

COUNCIL MINUTES  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING

July 19, 2011

A special workshop meeting of the City Council of the City of Jacksonville was held Tuesday, July 19, 2011 beginning at 5:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Jacksonville City Hall. Present were: Mayor Sammy Phillips, presiding; Mayor Pro-Tem Michael Lazzara and Council Members: Jerry A. Bittner, Fannie K. Coleman, Randy Thomas, and Bob Warden. Councilman Jerome Willingham was absent. Also present were: Richard Woodruff, City Manager; Ron Massey, Assistant City Manager; Grant Sparks, Public Services Director; Reggie Goodson, Planning and Development Services Director; Glenn Hargett, Communications and Community Affairs Director; Carmen Miracle, City Clerk; and John Carter, City Attorney. \*An audio recording of the Council Meeting is presently available for review in the City Clerk's Office.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sammy Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilman Bittner, seconded by Councilman Warden, and unanimously approved to adopt the agenda as presented.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES REVIEW

Mary Sartell, Senior Planner, distributed a copy of the draft ordinance amendment and provided a brief overview of the proposed updates to the Downtown Guidelines. There were four districts in the Downtown as follows: Residential 3 (RD-3), Residential 5 (RD-5), Office and Mixed Use (OMU), and the Central Business District (CBD). The four districts currently operate under a Downtown Design Guidelines framework that was adopted in 1998. Ms. Sartell explained the purposes of updating the guidelines included to bring the guidelines up to date and to provide additional clarity and flexibility. The updated guidelines included the recommendations from the 2007 Downtown Master Plan, which were also included in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) rewrite. The updates were reviewed by the UDO Steering Committee as well as the downtown building community to ensure support of the updated standards.

Ms. Sartell reviewed the significant changes as well as the standards that would be permitted, not permitted, and those which would require a special use approved by Council. She

also reviewed the proposed changes to the Sign regulations for downtown which were fairly strict under the 1998 guidelines but would now be more flexible.

Mr. Woodruff said that staff would provide Council with an Executive Summary of the key changes that they could review at their leisure. Mr. Woodruff and Ms. Sartell proceeded to review in detail the significant recommendations of the ordinance amendment. The review included residential and commercial architectural design standards, façade, setbacks, parking, sign regulations, landscaping, etc. In addition they reviewed the context based format of the standards and the graphics that helped to clarify the requirements. Another improvement included having all standards related to a particular zone within one area of the document so that users did not have to reference additional sections of the ordinance in order to review all standards related to a district. In addition, the flexible options allowed the downtown developers more choices in materials, especially in being able to use newer materials which allowed the industry more flexibility as they design their buildings.

In terms of fences, Mayor Pro-Tem Lazzara asked if the issue related to ambiguous fence type definitions had been clarified. This related to an issue earlier in the year involving picket fence design. Ms. Sartell said yes, and stated that the issue of type of fences allowed downtown was clarified by specifically listing the products and maximum heights of fences in front, back, and side yards. In addition, fence types such as picket fences had been defined to include requiring the slats to spaced 1.5 inches apart to qualify as such.

Councilman Thomas asked if locating retail space on the ground level with residential located above was allowed. Mr. Woodruff said yes, and gave an example of a building with a restaurant or office on the lower level with residential on the upper levels.

Mr. Woodruff said it was important for Council to note in the CBD zone that the standards were recommending a six story maximum building height. For comparison, he said the new Justice Complex would be considered five to six stories in height. This responded to the expectation that Jacksonville would continue to achieve a tremendous amount of economic growth in retail and quality office complexes and the downtown area could be available for some of that growth.

Councilman Thomas asked if the developer of such a building would be obligated to provide parking. Mr. Woodruff said no and pointed out that there was no requirement for development in the downtown to provide parking. Mr. Woodruff added that staff was finishing up the Downtown Parking Report for Council's review. This report provided an analysis of all

of the current downtown parking.

In terms of signage, Mr. Woodruff pointed out the change to allow sandwich board signs, which would be limited to 8 square feet. However, it was understood that if sidewalks were only four feet wide, the signage could become a hazard. Therefore, staff hoped to look at restructuring a lot of our sidewalks downtown such as across from the Justice Complex. They were currently working to see if those sidewalks could be redesigned to 8 or 10 feet wide

A brief discussion was held on the specialty eating establishments such as ice cream parlors and coffee shops which were allowed in the standards to offer drive through service; however, larger eating establishments, such as restaurants were not. Councilman Warden who served on the UDO Steering Committee stated that the Committee had worked hard to define a specialty eating establishment.

Mr. Woodruff stated this product was a team effort between the steering committee appointed by Council, the building and development industry and governmental staff. There were a lot of changes proposed and he asked Council to review it and to contact him if they had questions or needed more information. This item would be scheduled for a future Council meeting for further discussion and consideration of approval.

#### ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Bittner, seconded by Councilman Thomas, and unanimously adopted to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 PM.

Adopted by the Jacksonville City Council in regular session this 3rd day of August, 2011.

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Sammy Phillips, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Carmen K. Miracle, City Clerk