

Start: 5:30 pm**Adjourn:** 9:56 pm

Present: Alderpeople Rue Simmons, Suffredin, Revelle, Rainey (late), Fleming, Fiske, Braithwaite, Wynne, Wilson, Mayor Hagerty, Clerk Reid

Suspend rules to allow zoom meeting passed 8-0 (Rainey absent)

Mayor's Announcements

COVID 19 report: numbers have gone down, moving from tier 3 to tier 2 mitigation measures. More information will be forthcoming. We are moving to phase 1B with vaccines. Timing and number of doses controlled by IL Dept. of Public Health. Went through vaccine process.

Reported passing of Julian Junior Mance, jazz pianist from Evanston, and acknowledged Marta Torres who was murdered at IHOP. Took a moment of silence to honor the 104 Evanston residents who died from COVID.

No announcements from city manager or city clerk.

Public comment

Much of the public comment was in support of SB1, the proposed skate park. Over 20 people, including tweens, teenagers, older skaters, an EPD officer and skate part developers spoke in support. Asked to leverage Ridgeville youth skaters to evaluate designs.

Many residents spoke about SP4, a resolution authorizing the city manager to initiate an RFP to repurpose a city-owned lot at 506 South Blvd. Most were concerned about the possible rezoning from R4 to R5 or R6. Some said that there has been lack of involvement from people in community. Two said they support it but it needs to be delayed. One thinks that the zoning proposal is very confusing. A neighbor who lives across the street said that no one in the nearby assisted housing has been included in meetings about the property. He would like to keep it at R4 so it would flow with rest of community. The homeowner adjacent to parking lot said that he thinks low/duplex homes should be built, he doesn't see R5 or R6 there.

Another resident said he supports low to moderate income housing but was concerned about rezoning. An R5 development would be a 43% height increase over R4; R6 is even more at 85 ft. He suggested 12-16 R4 townhomes and thought that the city should consider donating land, developers would line up.

A low-income disabled senior involved with a homeless coalition said that the community did not approve. Another neighbor is concerned about height of the project. He believes that there is a lot of affordable housing in Evanston and agrees this is not family housing. One was concerned with impact of density and 3 bedroom units on Lincoln and Nichols schools which are at capacity. She asked how many subsidized units are on Hinman between Sould Blvd. and Main.

A resident said that 506 South Blvd. should be 100% affordable. It's near to transit, so perfect opportunity to have affordable housing. Some supported the idea of family housing, two to three BR units, and we should push the community to think about what we can do besides the same old. The city

owns the land, and the proposal possibly is to gift or sell. We should consider a community land trust. Permanent sale for temporary benefit is not desirable.

Other comments:

- commended Interfaith Action for helping the homeless and supported a permanent 24/7 shelter;
- expressed disappointment that affordable housing steering committee has been in hibernation and said we need a plan;
- a second ward resident asked about the new proposed building on Greenwood – why is it before DAPR tomorrow when there have been no community meetings about it. (NOTE: after public comment, Alderman Braithwaite said that he did not receive notification of the project before the DAPR meeting either. He asked to cancel the DAPR meeting and the developer should present at a ward meeting)
- stated that Black landlords are targeted for code violations, not white landlords. The white woman on 1932 Jackson made a killing;
- lack of grants for small minority landlords providing affordable units. It is odd to find money to build a skate park – she is in favor of it but it is odd. The same people seem to get help. A building on Jackson/Wesley has boarded up units – where is the affordable housing in wards other than 5? She is waiting for R5A rather than R5.
- Spoke about a client of connections who needs an apartment and said that Black males aren't being placed.

SP1 Skate Park for discussion

Discussion about temporary vs. permanent skate park. Rainey was concerned about temporary facilities, wanted to go for a real skate park. Suggested bonding for it and said we can do a “mini Robert Crown fundraising opportunity for people with deep pockets.” Fiske wanted to hear from skateboarders about what they want. Asked who can help pay for it.

City Manager Storlie said that we have been talking about skate park for a decade. Residents are complaining about skateboarding at Fountain Square. Lawrence Hemingway gave a presentation with multiple location options. Temporary is on table because there is an immediate need. A temporary park would be \$30K and could be built in 3-6 months. A permanent would be \$350-\$750K.

Wilson and Wynne supported both a temporary and permanent park and thought it would be an excellent opportunity for partnership w Ridgeville. Suffredin thought it was crazy that we are talking about this in our current financial situation. He wondered if they looked at the lakefront as a location. Rue Simmons acknowledged the need for outdoor recreation, but shared Suffredin's concern. If we could get a private partnership, then temporary proposal would be okay but objected to Twiggs park lot.

Fleming stated that the meeting was supposed to be focused on affordable housing and it's now almost 8 pm. Ridgeville has been talking about a skate park for a year.

Rainey moved **SP2– Affordable Housing and Homelessness Update**

Storlie commended staff for getting grants. Johanna Nyden gave a housing and homelessness update presentation that included the city's immediate response to COVID, short and long term impacts and trends. She believes we need a new comprehensive plan for city of Evanston, it's been 20 years.

Sarah Flax went through the city's response to COVID's impact on the homeless population that consists of two groups: chronically homeless and "invisible" homeless. There is an inequitable impact on people of color. We have an immediate need for day and night shelter for 50 people; and an ongoing need for a 24/7 shelter for 90-100 people, 50-60 permanent supportive housing units, and rent subsidies. She reviewed resources for our unstably-housed population. The city has expended almost \$10 million to address immediate needs.

Jessica went through COVID housing issues including evictions and impact on small landlords; there are inequities in financial impact. About 5,000 (20%) of our community might need help meeting monthly expenses. She discussed a new client-focused approach and the restructured allocation process of CDBG & Mental Health Board funding.

Marion presented on COVID's impact on housing and lifestyle. People are working from home, outdoor spaces are in high demand. Ris enters are staying in urban areas. Average rent declining slightly. Smaller buildings are in high demand. Evanston ownership market is hot due to low interest rates, aversion to change, telework. Between 2010-2019 Evanston had a significant loss of Black residents. Long term trends include walkability, community, lack of affordability. We can expect increased income inequality and greater affordability issues.

Megan reviewed our 2020 actions and accomplishments: funding affordable housing; IHO is creating more affordable units in market rate developments. IHO is not a solution for very low AMI. She discussed ADUs and expanding and maintaining homeownership.

Next steps are balancing immediate and long term needs.

Braithwaite's takeaway was that will never be enough affordable housing to remedy this issue. He thinks homeownership is the solution. Revelle and Wynne asked about the 24/7 year round shelter and the permanent supportive housing. Johanna said that we need to make sure we coordinate with other planning efforts.

Wilson commented that we need to make changes in our long term direction and thinking and doesn't want to overlook jobs, wages, economic development. He wants to make more legal resources available to people. Rainey said that we need to know how many people are permanently unemployed and will need housing help forever. The community must start accepting affordable housing.

Accepted and placed on file passed 9-0.

SP3– Sale of City Owned Property at 1805 Church St.

Paul Zalmezak recommended the partnership and asked to return Feb 8 to request the authority to negotiate. The affordable housing partnership is between HODC and Mt. Pisgah Ministry for mixed use development including housing, retail, community space.

Rue Simmons, Wilson, Braithwaite and Rainey spoke in support.

SP4– Resolution 8-R-21 Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate a Request for Proposal Process for the repurposing of City-Owned Real Property Located at 506 South Boulevard

Wynne was strongly opposed to rezoning to R6 and stressed that the council not deciding to rezone the property. We are just getting an RFP.

Paul Z. needed to stress that staff needs to execute on the council's vision, which is add more affordable units. There is no proposal yet. He said that he would take R6 off the table. R4 would yield 12 units. He suggested rezoning to R5 with a 4 story limit. There are many options. It could be a privately owned development that may have public financing. He explained that a land donation would turn into tax credit that funds construction.

There was some discussion about zoning. Fleming expressed disappointment at the neighbors' NIMBY attitude. She and Suffredin didn't want to take R6 off of the table. Suffredin pointed out that the lot is a city asset, not a ward asset. Wilson and Wynne thought R6 wasn't in scale. All agreed that it should be family affordable housing. Fiske was concerned that her constituents would think there is some secret plan for the new council to change zoning city-wide. Fleming does think there needs to be a conversation about zoning.

Storlie ended the discussion. She will bring the RFP to council in Feb.

Approved 9-0.

Call of the wards

Rue Simmons, Fiske Braithwaite, Wilson– no report

Revelle, Suffredin– Jan 28 6/7 ward meeting

Rainey–good meeting with CTA re yellow line

Fleming– 9th ward meeting tomorrow 7 pm

Wynne– thanks to everyone for signing up for office hours, town hall mtg Jan 28 7 pm

Hagerty– vaccine info will be updated. COVID QA this Friday at noon.

Adjourn 9:56 pm