Introduction

Cary Town Council
Quarterly
Thursday, August 13, 2020
1:30 PM, Electronic

DRAFT (contact the Town Clerk's Office at (919) 469-4011 or virginia.johnson@townofcary.org for official minutes)

Present at Herb Young Community Center, 101 Wilkinson Ave, Cary, NC 27513.: Mayor Weinbrecht, Mayor Pro Tem Don Frantz, Council Members: Jack Smith, Jennifer Robinson, Lori Bush, Ed Yerha and Ya Liu

I. CALL TO ORDER
Weinbrecht called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. According to N.C.G.S § 143-318.13, the public was provided a means to listen to the meeting via electronic means since public gathering was prohibited by the Governor’s State of Emergency.

II. FOR DISCUSSION
Manager Stegall gave an overview of today’s agenda. He shared the purpose of the quarterly meetings is to provide the opportunity for follow-up requests and reporting out on town initiatives.

2.1 Downtown Park Update
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Director Doug McRainey presented an update on the Downtown Park.

Exhibit(s) from this topic include: Exhibit A, Presentation

Comments or questions from council:

Bush asked if the maintenance would be in future budgets. McRainey answered yes.

Frantz shared the park pictures are amazing and truly reflect the incorporation of feedback.

Robinson shared the jewel box gathering space structure seems short and boxy. She would like the structure to be reviewed to provide the structure a greater presence and timeless feel, especially the height. Robinson shared it would be a missed opportunity if the structure is not a wow factor to the park.

Bush agreed the roofline could be adjusted.

Smith shared he would like to review the structure as related to the surrounding areas to ensure there is not competition with other wow factors.

Liu referenced an example of Duke Gardens and would like the structure to have memorable architectural design. Currently, it is not unique.

Frantz agreed that a little bit more review could be done on the building. He liked that the building allows visitors to look out on all the other elements of the park.

Smith shared concerns about complexity of maintenance. McRainey shared Public Works staff are part of these design meetings and have been reviewing how much maintenance will be required. Frantz disagreed with those
concerns and used examples of how maintenance is upheld at our existing parks.

Bush shared concerns about the cost of maintenance if there is not a consistent revenue source in the park. McRainey and Stegall shared the additional adds, including the jewel box structure, will be revenue sources to the park.

Smith would like to add plaques or signs to help visitors know they are visiting a welcome and inclusive community. The plaques could be educational and used as a marketing asset.

Stegall added the interactive kiosks will provide a lot of information. He shared information about the honorary naming project in the new library. Three rooms will be named after historic figures. A similar example that Stegall has seen before and spoke about was the “did you know. . .” signs.

Robinson asked about maintenance on the wood on the jewel box structure. Stegall answered the architect recommended a wood finish that had a long life with low maintenance.

Robinson shared concern about the appearance and maintenance of poured concrete. She would like to see a lot of natural materials to balance the look and feel.

Stegall added the architect shared with him that this park is being built to such a high level that the best architects in the world will be impressed by it.

Frantz cautioned staff and council about doing too much, too soon, and too quickly. He recommended having organic monument so that adjustments can be along the way before completing additional phases.

No action taken by council.

2.2 COVID-19 & 2020 Outlook

Public Safety Director Allan Cain presented an update on COVID-19 & 2020 Outlook.

Exhibit(s) from this topic include: Exhibit B, Presentation

Comments and questions from council:

Bush asked what four services were suspended indefinitely. Cain answered with one example, the Medicine Dropbox that was previously located in the lobby of the Police Department. It will be reevaluated when services return.

Robinson asked about employees whose jobs were to be present at facilities. Stegall answered that the Parks Department has been impacted the most and is now in the process of moving programming to virtual opportunities. He talked about the mindset transition to the fact that these cancelations will probably continue until the end of 2020. He confirmed they are finding new roles for staff as staff wants to work.

Weinbrecht asked about the volume of 311 calls. Stegall talked about the
impact of the pandemic on 311 and how they managed the increase of calls by reducing wait times.

Cain concluded his presentation by updating council about zoning violation ordinance changes that were discussed at the past retreat.

No action taken by council.

2.3 Obama’s Mayor Pledge
Assistant Town Manager Dan Ault presented an update on the Obama’s Mayor Pledge.

The exhibit from this topic include: Exhibit C, Presentation

Comments and questions from council:

Weinbrecht reminded staff about the 90-day reporting requirement. Staff confirmed they could meet this requirement and discussed how this pledge will reconfirm the current, positive activities occurring in our Police Department.

No action taken by council.

2.4 Financial Update
Chief Finance Officer Karen Mills presented a financial update. The exhibit from this topic include: Exhibit D, Presentation

Comments and questions from council:

Members discussed federal funding related to the pandemic. Stegall thanked Wake County for sharing their federal allotment with the Wake County municipalities as many other counties did not share.

Robinson asked how many utilities accounts are delinquent. Mills answered that about 5% are currently delinquent.

Mills explained the fund balance of 4 months policy and shared why she believed this type of policy works for our council. Stegall added it is better to have the flexibility in reserve funds than to restrict these funds as council has a history of good financial decisions.

Robinson asked for an explanation of the difference between total fund balance and available fund balance. Mills confirmed that total fund balance includes all funds, including designated and available funds. The available fund balance is the available funds only.

Weinbrecht asked about how we pay back short-term loans. Mills answered that we float the cash.

Robinson asked if Mills felt comfortable that the rating agencies would not be alerted by this many changes at one time. Mills shared she felt comfortable with moving forward with this amount of changes.

Bush asked how the debt policy recommendations align with other municipalities. Mills explained that many other municipalities do not have a
debtor limitation at all.

No action taken by council. Without objection, council provided a nonbinding indication of direction to change these policies at a future regular meeting.

2.5 Development Update

Planning, Development Services, and Inspections & Permit Director Scot Berry and Economic Development Director Ted Boyd presented an update about development in the Town.

Exhibits for this topic include: Exhibit E, Presentation and Exhibit F, Handout.

Weinbrecht asked about any delays in inspection and gave an example of a recent call with a developer. Stegall shared staff would look into it. Berry confirmed there have not been any substantial delays.

Members discussed the timeline of the construction for Fenton.

Frantz encouraged staff to stay committed to the structured parking lot beside the Methodist Church. This lot may assist when the new park is built as the new deck is full the majority of the time now.

No action taken by council.

2.6 150th Celebration

Clerk Virginia Johnson provided updates about the 150th Celebration.

The exhibit for this topic includes: Exhibit F, Presentation.

Members shared their approval of the logo.

Frantz added he is excited about the Downtown Park fence idea.

Bush shared she would like the construction fences throughout Cary to be wrapped with similar 150th images so everyone can enjoy without visiting downtown.

No action taken by council.

2.7 Special Projects

Special Projects Director Danna Widmar presented updates on several topics including historic preservation, environment, stormwater, interlocal government affairs, housing, and transit.

The exhibit for this topic includes: Exhibit F, Presentation

Stegall thanked Bush for her work with the Wake County School Board and Wake County Commissioners to advance the joint project with both groups.

Smith spoke about negative environmental chatlines that do not reflect the whole picture of what we are working on. He shared a recent example of comments he received about Fenton. He talked about the initiatives of the Environment Advisory Board and thanked staff for their support. The next year, it is important for the Town and board to step up the communications on what we are doing and currently working on.
Weinbrecht agreed with the increased communication. He would like to see an overall list of environmental-related initiatives. Bush recommended the website be updated as well.

Robinson suggested adding the value that each initiative has added or will add to the community.

Stegall shared the next steps of adding a sustainability section to the Imagine Cary Community Plan.

No action taken by council.

2.8 Council/Citizen Task Forces

Stegall provided an update on the council/citizen task forces. His presentation slide is attached as Exhibit F, Presentation Slide.

Frantz asked if each task force will be considered separately by council. Stegall confirmed that it would be separated into three different items/votes.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m.