

CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL WORKSESSION

MAY 6, 2013

CALL TO ORDER

A Council worksession of the City of Saint Marys was called to order by Mayor Sally Geyer on Monday, May 6, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Room of City Hall, 11 LaFayette Street. Notice of this meeting was sent to Council on May 2, 2013, posted at City Hall, and published in the Daily Press.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY**

Mayor Geyer expressed sympathy to Councilman Dornisch for the passing of his sister and to former Councilman Boots Bonfardine for the passing of his wife, Margaret.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Sally Geyer, Nedward Jacob, Gregory Gebauer, Richard Dornisch, Gary Anderson, Bob Roberts, Manager David Greene and Solicitor Thomas Wagner. Daniel Hepner was excused.

VISITORS

Visitors included: Clythera Hornung, Fred Haas, Bob Howard, Amy Cherry, Katie Weidenboerner, Ray Beimel, Grace Jesberger, Paul Jesberger, Richard Sadley, Tina Gradizzi, Denny Bauer, Warren Stewart, Darlene Lynch and Alyson Lynch.

Andrew Mohny did not sign in.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 15, 2013 and April 29, 2013

Gary Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2013, seconded by Nedward Jacob and all were in favor.

Bob Roberts made a motion to approve the minutes of April 29, 2013, seconded by Richard Dornisch and all were in favor.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group

Ray Beimel, Treasurer of the Marienstadt Corporation and member of the St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group, explained the Heritage Preservation Group is a committee of the Marienstadt Corporation. The Marienstadt Corporation is a 501c3 non-profit corporation whose mission is essentially to do good things for downtown St. Marys.

Susan Goetz, Secretary of the Heritage Preservation Group and board member of the Marienstadt Corporation presented the following information:

“The St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group began as a group of business owners predominantly around the Diamond, homeowners within the historic district, and citizens concerned about the increasing blight in the downtown, which is spreading onto successive blocks.

We’ve been meeting since March of 2012. We meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month at the “Visitors Center” from 12:00-1:00. You are all very welcome to attend.

The mission statement of the St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group is to advocate for, build awareness of and encourage the conservation of the cultural, historic, recreational and economic resources in the Downtown St. Marys Historic District

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John Onorato, DCED, Rich Vigilone, PA Downtown, and William Callahan, Bureau of Historic Preservation, have attended our meetings and all feel that our group is on the right path.

We have a slide-show presentation of our vision for the Diamond as a Veterans Memorial which we would like to show the Council at your convenience in the future.

We also have a Facebook page.

Bill Callahan of the Bureau of Historic Preservation: and I'm quoting:

“The second largest industry in Pennsylvania is tourism and Heritage tourism makes up the largest single chunk of those dollars. Tourists will visit communities with authentic historic character that offer shopping, dining, touring and recreational experiences. As more cultural and historic resources are lost, the cumulative effect of these losses has the potential to reach a “tipping point” where the traditional character of our community is unrecognizable. Passing this tipping point means not only loss of our cultural heritage, but a dramatic loss in economic development potential. Understanding and investing in the historic character of our community is a vital element in preserving both our cultural and economic future.”

The St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group believes that we have reached that tipping point.

Many small communities in PA have chosen this path of “Heritage Tourism” to save their downtowns and have been successful.

Our German heritage, Railroad heritage, Industrial heritage, and our Downtown should be preserved as part of the uniqueness of our community.

How can Historic Downtown Preservation help our economy and why does historic preservation makes economic sense?

The stores on the highway could be anywhere in the USA. Travel across the country and you will see the same signs as on the Million Dollar Highway. There is nothing unique there to encourage any tourists to stop.

The biggest draw in Elk County is the elk in Benezette. People travel there from 48 states and 29 foreign countries. We have to capture these tourists so that St. Marys is not just a place to drive through, but is appealing enough to encourage stopping, shopping and visiting. These often are not “cheap” tourists, but have money to spend as they are passing through often on their way north to Niagara Falls.

If visitors have traveled distances to see the elk, more than likely a unique historical, clean, revitalized community would be appealing. We have to capture these people and capitalize on the tourist aspects of having them in our

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community with specialty shops, restaurants and a pleasant downtown through which they could wander.

We also have visiting business people from the Industrial Community and the Marcellus Shale industry, which may be here for a few days and might want to take gifts home with them. A pleasant downtown would encourage them to shop here, dine here, instead of DuBois, before they return home onto I-80.

Right now they have no reason to stop in St. Marys but to continue through as quickly as possible.

And finally, something for the Council to consider is that we need a Main Street Manager who will have a total concept of the downtown from promoting and organizing events to encouraging and seeking businesses to locate in the downtown area, to coordinate façade and streetscape improvements and identifying endangered historic buildings before it is necessary to remove them.

We already have a grant writer who could possibly assume another title of Main Street Manager and could apply for the grants that are available for Main Street Projects and National Historic renovations. Tina Gradizzi could organize all the diverse groups in the City so that everyone is working towards a common purpose.

Our Historic District is already registered on the National Registry. Now we have to move forward from this point and the St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group is willing to help.”

Darlene Lynch, President of the Heritage Preservation Group and member of the Marienstadt Corporation explained the Group’s current projects were funded by a grant from the Elk County Community Foundation and a donation from the local Rotary Club. She explained possible future projects, including the Boulevard Beautification project, and the Group’s future fund raising options.

Council briefly discussed the presentation and thanked them for their presentation.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
AGENDA TOPICS**

There were no citizen comments on agenda topics.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

Consider for adoption: Ordinance No. 281, re: Revising the definition of “Shade Tree”

Ordinance No. 281 was presented for adoption amending the St. Marys City Code to revise the definition of “Shade Tree”. The Ordinance was duly advertised and displayed.

Cly Hornung, Secretary/Treasurer of the Shade Tree Commission explained the request for the revision was initially to “put into verbiage” what has been practiced by the Shade Tree Commission for many years and to protect the City from being responsible for numerous trees that are not between the City curb and sidewalk or within a City Park.

Nedward Jacob stated his concerns with the financial responsibility of the “Shade Trees”.

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Mrs. Hornung stated previously the City was very cooperative with storm damaged tree removal. She further added in the past there was a proposal considered to add a millage rate onto the tax rate, specifically for the Shade Tree Commission, which was defeated by the voters. She stated she hoped that Council at some time in the future would reconsider the millage rate option for the Commission due to the increase of available funds it would provide to maintain the large amount of "Shade Trees" and for future planting in areas where trees have been removed.

Motion Passed

Bob Roberts made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 281, seconded by Gregory Gebauer, and all were in favor, except Nedward Jacob who opposed.

Resolution No. 13-8, re: Keystone Communities Development Grant for the Depot Street Land Improvement Project

Resolution No. 13-8 was presented for adoption authorizing the filing of a grant application to Keystone Communities Development Grant for the Depot Street Land Improvement Project. The Resolution was previously tabled by Council in order to acquire more information regarding the project.

Tina Gradizzi, Community and Economic Coordinator explained there was still information needed and she suggested withdrawing the Resolution.

Motion

Nedward Jacob made a motion to withdraw Resolution No. 13-8, seconded by Gary Anderson.

Discussion

Nedward Jacob questioned if the grant would only pay for the property purchase on Depot Street pertaining to the Hotel Project and Ms. Gradizzi responded fair market values needed to be obtained and the property owners would have to agree to that value, the developer agreement would need to be in place and commitments were also required. A 50/50 match was necessary, but the developer's costs would be able to be used for the match of funds required.

Nedward Jacob then questioned if the land owners were not in agreement with a revised market value and would want the settlement value would the grant be able to adjust to that and Ms. Gradizzi responded "just cause" would have to be proven for an increase. Demolition and engineering costs would also be added to the amount.

Nedward Jacob then asked if there was a developer committed to the project and Ms. Gradizzi responded there was not a committed developer.

Motion Passed
Resolution No. 13-9, re:
Disposition of City Records

All were in favor to withdraw Resolution No. 13-8.
Resolution No. 13-9 was presented for adoption authorizing the disposition of City Records according to the Municipal Records Manual.

Motion Passed

Richard Dornisch made a motion to approve Resolution No. 13-9, seconded by Bob Roberts and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 13-10, re:
Greenways Trails and Recreation

Resolution No. 13-10 was presented for adoption authorizing the filing of a grant application to Greenway

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Grant Application for the multi-park project.

Trails and Recreation for the St. Marys Recreation Board multi-park project (Phase I).

Bob Roberts made a motion to approve Resolution No. 13-10, seconded by Nedward Jacob and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 13-11, re: Elk County Community Foundation Grant Application for the St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group Boulevard Beautification Project Motion

Resolution No. 13-11 was presented for adoption authorizing the filing of a grant application to the Elk County Community Foundation for the St. Marys Heritage Preservation Group Boulevard Beautiful Project.

Gary Anderson made a motion to approve Resolution No. 13-11, seconded by Bob Roberts.

Discussion

Council had a lengthy discussion with the Heritage Preservation Group members regarding the application and stated their concerns with the needed cooperation of the numerous Authorities, Boards and Commissions for future improvements to the downtown area.

Motion Passed

All were in favor to approve Resolution No. 13-11.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Bob Roberts questioned who was responsible for the "Welcome to St. Marys" sign along Bucktail Road that needed realigned and Manager Greene responded it was the Marienstadt Corporation project in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, but he would see that it was taken care of.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA TOPICS

Grace Jesberger commented the Intown Gardeners are volunteers who plant flowers in the downtown area and she believed they did a nice job.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Gary Anderson
WWTP Report

Gary Anderson commented the recent Wastewater Treatment Plant Report needed further information on the collection portion of the report.

Nedward Jacob
Orange Cones in Parking Garage

Nedward Jacob questioned why there were orange cones in some of the parking places in the Parking Garage and Manager Greene responded it was a leaking drain and the contractor was going to take a look at the issue.

City Webpage

Nedward Jacob commented the City webpage information needed updated.

Daily Press charges

Nedward Jacob commented he disagreed with the St. Marys Daily Press charging the City for advertising the Council agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

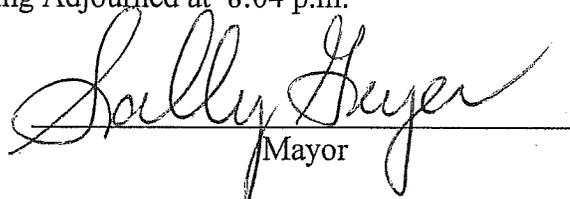
Mayor Geyer made the following announcements:

- The next Council meeting will be Monday, May 20, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Gary Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting Adjourned at 8:04 p.m.


Recording Secretary


Mayor