

Observer: Betty Hayford

Aldermen present: All (via Zoom)

Media present: not possible to observe

Meeting began: 6:05 pm

Meeting ended: 9:35 pm

The meeting opened with a motion from Alderman Wilson to suspend the rules to conduct the meeting by internet teleconference. The motion was seconded and passed without dissent.

Announcements. The Mayor provided an update on Coronavirus developments. Cases continue to increase although the rate of increase is slowing. Hospitals continue to have sufficient beds and equipment. The Evanston Community Foundation as established a fund to assist residents with essential needs and encourages contributions. The stay at home order will continue through the month.

The City Manager asked Audrey Thompson to report on the Summer Youth Employment Program. The Job Fair and Job Readiness Training had to be cancelled, but the City is continuing with on-line registration and training. Pre-registration numbers are high and employers have listed a wide range of jobs.

Public Comment. Public comment included 7 who called in through Zoom or phone, and 8 who had sent comments to be read by the Clerk and entered into the record. Many varied issues. 2 opposed to funding for coach house at 1930 Jackson, 1 in favor; 1 support of 605 Davis; 1 support for development at 2024 Wesley; 1 concerned about city budget; 2 opposed to carrying on of city business during pandemic; 1 praising city's strong response to pandemic; 1 concerned about definition of essential businesses; 1 praising work of animal rescue group.

Special orders of Business. (SP1) Application for Appeal of the Preservation Commission Denial at 2404 Ridge Avenue. Alderman Revelle moved to hold the item until the next meeting. The motion passed 9-0.

(SP2) Granting a special use for St. Athanasius School and Parish to Expand Off-Street Parking. St. Athanasius has applied to withdraw its request. Alderman Revelle moved to accept the request to withdraw. There is no longer a need to expand parking. The motion to accept the withdrawal passed 9-0.

(SP3) Adopt the 2020-24 Consolidated Plan; Adopt the 2020 Action Plan; Approve the Reallocation of Unspent CDBG Funds from Prior Years. Motion to adopt these plans passed 9-0.

(SP4) Authorizing the City Manager to Allow a Fence to be Repaired and Replaced in the Alley Right of Way at 3434 Park Place. Passed on a voice vote 9-0.

(SP5) Extending the Declared State of Emergency to May 11, 2020. Alderman Suffredin asked why this is necessary. The Mayor responded that he doesn't want anyone to think the crisis is over. Special authority may be needed. The motion passed 8-1, Suffredin voting no.

(SP6) Discussion of City of Evanston/LEND Small Business Emergency Loan Program. Paul Zalmezak, Economic Development Manager, explained that LEND, a non-profit, will leverage City funds to assist small businesses. Rainey said aid to small businesses is vital. Rue Simmons agreed, but suggested grants instead of loans. The leaders of LEND explained that many loans were forgiven, but when businesses could repay loans the funds could be recirculated to other businesses. It was moved and seconded to allocate \$100,000 from the workforce Development account to provide loans to small businesses in partnership with LEND.

(SP7) Discussion of possible changes in Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Lara Biggs, City Engineer, reviewed proposed Capital Improvement Projects to identify projects that might be postponed due to budget pressures. She explained that some projects should be continued because external funds were available. Alderman Fleming asked several good questions about what could be deferred. Staff will continue to keep Council informed about projects.

Consent Agenda. Alderman Fleming introduced the consent agenda. Minutes for March 9, March 17 and March 26, as amended, were approved. The consent agenda passed, 9-0. Included on the consent agenda was the Introduction of approval of a special use permit for a planned development at 1555 Ridge Avenue which had been amended in the Planning and Development Committee.

Alderman Fleming then presented items which were removed from the consent agenda from **Administration and Public Works**. First was approval of a contract to purchase 189 trees for spring planting from Suburban Tree Consortium for \$39,900. Alderman Suffredin recommended cancelling the contract. Rainey and Wilson pointed out that this is part of a long term plan and involves working with a consortium of cities. The motion to approve the contract was approved 8-1, Suffredin voting no.

Fleming presented approval of a settlement and release of claims in Lamaster v. City of Evanston. She said she was opposed to the settlement because the claim resulted from poor staff behavior and staff should receive better training. The motion passed 7-2, Fleming and Suffredin voting no.

From **Planning and Development**, Suffredin presented approval of application of Homes Community Development Organization Funds to construct a coach house for affordable rental by Housing Opportunity Development Corporation (HODC). The coach house will be built at 1930 Jackson, on a property on which HODC has constructed an affordable house. HODC is an active housing non-profit. Rue Simmons explained that she agrees with one of the public comments that local landlords providing affordable housing should be helped, but these funds could only be used for this purpose. The motion passed 8-0, Alderman Revelle abstaining because she is on the board of the organization.

The next item involved allowing the Mayor to appoint the chair of two committees, Plan Commission and ZBA, and revised the membership of Design and Project Review Committee (DAPR). Wilson moved, and council agreed, to separate the item into three parts to be voted on separately. The motion to allow the Mayor to appoint the chair of Plan Commission failed 7-2, Braithwaite and Revelle voted in favor. The motion to allow the Mayor to appoint the chair of ZBA failed 8-1, Revelle voting yes. The motion to revise the membership of DAPR passed 8-1, Suffredin voting no.

For Introduction was approval of a Special Use for a Planned Development at 605 Davis for an office building requiring a number of Site Development Allowances. Alderman Fiske opposed the motion because of the large size of the building and the safety concerns related to the alley. Staff is working with the developer to address the issue of alley safety and increase public benefits. The motion passed 8-1, Alderman Fiske voting no.

Plan Commission had denied a request to amend the Zoning Map to remove 2044 Wesley from the oWE West Evanston Overlay District. The owner is planning townhouses on the site. Rue Simmons stated that the developer has not been very communicative about his plans and the neighbors are opposed. She suggested the developer provide more details about his plans and meet with the community. Alderman Revelle agreed that the proposal is too open-ended and more specific plans are needed. The motion to uphold the Plan Commission denial passed 6-3, Wilson, Fleming and Rainey voting no.

Alderman Fiske presented two items from **Human Services Committee**. First was a motion to accept and place on file the Review of Evanston Police Complaints and Comments Report. Alderman Fleming stated that she is willing to accept the report, but she is disappointed that the new Review Board has not been named and there are no civilians reviewing complaints. She urged the Mayor to make appointments. The motion passed 9-0.

Next was adoption of amendment to the City Code approving restrictions on the sale and adoption of cats, dogs and rabbits in Evanston. Alderman Fiske said the language is still being revised, and moved to table until the April 27 meeting.

Call of the wards. Several Aldermen praised the good work of City staff and strong cooperation of city residents in a difficult time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.