CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Regular City Commission Meeting
Monday, December 9, 2024

The City Commission met in formal session Monday, December 9, 2024, at 5:00 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call: Nancy Sikes-Kline, Mayor/City Commissioner
Barbara Blonder, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
Cynthia Garris, City Commissioner
Jim Springfield, City Commissioner
Jon DePreter, City Commissioner

Also Present: David Birchim, City Manager
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Darlene Galambos, City Clerk
Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager
Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager
Corey Sakryd, Director, General Service
Amber Foschaar, Grant Administrator
Stephen Slaughter, Director, Public Works & Utilities
Amy Skinner, Director, Planning and Building
Melissa Wissel, Director, Communications
Jennifer Michaux, Police Chief
Elyse Wiemann, Recording Secretary

MOMENT OF SILENCE and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Sikes-Kline requested a moment of silence and Vice-Mayor Blonder led the pledge of allegiance.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

2.A. Modification and Approval of Regular Agenda

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to approve the Regular Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

3. Special Presentations, Recognitions and Proclamations

3.A. Certificate of Recognition: Recognizes the City of St. Augustine Fire and Police Department employees and the National Park Service for the life-saving event at the Castillo de San Marcos on September 14, 2024. (J. Michaux, Police Chief)

4. General Public Comments (3 minutes per individual)

The Commission heard from the following members of the public:

- Scott York
- BJ Kalaidi

5. Consent Agenda

David Birchim, City Manager, read the Consent Agenda.

CA.1. PREVIEW OF UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS.

CA.2. THE FOLLOWING ORDINANCES ARE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR SECOND READING ON DATE:
Ordinance 2024-34: Amends the Zoning Designation of 30.15 acres of property from City of St. Augustine Industrial and Warehousing (IW) to City Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 404 Riberia Street

CA.3. REMINDER OF UPCOMING MEETINGS:
•January 13, 2025, 5:00 PM–Regular City Commission Meeting
•January 27, 2025, 3:30 PM–Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting
•January 27, 2025, 5:00 PM–Regular City Commission Meeting

CA.4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR COMMISSION MEETINGS:
•October 28, 2024–Regular City Commission Meeting
•November 12, 2024–Regular City Commission Meeting

CA.5. RELEASES OF LIEN FOR UNIT CONNECTION FEE MORTGAGE(S):
•284 W. King Street and 0 N. Whitney Street-David Masony
•211 Alerto Street-Bradley J. Priester and Cheryl L Priester

CA.6. PROPOSED PROCLAMATIONS, CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION/RECOGNITION. (COMMISSION APPROVAL REQUIRED). (TO BE READ AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING): NONE.

CA.7. NOTIFICATION OF PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION ISSUED:
Certificate of Appreciation for Sister Yvonne Nicholson in recognition of her leadership, dedication and commitment to serving the community. (C. Garris, City Commissioner)

CA.8. Advancement of the Forson Family for selection as the recipient of the 2025 De Aviles Award. (M. Wissel, Communications Director)

End Consent Agenda

5.A. Additions, deletions or modifications to Consent Agenda

(None)

5.B. Approval of Consent Agenda

MOTION

Commissioner Springfield MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner DePreter and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

6. Appeals

(None)

7. General Public Presentations, Items of Great Public Importance, and Other Items Requiring Public Hearings

7.A. General Public Presentations

(None)

7.B. Items of Great Public Importance

(None)

7.C. Other Items Requiring Public Hearing

(None)

8. Ordinances and Resolutions – Public Hearing Required.

8.A. Ordinances – Second Reading

(None)

8.B. Ordinances – First Reading (only if required by law)

(None)

8.C. Resolutions – Public Hearing (only if required by law)

(None)

9. Ordinances and Resolutions - No Public Hearing Required

9.A. Ordinances – First Reading

9.A.1. Ordinance 2024-34: Amends the Zoning Designation of 30.15 acres of property from City of St. Augustine Industrial and Warehousing (IW) to City Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 404 Riberia Street. (A. Skinner, Director Planning and Building)

Amy Skinner, Planning and Building Director reviewed the Ordinance.

James Whitehouse, representative for the applicant, presented a brief overview of the project.

Commissioner Springfield noted there could be an increase in vehicular traffic but felt that would not have a massive impact on the area. He said he was in support of the project.

Commissioner Blonder asked if the landscape plan in the staff report was the one that was proposed for approval. She asked for certainty that the project would use the native plants.

Mr. Whitehouse confirmed that native plants would be used.

Commissioner Blonder said in the rendering, there were locations where permeable pavers were shown. She said for parking, driving, and pedestrian walkways she was advocating for permeable pavers.

Mr. Whitehouse asked what particular areas were being referred to.

Commissioner Blonder said any area where there was a potential impermeable surface where flooding occurred often. She said she wanted more filtration and storage of water to help reduce those impacts.

Mr. Whitehouse replied that a lot of the area was finished; however, some of the buildings were being renovated. He said the surfaces were either hard packed such as the boat storage area on the south end, which they wanted to improve, but did not intend to install new material. He asked if any new material were installed did Commissioner Blonder want permeable pavers.

Commissioner Blonder said she was advocating for permeable pavers throughout the site, not just in new locations. She said the entire site was being beautified and from the contextualization provided and there were many permeable surfaces at ground level.

Commissioner DePreter noted his ex parte communication and advised he had reviewed the Planning and Zoning Board discussion on the project. He said he was in support of the project moving to second reading. He asked about the storm water clarifications and if that information would be available at second reading.

Mr. Whitehouse said there was a berm that was intended to be installed on the southwestern end of the property with a retention pond to help retain the water to avoid it from entering the marsh. He said they were working with the Water Management District. He said they did not have the final permits and those were unrelated to the PUD, but that was the intent. He said the documents may be available but was unsure.

Commissioner DePreter asked for any information they had be provided at the

next meeting. He asked for more details on the property related to the Border Patrol.

Mr. Whitehouse stated that that property was not within the PUD, although, they owned it. He said it was separated from the PUD as it was a safety issue. He said this was closed property and within the lease it was to be protected for the Border Patrol and Customs Agency. He said there were no improvements to this piece of property as part of the PUD.

Commissioner Garris confirmed there would not be a restaurant nor condos on the property, and the main reason for the PUD was to increase the height of the buildings to fifty feet.

Mr. Whitehouse replied in the affirmative.

Mayor Sikes-Kline stated she was concerned with the use of the clubhouse.

Mr. Whitehouse said on the site plan this was for Marina use plus a ship store. He noted this was mainly for showers, lockers, restroom facilities and part would be for the parts store use for patrons repairing their vessel. He said the patio was a staging area and no special events would be allowed on the patio. He said it was staging of vessel when entering and leaving the property.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said the patio area could be a good place for permeable pavers as it was 800 square feet. She suggested clarifying the permitted accessory use language and notate that the clubhouse was related to the marina operations. She asked if there had been a neighborhood meeting.

Mr. Whitehouse agreed he could update the language about the Clubhouse. He said there was a neighborhood meeting held at the Galimore Center and the main concern from the neighborhood was if there would be condos or a hotel. He confirmed that would not take place.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said she was in favor of moving this to second reading for public hearing. She said this would be a great impact to the maritime economy and very positive.

Commissioner Blonder clarified that the applicant was requesting an entitlement to increase the height from thirty-five feet to fifty feet and some setback changes. She said if those entitlements were granted, they would be giving up the ability to have a hotel, motel, full-service restaurant, special event venues, significant reduction in the intensity of allowable uses, and a reduction in maximum lot coverage from 80% to 50%. She reiterated the encouragement of using permeable pavers throughout the site.

Ms. Skinner replied in the affirmative.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said this was one of the better PUDs with the defined deviations from the City Code as it made it very clear to the Commission and the community what was being requested.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Ordinance 2024-34 on first reading and moved to second reading. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, read the Ordinance.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-34

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 30.15 ACRES OF PROPERTY LOCATED WEST OF RIBERIA STREET AND SOUTH OF CERRO STREET IN THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREINAFTER, FROM ITS CURRENT CLASSIFICATION OF CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING (IW) TO THE CITY

CLASSIFICATION OF PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD); PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERANCE OF INVALID PROVISIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: DePreter, Springfield, Garris, Blonder, Sikes-Kline
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

9.B. Resolutions

9.B.1. Resolution 2024-44: Authorizes a utility work agreement between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the City of St. Augustine for utility work to be completed by FDOT's contractor as part of the project's construction. (S. Slaughter, Director Utilities & Public Works)

Stephen Slaughter, Utilities and Public Works Director reviewed the Resolution.

MOTION

Commissioner Springfield MOVED to pass Resolution 2024-44. The motion was SECONDED by Mayor Sikes-Kline.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Springfield, Sikes-Kline, DePreter, Garris, Blonder
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

9.B.2. Resolution 2024-45: Adopts a statewide mutual aid agreement with the Florida Division of Emergency Management for emergency aid and assistance in the event of a disaster or emergency. (C. Aviles, Fire Chief)

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney reviewed the Resolution.

Commissioner Springfield said he understood the purpose of it but was concerned that the state would become the authority over the City's firemen and policemen.

Ms. Lopez replied that under state statue when the governor declared a state of emergency, they had that authority under state law. She said this agreement did not give authority to the state, but it was intended to be for the state agency to be used as a clearinghouse to help other local governments with their needs.

Commissioner DePreter felt the Resolution had been clearly stated.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Resolution 2024-45. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Blonder.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: DePreter, Blonder, Garris, Springfield, Sikes-Kline
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

9.B.3. Resolution 2024-46: Continues the Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND) Waterways Assistance Program for the Salt Run Navigation Channel Maintenance Dredging. (A. Foschaar, Grant Administration Coordinator)

i. Approval of Resolution 2024-46 for FIND Waterways assistance program to receive grant funding to continue the multi-phased maintenance dredging project for the Salt Run Navigation Channel.

ii. Approval of the Interlocal agreement with the St. Augustine Port, Waterway & Beach District (SAPWBD) to receive grant funding.

Amber Foschaar, Grants Administrator reviewed the Resolution.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said this was for maintenance.

Ms. Foschaar said this was for an additional 6,000 cubic yards of spoils.

Commissioner DePreter said he was very aware of this as it had been done in his neighborhood for some time. He thanked Carl Blow for being the Florida Inland Navigation district representative and also those at Port and Waterway.

MOTION

Commissioner DePreter MOVED to pass Resolution 2024-46. The motion was SECONDED by Mayor Sikes-Kline.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: DePreter, Sikes-Kline, Garris, Springfield, Blonder
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION

Commissioner Springfield MOVED to APPROVE the Interlocal agreement with the St. Augustine Port, Waterway & Beach District. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Blonder.

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Springfield, Blonder, DePreter, Garris, Sikes-Kline
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

10. Staff Reports and Presentations

(None)

11. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

(None)

12. ITEMS BY CITY CLERK

12.A. Approval of the 2025 City Commission meeting and holiday schedules. (D. Galambos, City Clerk)

Darlene Galambos, City Clerk reviewed the 2025 City Commission Schedule and the Holiday schedule.

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to APPROVE the 2025 City Commission and Holiday Schedule. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

12.B. Request for Two (2) Appointments-Civil Service Board. (D. Galambos, City Clerk)

Darlene Galambos, City Clerk requested two appointments for the Civil Service Board. She said these positions were advertised as required and applications received were from the current members Steven Moranda and Loren Lueders, who were eligible for reappointment.

MOTION

Commissioner Springfield MOVED to approve the two applicants. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Garris and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

12.C. Notification of term expiration for the City of St. Augustine Poet Laureate. (D. Galambos, City Clerk)

Darlene Galambos, City Clerk advised the Commission of the term expiration for the Poet Laureate. She said the term would end January 13, 2025, at which time new applications would be provided for consideration.

Commissioner Springfield said he was uncomfortable selecting a poet. He

suggested having a group of experts reduce the number down to two or three for the Commission to consider; similar to how the art piece was selected.

Commissioner DePreter asked how many applications had been received.

Ms. Galambos replied that as of now, there was one.

Commissioner Garris suggested having the current poet laureate write a poem for Arbor Day, that way there was no rush to select a new one. She said writing a poem for Arbor Day could be her last duty.

Commissioner Blonder agreed with Commissioner Springfield but felt the Commission had made a good choice and wanted to recognize the City's first poet laureate, Norma Sherry for the great work she had done. She said she was in support of the current process.

13. ITEMS BY CITY MANAGER

David Birchim, City Manager replied to public comment and noted there would be a full report in relation to Nights of Lights (NOL) in February to assist with appropriate changes. He said the report would be complied from the different departments that assist with NOL within the City. He understood there was a deficiency in public restrooms, and that was the reason for porta potty's on Light up Night!; however, those were removed to not have them in the plaza, but understand the need for them. He said the hours of the restrooms at the Visitors Information Center and at the Casa Del Hidalgo were extended during the Night Life Ordinance process. He said the public restroom at the Florida Cracker hours could be addressed. He said the lighting study requested during the Night Life Ordinance was recently completed and would be provided in the new year to show where pedestrian lighting was needed for safety.

Mr. Birchim advised that the tentative date for the update for the noise ordinance was January 27, 2025, meeting. He said during this meeting, it would be introduced to the community and commissions and if the Commission chose to move forward, public outreach would begin.

14. Items by Mayor and Commissioners

Mayor Sikes-Kline said she was concerned with pervious surfaces and native plants related to PUDs and rezonings. She said those policies should be memorialized for City projects, whereas it may not be enforceable for applicants or City Code, the City could follow these regulations. She proposed those policies in resolution form and present them as there were some projects coming up and having those policies in place could be useful.

Mr. Birchim said that could be incorporated into the contracts for landscaping plan funded this fiscal year for the downtown area, for the part north of town where San Marco and US1 meet, and at the Zora Neal Hurston Park.

Mayor Sikes-Kline stated there was a median project was in progress.

Mr. Birchim replied that the median on US1 was funded by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for landscaping and native landscaping could be incorporated.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said there were several PUDs in process currently and this would not apply; however, in the future she proposed a super majority vote for a PUD. She stated she had spoken to Ms. Lopez, City Attorney regarding the issue. She said the reason for the change was it would provide more leverage as PUDs impacted the City more than anything else. She said this could help protect the history of the city and limit the overgrowth of commercial activity. She said if the commission was in agreeance, she wanted staff to develop previsions and let the commission review

the information and decide on how to proceed.

Commissioner Blonder was in agreement and thought it was a tool that could be used to help protect the character of the City.

Commissioner DePreter said he would need ample time to think about making the change. He said either having the super majority or tightening the criteria but either way he was willing to listen.

Commissioner Garris agreed and felt there should be tighter provisions in advance. She said she was in support to review what staff could develop.

Commissioner Blonder asked if there could be a template for PUDs and deviations for the packet and for them not to be accepted by Planning and Zoning until those items were met.

Commissioner DePreter said there were many applications reviewed by the Planning Board and the clearer the application, the easier it was for them. He said the Board often encouraged the applicants to clearly define and show what they were requesting. He said he was hesitant to change the whole process but was willing to explore more communication of the project.

Ms. Lopez said she would provide at the next meeting more information regarding super majority. She said any big changes to the code or zoning would take more time and was a process.

Commissioner DePreter thanked the City Manager and Staff for the tour of the City.

Commissioner Garris was concerned with how public comment was handled. She thought the commission should be allowed to address the comments made by the public. She felt they should be able to provide feedback to the citizens to make them feel heard. She thanked the Information Technology (IT) for their assistance this week.

Commissioner Springfield said the NOL traffic was busy, and the restrooms were an issue. He said the City did not make a lot of income from NOL except by parking and very little in taxes. He said it was great for businesses and employees, but the City was having a hard time keeping up with the tourist that came through and felt more money needed to be contributed but he was unsure where the funds would come from. He suggested during NOL, Hypolita Street and Treasury Street should be closed and not allow vehicular traffic. He felt the Christmas Parade was well done but thought next year the Commissioners should be in the parade and felt this should be considered. He said the webinar from the Florida League of Cities was good as it was the kickoff to the legislative session. He thanked the Fire and Police Departments for all their hard work and dedication.

Commissioner Blonder agreed that flashing lights proposed during public comment should be installed if able to accommodate as it was a dangerous area.

Mr. Birchim advised that this road was owned by the City and it would be discussed by staff.

Commissioner Blonder noted she ran for commission uncontested and won her seat; however, did not have the chance to express her priorities this term. She said she would focus on continuous sustainability and resiliency in the City. She requested an update on the Conservation Acquisition applications.

Mr. Birchim replied that the appraisals had been received for the properties that had been reviewed by the commission and more information would be provided to the commission in January.

Commissioner Blonder continued and noted an email regarding the San

Sebastian water quality and suggested having a water quality awareness campaign to remind everyone this was an ongoing stewardship that everyone could be a part of. She asked if there were water incentive programs and if there could be a deliberate attempt for stormwater improvement for property owners and businesses. She said after Light Up Night! she enjoyed engaging the residents as she was walking. She said this interaction was magical and felt it should happen more often. She said this kind of interaction would happen more often on pedestrian streets.

Mayor Sikes-Kline agreed that closing streets during NOL could be beneficial.

Mr. Birchim replied that was going to be part of the February presentation.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said that was a great suggestion and movement in the right direction.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 P.M.[1]

Nancy Sikes-Kline, MAYOR

Darlene Galambos, CITY CLERK

CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

[1] Transcribed by Elyse Wiemann