

MINUTES
SPECIAL\JOINT CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA
YUMA CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM #190
ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA
June 23, 2021
5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nicholls called the Special/Joint City Council Worksession to order at 5:05 p.m.

Councilmembers Present: Shelton (5:20 p.m), Morris, Watts, Knight, McClendon, Shoop, and Mayor Nicholls

Councilmembers Absent: none

Design & Historic Review

Commissioners Present: Rushin, Moody, Sheldahl, Rubio and Anthony

Staffmembers Present:

City Administrator, Philip A. Rodriguez
Various Department Heads or their representative
City Attorney, Richard W. Files
City Clerk, Lynda L. Bushong

I. CITY OF YUMA'S VISION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

Mayor Nicholls summarized the process of how the Strategic Plan was established and noted that public engagement and Council discussion was key in the writing of the Vision Statement. He reviewed each of the Strategic Outcomes and stated each one shares different characteristics of the City's historic areas.

Rodriguez discussed the following four current projects:

- **Drake Project**: this project is a demolition and rebuild of a 3 story building that contains 14 residential units located on 2nd Street

Rushin declared a Conflict of Interest on this project.

Discussion

- Because the building is over 100 years old the decision to demolish it was a difficult one. However, adding a condition that a new building must be ready to build (funded) and met the new health standards made the vote from members a little easier. [**Moody/Rubio**]
- Although there is no parking garage included in this plan, public/private partnerships should be considered to resolve parking inadequacies. [**Rubio/Watts/Linville**]
- There is a demand for High Density residential in this area and the current building has exceeded its lifespan of being safe to occupy. [**Moody/Knight**]
- Viable buildings in the Historical Downtown area should not be demolished just because they don't serve the needs of the occupants. The County should be asked to reconsider tearing down the building they are in, as it is prime downtown property.
 - There are foundation issues and employees that work on the 3rd floor are getting sick.
 - Citizens need to speak out, as discussions on this matter between the City and County have not been successful.

- It is agreeable that Government is a compatible use in the Downtown area.
[**Moody/Knight/Mayor Nicholls/Shoop/Rushin**]
 - No opposition to opportunities for the Multi-Modal Center; however not if it means loosing old buildings. [**Moody/Shoop**]
 - Development should maintain the historical presence in this area as well as incorporate modernization with history. The developer is utilizing some of the old bricks from the original building and proposed naming the building Drake Flats. [**McClendon/Linville**]
- Home2Suites: located in the downtown area near Pivot Point.

Discussion

- Concerns expressed that the Home2Suites was not built to aesthetically fit in to the Downtown area. However, it does fill the purpose of bringing people to the area.
 - Although the zoning is different than the neighboring Pivot Point hotel, the Home2Suites does meet the Secretary of Interior standards.
[**Moody/Rushin/Sheldahl/Mayor Nicholls**]
 - The City has done a great job with the Riverfront area and Wetlands, but each project needs to be taken independently to see if it meets the standards and fits in with the plan.
 - There is a fine line to meeting aesthetics and standards, but not discourage economic investment. [**Moody/ Rushin/Morris**]
- LaQuinta Hotel: located near the mall district next to the Pacific Avenue Athletic Complex (PAAC)

Discussion

- Design was approved by Design and Historic Review Commission (DHRC), but there is concern that the round-about is too narrow.
 - Roundabout is proposed to be widened to two full lanes once the 2nd development (same Developer) is started. [**Moody/Rubio/Kramer**]
- Puckett Building: a 3,000 square foot building located across from the Federal Court House

Mayor Nicholls declared a *Conflict of Interest on this project.*

Discussion

- The design and materials being used are impressive and the project will be an asset to the corner.
 - The design captures the City's spirit and was approved at an earlier meeting today by DHRC. [**Crist/Knight/Rushin/Sheldahl**]

Rodriguez then displayed a video Tour of Main Street

Discussion

- Signage emphasizes the Yuma brand
- Efforts of Gowan to rehabilitate buildings and keep the historic feel is appreciated

- The Historic Post Office, built in 1934, anchors the Downtown area.
 - Not sure it fits with current downtown area; it is more like the old City Hall, Court House and Heritage Library.
 - Some buildings do not match each other, yet they are unique and fit the historic area well. [Mayor Nicholls/Rushin]
- No opposition was stated from the DHRC members when asked about the Temporary Extension of Premises that the City has approved in the Downtown area due to COVID issues.
 - Consideration of removing the large planter boxes would create more walking room was brought forward by the businesses.
 - Perfect height for seating and some provide shade during Downtown events [Mayor Nicholls/ Moody/Rodriguez]

Before concluding the meeting, **Mayor Nicholls** asked if there are any parting thoughts to be shared.

- There is a need for safe pedestrian paths. [Sheldahl]
- Yuma has a great story and although we don't want to hold on to dilapidated buildings, we also don't want to lose the story. [Sheldahl]
- The connectivity of the Downtown area, the PAAC and Yuma Palms is key; we need to make it more aesthetically appealing. [Rushin]
- The old Kmart building is scheduled to be demolished. [Rubio/Crist]
- Historic and modern mix aesthetics are very Yuma [McClendon]
- Personal interpretation of buildings should be documented and kept at the Yuma Tourist Center; Del Sol is a defining landmark. [Shelton]
- Consideration needs to be given to what the younger generation sees for the future of Yuma; accommodations need to be made in the Downtown area to fill this need and keep our youth in Yuma. [Shoop]
- The Downtown area presents a good value of mixed uses and offers more potential opportunity for transportation and the MultiVersity. [Morris]
- The Magellan plans are only conceptual at this point; plans will come forward for approval to DHRC at a later date. Project will likely inspire new development. [Moody/Knight]
- It's a welcoming sight to see the economic development that ties the Downtown area and PAAC move forward. The beaches and Riverfront are also great successes. [Knight]
- If there are road blocks for developers, they are likely to invest elsewhere. [Knight]
- Requirements to put the best ideas forward are a must. The Downtown area has basically built itself, not the City of Yuma; however, support needs to be provided. [Mayor Nicholls]

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

APPROVED:

Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor