

DAHLONEGA CITY COUNCIL

WORK SESSION

JANUARY 5, 2009

The Dahlonega City Council met at City Hall on January 5, 2009. Council members present were Gerald Lord, Sam Norton, Michael Clemons, Terry Peters and Ralph Prescott. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

DDA Director Joel Cordle advised that the City has received a Local Assistance Grant in the amount of \$10,000. This money will be applied toward raised crosswalks for the downtown area. Raised crosswalks will improve pedestrian safety and improve economic development. He recommended that they be constructed at West Main/Church Street, East Main at Meaders Street and South Chestatee Street at the Baptist Student Union. Project Manager Ricky Stewart advised that the crosswalks will be similar to those constructed on Enota Street in Gainesville. Mr. Stewart stated that there are pro's and con's to all methods of construction. The crosswalks can be constructed with asphalt and stamped with brick or stone pattern or constructed with pre-colored concrete which is stamped with brick or stone or constructed with durable brick pavers. Mr. Stewart recommended the Duratherm Asphalt Imprint System. Council members concurred with this recommendation. The total project cost was estimated at \$25,000 with the city's share being \$15,000. City Manager Bill Lewis recommended that the funding come from the FY 09 Street Paving Budget. Council members agreed to add this proposal to the Council Meeting Agenda for approval.

Council Members received a draft of the Hancock Park Pavilion Rental Rules and Policies. Council discussed whether the entire park can be rented and after some discussion and minor changes the majority of council members agreed with the rules as presented.

The council was given a proposal from GMRDC to conduct a boundary study for B-3 and CBD. The total cost of the services is \$3,000. This will include updating the existing resource inventory, submitting this in a format that will be compatible with the city's data base and for GMRDC representatives to serve as a consultant to the city and the Historic Preservation Commission.

City Manager Bill Lewis asked the council to reconsider the plans for completion of Project C. He advised that we now have more information available with which to evaluate the cost and ease of construction of Contract C. The original plan was to have city forces complete the force main portion of Project C and contract out the gravity portion. The intention was to try and work with one of the contractors from the Timken project on contract B for a change order for the gravity portion of the project thus saving money on bidding, contract mobilization, etc. Both of the contractors looked at Contract C and they have stated concerns about the location of the line from Zaxby's to Taco Bell. The

narrow ROW, sidewalk replacement, guardrails, and steep terrain to be dealt with on the South side of Morrison Moore Parkway are a concern. Both contractors have said these obstacles will drive the construction cost up. Both the contractors have advised we could save considerable construction cost by crossing the road at Zaxby's and using the north side of Morrison Moore Connector down to Taco Bell where we would cross back over to the south side. Making this change will require some redesign of the project. The survey work and redesign will cost approximately \$25,000. \$20,000 is available in Task Order # 12 plus another \$5,000 is needed to redesign the gravity portion of the project. Mr. Lewis recommended that the council approve bidding the gravity and force main section of the project in order to obtain a better price. The bidding and contract services will be handled in house. Council members concurred with the recommendation.

Council members were made aware of the circumstances involved in certified letters received by the council from a private property owner. The council was assured that staff has met all requirements of the state concerning determination of location of water sources on private property.

The council met with members of the Dahlonega Planning and Zoning Commission concerning their recommendations for changes to the city's sign regulations. Mayor Gary McCullough advised that a Public Hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. for citizen comments.

Council members and Planning Commission members advised that they have several issues with the sign ordinance as drafted. Some of the issues discussed were:

Article 6.1-Area of Sign and Article 7.13-Maximum size of sign. This is not clear and needs to be clarified. There is some confusion about the area of a sign consisting of the entire area including any type border and if the sign has two faces that are parallel the size of the sign is one-half the area of the two faces. This is not clear and needs to be clarified.

Section 6.3-Illumination. It was commented that a lot of back lit signs already exist and this is not fair to new business owners if they are not permitted in the future. It was pointed out that signs will be approved by the Planning Director in the future.

Section 7.6-Inflatable Signs. Inflatable signs have been added as allowable under special circumstances for 7 days one time annually. Council members and Planning Commission Members agreed that they should not be allowable.

Section 6.4-Type Styles. Council members and Planning Commission members recommended that an illustration of the type styles allowable be included in the ordinance.

Section 8.6-Informational Signs. This would include political signs and limit them to two allowable on a single lot. It was pointed out that the city cannot regulate the content of the sign. The intent is to regulate the amount of signs and the size. We can limit the number of signs but we must guarantee free speech.

Section 13-2-Non Conforming Signs-g. Council discussed whether signs would be required to be removed within 30 days if there is a change in ownership of the property or the business and decided to make no changes to this section.

Article 4- Window Signs- Any signage that is located inside the building within 3 ft. of the window. Sam Norton asked how do you interpret this. After discussion it was decided that anything that is meant to be advertising would be considered signage.

Section 8.10-Out of store marketing devices. It was agreed that out of store marketing devices would not be allowable in the H-B and CBD zones.

Section 10.9-Identification Labels. The city will issue a sticker bearing the same number as the permit. It was agreed that this will apply only to permanent signs and a picture of the sign will be taken to be included in the file. This will apply only to new signage. Grandfathered signs will also be labeled with a different color label.

Section 10.5-2-The value of the sign. It was agreed to add monetary value of the sign.

Mayor Gary McCullough stated that the reason people come to Dahlonega is its charm and we must keep Dahlonega a better place to live and work.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.