

Observer: Betty Hayford

Aldermen present: Eight aldermen. Braithwaite came late. Rue Simmons absent.

Media present: Four: Evanston Now, Roundtable, Review, NU Daily.

Meeting began: 7:55pm

Meeting ended: 11:05pm

Announcements. The City Manager announced plans for habitat restoration in the Clark Street Bird Sanctuary. Work will concentrate on the south side and removal of ash saplings.

Public comment. 30 signed up for public comment; 1.5 minute each. 7 including high school students and Chamber of Commerce head supported Climate Action; 4 spoke about St. Athanasius parking – 3 against, 1 for; 4 in support of Evanston Voter Initiative; 3 about problems in snow removal; 2 urging better dialogue between Council and citizens; others concerned about release of police data, importance of census; preservation of trees.

Special orders of business. (SP1) Appeal to Council of Preservation Commission Denying Certificate for 612 Judson Avenue to Replace 21 Wood Windows with Vinyl (actually Fiberglass). Alderman Wynne announced her support for the appeal, citing, the extensive costs of the renovation so far, the owners' efforts to respect the historical aspect of the house and the problem presented by the windows. Rainey said owners need flexibility. The motion to uphold the appeal passed 7-1, Fiske voting no.

(SP2) Sustainability Legislative Update. Kumar Jensen, Sustainability Coordinator, presented a legislative agenda outlining next steps to move towards sustainability and carbon neutrality. Phasing out single use plastic, improving large building emissions releases, and expanding recycling and composting are priorities. Fleming asked about timelines, and Wynne and Revelle urged Council to support these initiatives. Storlie said that staff would be bringing proposed actions to Council It was moved and approved to accept the report and place it on file.

(SP3) City Manager Recruitment Schedule. Heidi Voorhees, representative of GovHR, outlined steps in the City Manager search, starting with public meetings to identify desired characteristics in the new City Manager and a survey distributed to the community. They will be seeking extensive input from the community, and then publicizing the opening, providing information to applicants and screening applicants. Suffredin asked whether GovHR was covered by FOIA laws. Voorhees said it was not. GovHR will prepare a recruitment brochure outlining community priorities for Council to approve. It will do video interviews, gather information and check references. Council will choose finalists, probably 7 initially then reduced to 3. Candidates will be assured confidentiality until the final three, which will be introduced to the public, perhaps in June. Voorhees said confidentiality was important to attract candidates in the initial stages, and the job market was tight for good positions like Evanston because of the strong economy and retirements of baby boomers. The report was accepted and placed on file.

Consent agenda. Mayor Hagerty asked Aldermen to identify items to remove from the consent agenda. A16, A18, P1, P5, P7 were cited. P2 creating a new zoning district north of Emerson has been held in Committee. A16 amending parking on Central Street and Hurt Avenue has been tabled until September. The rules were suspended on P3 amending the zoning ordinance to establish definitions and provisions for additional cannabis uses to allow Introduction and Action.

The consent agenda passed 8-0.

A18, amending the ordinance requiring that sidewalks be cleared of snow, ice, dirt and weeds, was moved and seconded. Wilson expressed concern that the proposed requirement prohibited "any accumulation" and allowed zero tolerance. This seems excessive and might open property owners to liability. Revelle shared his concern and argued that business district enforcement should be the priority. Johanna Leonard explained that priority responded to complaints and that enforcement always started with a warning. Wilson pointed out that her expression of flexibility in enforcement was not in the language of the proposed law. Storlie pointed out that in

current practice around 20 citations were issued each year and enforcement resources are limited. Aldermen expressed concern about the language and asked the City Manager to make some revisions and return to council. It was moved, seconded and approved to hold the item, make changes, and return to council.

Item P1, to approve a vacation rental license at 2723 Noyes Street was moved and seconded and passed 7-1.

Item P5 granted a special use for St. Athanasius School to expand off-street parking in its R1 district. The original proposal had been denied by the Zoning Board. Alderman Revelle pointed out that the school created traffic congestion and there was no good solution to the conflict between student safety, parent pick up and drop off needs, and the convenience of the neighbors. Granting this special use will improve a congested situation. Other aldermen supported the concerns of the neighbors. The vote split 4-4, with Suffredin, Fleming, Fiske and Braithwaite voting no. Mayor Hagerty would usually cast the deciding vote, but he recused himself because he has a child in the school. The motion failed to pass on a 4-4 vote.

Item P7, amended the Tree Preservation ordinance to restrict the removal of large old trees. Aldermen supported the goal of aiming to protect old trees, but noted the difficulty of enforcement. It was moved and seconded to hold the item for revision.

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 11:05pm.