CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Planning and Zoning Board Special Meeting
October 28, 2021

The Planning and Zoning Board met in formal session Thursday, October 28, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Grant Misterly, Chairperson and the following were present:

1. Roll Call:

Grant Misterly, Chairperson
Mike Davis, Vice- Chair
Jon DePreter
Sarah Ryan
Carl Blow
William Masson
Charles Pappas

City Staff:

David Birchim, Director, Planning & Building Department
Amy Skinner, Deputy Director, Planning & Building Department
Ruben Franklin, Director, Public Works
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Elyse Anderson, Recording Secretary

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2. General Public hearings for Items Not on the Agenda

(None)

Ms. Skinner stated a class from Flagler College was present to watch Government in Action, as well as Commissioner Blonder.

3. Discussion and Recommendation Related to Mobility Planning in the City of St. Augustine

Ms. Skinner spoke regarding the topic. She said State required the City to review transportation and transportation planning. She said the City was required to have a mobility plan. She advised they had updated transportation element in the Comprehensive plan for the past few years which helped establish the framework for the mobility plan. She stated they were reviewing land development regulation, that would eventually be adopted into the land development code. She said there would a mobility fee component that went along with the plan and this would be to make improvements to the City. She said the goal was to improve the City's mobility, and quality of service on the roadways. She said there would be other forms of movement in the City and there would be other options available such as biking and walking. She said moving forward, they wanted to have the item on the official agenda for December for a recommendation to the City Commission. She stated this was associated with a fee and would have a ninety-day waiting period before implemented in early spring. She stated after this they would look at updating the parking code to be consistent with the mobility plan.

3. (a) a. Discussion and Presentation of the Mobility Planning and Mobility Fee Technical Report and Sample Fee Schedule by the City's Mobility Consultant, Jonathan Paul, AICP, Principal, NUE Urban Concepts

Jonathan Paul, New Urban Concepts

reviewed the topic. He said this was a vision over the next twenty years of how people would move around the City. He stated this was for new development to mitigate the impact on the transportation system. He said there was a technical report and a summary that detailed the plan and overall calculations and should be available on the website. He said the mobility plan had been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. He said they were at steps three and four which was to develop the fees and implementing ordinance. He said there were several legal and statutory requirements that must be met when developing the fee.

He said the City was moving people in a variety of ways from bike share, walking, ride share, and others. He reviewed the following:

- Focused on moving people and safer when speeds were slower
- Allowed the City to continue its planning for shared streets and innovative street designs
- First step in the mobility plan was roadways, with addressing regional and through traffic
- Complete streets were retrofitting existing roadways to add wired sidewalks or protected/buffered bicycles lanes
- Shared street concept was curbless, slower moving vehicles, and people moved freely
- Identified major roadway improvement on the peripheral area of the City design for long range transportation plan
- Regional through traffic was at roughly 17% that went through the City
- Mobility plan would help eliminate through traffic
- Bicycle Pedestrian Network was a system of trails, protected bicycle lanes, and wider multi use facilities
- For the US1 resurfacing thought FDOT would add protected or buffered bicycle lanes
- Discussed Multi-model transportation to encourage people to park once outside the historic downtown and use separate mode of transportation into the City
- Reviewed circular routes to connect various garages with destinations in the City
- All those helped to frame the mobility fee
- Benefits to having mobility fee allowed City to pursue federal funds through the NPO process
- Allowed for congressional legislative appropriations
- Allow for opportunities for public and private partnerships
- Mobility fee was a way to help mitigate traffic as a one-time fee assessed to new development only
- Would not be assessed to existing businesses or existing homes
- Based on the mobility plan and assume a certain level of funding available through gas tax or appropriations that recognize other cost that help funding
- Fees would be assessed at time of building permit application
- Permit would be issued when paid
- Would apply if redevelopment of an existing building were a more intense use, would pay the difference
- Would be able to offset cost if developer made improvements such as sidewalk or dedicated right-of-way
- County did not enforce the City to collect the fees

Mr. Blow noted that the County did not share any fees with the City.

Mr. Paul continued:

- Legal requirement had to be met
- Any type of fee had to show a need for improvements which was the Mobility Plan
- Must provide a benefit to the people who pay it, have to show the build for the projects in the plan
- Fee had to be proportional or related to the impact of the new development
- Technical report calculation and demonstrated how legal tests were met
- Report was essential to forming the basis of the mobility fee
- Proposed establishing two assessment areas within the City
- Could be changed but provided different fees based on location
- Proposing a City-wide benefit district to be spent anywhere within the City for improvements
- Two assessment areas: one downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, and second area was the outlying neighborhoods and new development and capture future annexations
- Monies collected can be spent in the overall area
- Fees were different for the two areas

Mr. Paul show the Board the two different districts and discussed the trip rates based on the two areas. He discussed the schedule fees and the High Daily Trip Generator/ Impact Land Use. He said the High Daily Trip Generator calculations were businesses that were visited more frequently. He said these were reflected in the proposed Mobility Fee schedule.

Mr. Paul stated St. Johns County had focused on the residential uses. He said the fees were much higher than the City of St. Augustine.

Mr. Davis within the County, there was a fee for just roads which he associated with the mobility fee. He said the county included much more and did not think this was an accurate comparison.

Mr. Paul said this information had been pulled from the County's technical report from their website.

Ms. Skinner stated she table included from St. Johns County and the fee was higher than the City.

Mr. Davis clarified that the table was accurate, but the verbiage was inaccurate.

Mr. Paul stated this was only for transportation. He said they were only focusing on roadway impacts. He noted the roadway impacts were significant as it related to residential uses.

He explained there were two districts OMMD (Outside the Multimodal District) was anything outside the downtown area would pay the overall higher use, and the other was inside the downtown area, MMD. He said the Board could choose one assessment area.

Mr. Misterly said he felt during the last meeting, the Board had asked for more information and felt the conversation had not extended past last months meeting.

Mr. Paul stated the difference was trip length within the core area. He said the fees were based on a variety of overall factors. He said it was in the technical report which explained most people were being charged for a mile and a half of travel.

Mr. Pappas asked what trip lengths were calculated.

Mr. Paul replied that it was based on the type of uses and they were not charging for impacts outside the City.

Mr. Pappas said assuming the trip length within the City might not be a reality of how citizens utilize the City.

Mr. Paul stated the City was around two miles wide and four miles long and the overall travel was around a mile and a half to two miles.

Mr. Pappas stated it felt like an assumption that the trip length was less than the trip length if outside the downtown area.

Mr. Paul stated there had not been any changes to the uses, but this had provided the Board with time to review the technical report and answer any questions.

Ms. Skinner stated that since the last meeting included the final recommendations from the Building Code Task Force, this was an opportunity for the community to have input and to gather more information from the Board. She asked if there were any recommendations or directions they needed to move toward.

Mr. Misterly stated he provided questions and thought those would be answered, but they had not. He felt this was the same meeting that was held two months ago since no new information had been provided.

Mr. Paul stated he was more than happy to answer any questions the Board had related to the presentation.

Ms. Lopez referred to Mr. Pappas' comment regarding trip lengths and stated it might not reflect a person's movement exactly, but it was had to be reduced to within the City limits. She said the trip lengths were not an accurate picture of what a person's driving usage was all the time.

Mr. Pappas understood but thought it was more of a theory of how residents lived within the City.

3.(b) Planning and Zoning Board discussion and recommendation

The Board and Mr. Paul Discussed:

- Understood fees and calculations but wanted to know the theories on how they were generated
- Felt that fees could have unforeseen consequences
- If fees were higher outside the downtown area it could incentivize building in a more congested area
- Thought the list shown should be simplified and not broken down as much due to potential changes in the future
- Overall trip lengths could not be charged for in the County
- Thought the core part of the City was traveled less
- Thought better to recognize many uses than not enough since this was the first time proposing a fee

Mr. Pappas asked if the fees could be more for those entering the City.

Ms. Lopez responded those who were being charged the fee were not people coming and going; it was the new development or a business with a newly expanded area. She said it was not a person being charge. She stated the only way to do so would be to quantify a dual rational nexus that could be mathematically shown with data.

Mr. Paul said it came down to who issued the building permits. He said there would have to be an agreement to allow the City to charge a mobility fee for development outside the City and have St.

Johns County collect the fee on the Cities behalf.

Ms. Lopez stated they did not have the ability to construct a table to break it down to 'user from the City' and 'user from the County'.

The discussion continued:

- Would expect building a sidewalk or making road improvements downtown would cost more than outside the downtown area
- Mobility impact in downtown cost more to address than mobility impact on the outskirts of the City
- Felt the cost should be inverse
- There were differences with cost in the Core part
- Sometimes came down to a policy decision
- Some communities actively incentivize development in the core area or other ways to encourage positive development
- Could use this as a tool for the City Commission to recommend encouraging a certain area by recognizing a lower trip length or they could have a uniformed rate City wide
- Understood the rationale for two zones, but leaned towards one zone for the City
- Did not want to incentivize more development in the core of downtown
- If ordinance were to be recommended should be clearly stated that because something was listed with a fee, did not mean it could be built in the area if not appropriate
- Section indicated list provided were for mitigating impacts nothing to do in terms of right for a use
- The ability to do a use was with the future land use element and zoning
- Questioned how many driving uses would be allowed in the multi-model district
- Plan would attract or encourage around 1.7 million dollars in extra revenue
- Monies could be used to achieve the goals listed on the schedule
- Was it assumed the revenue would be obtained plus the mobility fee

Ms. Skinner asked if they were referring to the examples in the packet. She said she reviewed 2017 and 2019 and it was not scientific, but she tried to determine the amount of development, both residential and commercial, based on the uses and square footage. She said she used the proposed table inside and outside the City and tried to come up with examples for an average household size and average impact. She said for those two years she calculated a potential collection fee of 1.6 million dollars. She stated this was strictly the mobility fee which were about one percent of the value of the construction and was trying to rationally understand the economic impact it could have on development in the City. She said this was an example of the fees that could be collected. She said the collected fees would be used on mobility improvements or fees could be offset if builder/developer were to provide a service to the City.

Mr. Paul stated any type of fee had to recognize available funding sources and historically, the City was able to obtain grants, appropriations, allocations, and other sources which had to be recognized to offset the fee. He said the amount would vary from year-to-year. He said this was also a tool for the City to help obtain funding for the projects.

Discussion continued as follows:

- Mobility plan on the Island started at State Road 312 and A1A
- Seemed to be two different bike paths: human powered and electric powered (e-bike)
- Unsure of the difference between the two paths
- In talks with the State to have protected bicycle lanes
- Plan funded by Florida with Sun Trail Network would be a trail
- Electric bikes were not allowed per legislation on the Sun Trail Network
- Thought in next legislation session would review if E-bikes were allowed
- Plan was to encourage parking on the peripheral and use another mode of transportation to enter the City

Mr. DePreter asked if the E-bike program was doing well.

Mr. Franklin stated there had been 1,000 riders in September and thought it would increase in the cooler months. He said the ribbon cutting ceremony would be on November 8, 2021 at the Visitors Information Center.

Mr. Misterly stated he was in favor of the mobility fee and thought there was value in having a consultant that worked all over the State.

Discussion:

- Including every event into an ordinance did not seem feasible and was included in sperate document called Administrative Procedures Manual
- Did not feel items should be passed off to the Administrative Procedures Manual but needed to acknowledge for the community
- Community needed to know how this would affect them
- County and City rates were different and was unsure if items were being over or under charged for
- County elected to charge residential full travel length of eight miles and the City could only charge for two miles
- County was able to use different metrics based on road capacity and trip lengths that were county wide
- Properties could be annexed after construction to avoid County fees
- Annexed properties would pay a lesser fee as the fees with the City were lower
- Unable to recommend until able to review the updated ordinance
- Updated ordinance should have available by December
- Questioned if fees would slow down residential annexation into the City
- Could slow down the residential but might increase the amount of commercial with having different fees than the County
- Might become a bigger incentive to add more businesses
- Main roads in the City were State owned
- Not charging for roads but the retro fit for roads
- Monies could work in conjunction with the State to fix the road
- Monies would be used for multi-model uses

Mr. Franklin stated with the Department of Transportation (DOT) projects it was helpful to have money to contribute and, in some cases, could help accelerate the project. He said the fees could be spent as they accrued on San Marco Avenue, Anastasia Boulevard, and King Street. He said most of the time the contributions were based on improving underground utilities.

Mr. Davis asked if the fees being collected would have to be used on mobility.

Mr. Franklin answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Davis asked if existing building were exempt from the ordinance or if an addition were to be added to an existing building, would a percentage of the fee would apply to the additional square footage.

Mr. Paul said the fees would be based on the schedule or future use, and if the usage was the same or less there would be no extra fee; however, if the use was more they would be able to obtain a credit for the existing use and pay the difference.

Mr. Davis asked how the mobility fee off-set how the roadway improvement monies would be spent.

Mr. Franklin said the roadway improvements were paid for through parking fees and the projects listed in the twenty-year plan would help but would not pay for everything.

Board Discussed:

- Thought it should be for road improvement instead of road repair
- Legally fees had to be used for the added demand
- Unable to use fees for backlog or maintenance
- List of mobility projects fees would need to be spent on the list provided
- Monies would be spent on the multi-model projects
- Thought annexation was a good idea if a special tax was developed
- Mobility went hand and hand with livability and downtown was not just for tourist

Mr. Franklin stated since the City developed the Mobility Plan, staff was able to meet with DOT and the North Florida Transportation Organization and the long-range plan was adopted by them into their long-range plan. He said there was a recent study completed on Anastasia Boulevard and there were 1,700 survey responses, and in turn they were developed into two different plans and now they reference the Mobility plan when working within the City.

Discussion continued:

- Mobility Plan laid out a general time frame for projects
- City Commission would prioritize the projects annually
- The prioritized project list and a recommendation list was sent to the State
- Perhaps could have higher priority if City could contribute monies
- City had mobility issue and thought plan was well developed
- City should have transparent method to collecting fees
- Unsure how to collect revenue from people who lived outside the City
- 2019 Florida Legislation stated only by statue were able to charge for new construction at the time of filing for a building permit
- Food Trucks were not assessed since there was no building permit
- New bed tax does allow for charges like transportation needs triggered by tourism
- Issue was bed taxes was controlled by the County
- Thought the mobility issue was day trippers
- Unsure how to collect fees from the day trippers
- To deal with the immediate influx would be through parking
- Could limit parking on street to business and create a residential parking program

- City could control the charges for the parking
- Board had previously recommended a variable parking fee
- Policies had been adopted that move towards having a variable cost
- Parking garage was a flat rate but wanted to transition into an hourly rate
- Was cheaper to park on street than in the garage
- Recommended making the ordinance more transparent
- Felt the vacant building credit should be longer than three years

Ms. Skinner said they were open to having another workshop on the topic in December.

Mr. Misterly said he was not in favor of passing the Ordinance on to the City Commission and wanted to have another meeting with more explanations. He said if other Board members had specific questions, those could be sent to Ms. Skinner and have answers at that meeting.

Ms. Skinner said if anyone had any additional notes or questions, they were able to email them. She said the best possible date for a workshop would be December 21, 2021.

Ms. Ryan asked if it could be added onto the December regular meeting agenda.

Ms. Skinner said it could be added in December, but it was up to the Boards discretion.

Ms. Pappas commended the staff and encouraged them not to forget the other parts of the City and not just the downtown area.

4. Public Comment and Discussion Related to Mobility Planning in the City of St. Augustine

BJ Kalaidi said Masters Drive and South Dixie Road was not being taken care of. She thought it was very important that the verbiage was correct when writing an ordinance. She said the Board should remember residents paid both City and County taxes. She felt that annexation would not stop but would continue. She thought the Board was on the right track.

5. Adjournment

Having no further business, Mr. Misterly adjourned the meeting at 11:30 P.M.[1]

Grant Misterly, Chairperson

[1] Transcribed by Elyse Anderson