a higher level of seismic standards; agreed that having a summary of the work council had done in the past to identify values for building a City Hall would be helpful
- Mayor Vinis – asked for more financial information when staff returned; emphasized the importance of the building being operational after an earthquake.
- Councilor Clark – repeated his request that council decide on a building budget first; said he wanted the cost to rent additional space elsewhere in the city factored into the total City Hall cost per square foot; urged council to hold onto the option to utilize the EWEB building until it learned how much it would cost to build on the Butterfly Lot; said he thought council should admit to not being able to afford the second phase of the project.
- Councilor Syrett – said she thought there may be other strategies to obtaining parking downtown; asked for confirmation from staff that all the City buildings built in the last 20 years had been LEED certified; asked council to consider building sustainably without necessarily going through the process for a LEED certification.
- Councilor Zelenka – said he thought it would cost more money to build additional office space rather than rent downtown; supported using some of the building for community meeting space; said he was not interested in renting space to other groups; voiced concern that underground parking was too expensive, but spending some funds on making existing parking safer would be worthwhile; said LEED Silver would lower operating costs; supported seismic standard that would ensure building use following an earthquake.
- Councilor Taylor – said she did not think the City should rent some of City Hall for office space; thought City Hall underground parking was essential; supported a council decision on what it wanted first before figuring out how to fund those ideas.
- Councilor Yeh – supported the idea of not having the building be LEED-certified while still meeting the same sustainability standards.
- Councilor Clark – asked staff about the cost per square foot; said he thought the City couldn't afford a second phase of the project; expressed interest in collaborating with the County to build more parking above its underground lot; reiterated his desire for council to decide on a budget first.
- Councilor Syrett – supported the City exploring other green building certifications beyond LEED; said she thought the seismic resiliency considerations would be prudent; wanted to hear from staff about additional avenues for funding the project.
- Councilor Pryor – agreed with Councilor Syrett on the need for funding ideas; wanted the design to incorporate council's values in a cost-effective way.
- Councilor Zelenka – requested funding options and cost estimates for sustainability elements and seismic standards.

- Councilor Taylor – said she would support fundraising ideas.
- Councilor Clark – said he wanted the sustainability pricing to factor in local costs, particularly with electricity being so inexpensive locally.
- Mayor Vinis – thanked staff and councilors for the discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

[Recorded by Cas Casados]