

City of Greeley, Colorado
CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION REPORT
March 9, 2021

1. Call to Order

Mayor John Gates called the virtual meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. via the City's Zoom platform.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gates led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

3. Roll Call

Cheryl Aragon, Deputy City Clerk, called the roll.

PRESENT

Mayor John Gates

Council Member Tommy Butler

Council Member Brett Payton

Council Member Dale Hall

Council Member Michael Fitzsimmons

Council Member Kristin Zasada

ABSENT

Council Member Ed Clark

4. Reports from Mayor and Council Members

Council Member Fitzsimmons stated that he has received calls of concern and inquiry from residents in the Homestead and Eagle Ridge Subdivisions off of 71st Avenue about the smell of hemp crops during the harvest season. He asked what options Council has to address these concerns.

Brad Mueller, Community Development Director, reported that staff has received concerns from residents to the south of Homestead Heights about the smell of hemp and that they were offended by it as it does smell like marijuana. He noted that staff spoke with them about what it was and they were still offended by the smell.

Director Mueller stated that this cultivation is a use by right. He stated that Council could monitor this situation so that everyone is aware of it; could direct staff to research legislation on this in terms of restrictions, but cautioned that this would be inconsistent with the cultivations of other crops in the city; or look at allowing hemp cultivation in certain parts of the city.

He went on to advise that planting hemp next year is not planned by the property owner.

Council Member Zasada stated that one of her constituents asked her about a house in the area that was legally growing marijuana and the smell from that, and Director Mueller stated that he would circle back on the marijuana smell, but advised that prohibiting personal growing within a home at the levels allowed would not be something that would rise to a violation.

Council Member Fitzsimmons stated that he would prefer, at this time, to monitor the situation and expressed his gratitude that everyone is aware of it now.

Council Member Hall shared that he has been the Chair of Bright Futures and noted that it has merged with the Weld Trust. He emphasized that health care and education will continue to be its focus areas, and this is a positive step moving forward.

Mayor Gates stated that he has spoken with Council Member Clark, and that he sounds good and that he hopes to be home later in the week following a major surgery.

5. Discussion regarding Potential Keep Greeley Moving Tax Renewal Ballot Issue for November, 2021

Paul Fetherston, Deputy City Manager, led a discussion regarding a potential ballot measure in November, 2021, related to the renewal of the existing Keep Greeley Moving sales tax. He shared the history of this tax and Council's consideration of an extension in 2020.

Joel Hemesath, Deputy Public Works Director, shared background on the projects and improvements that have been realized with this Keep Greeley Moving (KGM) funding.

Raymond Lee, Deputy City Manager, shared what is needed in terms of infrastructure repairs and highlighted what a renewal of the KGM funding could accomplish.

John Karner, Finance Director, highlighted KGM considerations including the tax rate and the term of the tax. He also provided sales tax comparisons to other surrounding communities and shared staffs' recommendation to continue the KGM tax at a 0.65% rate for the same 7-year term, along with initiating a poll to test various tax rates ahead of the November, 2021, election.

Trent Howell, Citizen Budget Advisory Committee member, shared that the Committee has discussed this issue at length and supports polling on various tax rates, and would support this moving forward at the current rate as well.

Deputy Manager Fetherston shared the timeline for moving this forward including polling in May, Council review of those results in June, referral to the ballot in August, and then the election in November.

Mayor Gates thanked the staff for this great and thorough presentation.

Council Members present reached consensus to move forward as outlined and with the timeline provided by staff.

6. COVID-19 Update

Dan Frazen, Emergency Manager, reported that the daily COVID-19 report is on the City's Dash Board and is current in real time, the link to which has been published and sent out to staff and Council.

He stated that there are 16 total positive cases at both hospitals and that the South African variant has arrived in Colorado. He also stated that vaccine clinics continue in Greeley, and staff continues to work with the Stampede staff and Blues Jam staff on plans for those events, taking into consideration State health orders and guidelines, as well as local data.

Anissa Hollingshead, City Clerk, reported that some further updates have been made to the State Public Health Order which includes an opportunity to slow down the process a bit to make sure we are moving forward and with some consistency.

7. Development Code Update – Infill Strategies - Housing

Carol Kuhn, Planner, reported that this item supports Council's 3-year Priorities item entitled "Your Home is Here: Evaluate the Strategic Housing Plan and Implement It" and "Your Home is Here: Put a plan in place to ensure the future development is built around the village concept".

She went on to state that this particular discussion will focus on infill strategies which then create the criteria that allows an infill project to fit into a neighborhood by evaluating it based on frontage, size and setback, scale and massing, design interest, open space, and architecture.

Chris Brewster, Consultant, highlighted some recommendations that staff is seeking some guidance on in terms of infill strategies and offered three topics for discussion and direction – Topic #1 Frontage Design; Topic #2 Building Design; and Topic #3 Open Space Design.

Council consensus was reached to proceed as outlined by staff with regard to frontage design, building design, and open space design as they relate to infill strategies for housing.

Planner Kuhn noted that staff will be back in April to discuss Downtown and Place Making and that Council will see everything again in September.

8. Scheduling of Meetings and Other Events

City Manager Roy Otto noted that there were no additional meetings or events to schedule.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, the Worksession was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

John Gates, Mayor

Cheryl Aragon, Deputy City Clerk