

CITY OF SILVERTON
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Zoom Web Conference Platform

May 17, 2021 6:00 p.m.

I. OPENING CEREMONIES – Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call

Mayor Palmer called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m. and explained this meeting is being held through Zoom consistent with House Bill (HB) 4212.

Present	Absent	
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Mayor Kyle Palmer
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Council President Jason Freiling
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Jim Sears
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Jess Miller
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Dana Smith (<i>arrived at 6:03 pm</i>)
<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	Elvi Cuellar Sutton
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Crystal Neideigh

Staff Present:

City Manager, Ron Chandler; Community Development Director, Jason Gottgetreu; Chief of Police, Jim Anglemier; and Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk, Angela Speier

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Joyce Ryan, N. Water Street. Joyce Ryan owns Subway restaurant and addressed the parking and the change of traffic suggested for the intersection. Ms. Ryan is concerned with the proposed parking on Front Street next to Subway, as well as the proposed barrier at B Street. Subway gets about 150 customers per day through the drive-thru entering and existing near where the proposed parking would be located. This could create a hazard when drivers are backing out of their space. The barrier at B Street could also pose a problem with Subway’s delivery trucks, because they use B Street for their delivery access.

Councilor Sears asked how many drive-thru customers come from the south. Ms. Ryan said most customers exit to the south, while others will exit through the alley between Subway and O’Reilly Auto Parts. She also noted the concern about delivery trucks and them backing up next to the building. The proposed location for the parking on Front Street along with the proposed one-way configuration will limit customer mobility. She noted eliminating the parking would help lessen the concern. Discussion ensued on how delivery trucks access the building from B Street and why they can’t access the building from Water Street.

III. DISCUSSION ITEM

3.1 Front Street, A Street, North Water Street intersection discussion

Community Development Director Jason Gottgetreu said this item was raised at the April 5, 2021 City Council meeting. Since that meeting Councilor Sears met with the Design Team and staff met with the

property owners who would be impacted by a traffic change. The current plan would extend the curb to line up with the Subway parking lot and all traffic lanes would remain open with the current turning movements still in place. He reviewed the other options being considered including an option F that would make Front Street a one-way going north from A Street to B Street with parking on one side of Front Street. This design also includes a traffic barrier diverting traffic to B Street, which could be configured differently if needed and does not need to be a physical barrier. Discussion ensued on how the parking could impact the drive-thru customers' ability to maneuver onto Front Street. Lastly, Director Gottgetreu reviewed a revised intersection design from Mackenzie and a traffic analysis performed on April 21-27, 2021. He explained if Front Street was converted into a one-way the traffic will not go away it will just be diverted to other intersections. Councilor Sears asked where the traffic counts took place and if traffic was counted going both directions. Maintenance Division Supervisor Travis Sperle explained the device was installed on the telephone poll located at A and Front Streets and it tracked cars going north and southbound on Front Street. Council discussed the alley access behind O'Reilly Auto Parts and how most traffic going south would likely cut through there to get onto Water Street. Councilor Sears discussed the safety concerns he sees with people exiting the drive-thru and turning right on Front Street to go south.

Director Gottgetreu explained how traffic controls are designated in the Silverton Municipal Code and said the City Council would need to adopt a resolution to change the section of Front to be one-way. City Council could also provide staff direction for a design that keeps the current two way traffic in operation or provide input on how to design the area so that it could be easily converted to a one-way design in the future.

Councilor Sears asked if staff has received information from ODOT. Director Gottgetreu said staff received some information, but is still waiting to hear back from their traffic engineer. Councilor Sears said ODOT will have requirements and feedback on how the curb returns will look, so City Council does not have all the information needed to make an informed decision. He said the City Council has an opportunity to redesign a poorly designed intersection and feels it is important to reduce the conflicts there. The Civic Center will only increase the current conflicts occurring at this intersection. Mackenzie's redesign does a partial fix by removing the merge lane, but now is an opportunity for City Council to do a complete fix. He hopes City Council could work with the businesses to mitigate their concerns with a one-way configuration.

Staff further explained the traffic counts and noted the average daily trips for vehicles traveling south was 282 and the average traveling north was 53. Further discussion ensued on the options for the section of Front Street from A to B Street. City Council was hesitant to make a decision without first hearing from ODOT's engineers. Mayor Palmer said he is not ready to make traffic one-directional at this time. He would like to see the intersection squared up in a way that the street could be converted to a one-way in the future if needed. Councilor Neideigh agreed and felt it should stay bidirectional, but the intersection should be squared up. She said the vast majority of the traffic will cut through the O'Reilly parking lot putting pedestrians at risk. Councilor Freilinger agreed that traffic should stay bidirectional and the intersection needs to be squared up.

Councilor Sears noted the high number of vehicles traveling south and said he is concerned for safety in the area. The new Civic Center will significantly increase the number of vehicles at that intersection which already does not function well. He noted there is a precedent in Silverton for establishing one-way streets. In regards to pedestrian safety, Councilor Sears recommended going with the updated plan from Mackenzie due to the location of the crosswalks. He also suggested not allowing a left turn from Water Street onto Front Street as a potential solution to help reduce conflicts. In summary, City Council would like staff to move forward with the best design for safety while keeping all drive lanes open. The design should also allow for a possible conversion of Front Street to one-way in the future if it is deemed necessary after the construction of the Civic Center.

Councilor Smith raised a question about a possible monument sign to be placed on the corner of Water and A Street for the new Civic Center. Director Gottgetreu pulled up a current picture of the trees located at the corner. Councilor Smith explained the fir tree sustained a lot of damage during the recent ice storm and noted the sequoia is not in an appropriate setting for that type of tree. She said at least the fir tree

should be removed and for long term maintenance and safety it could be that both need to be removed. There is not enough space for the root system they will ultimately need and she said it seems irresponsible to leave them next to a facility that is supposed to be for emergency operations which could impair the City's response. Councilor Miller asked if there are more appropriate trees for that area and Councilor Smith said the City could replace them with an oak tree. Council discussed the 2019 assessment of the trees that was done by R&R Tree Service. This assessment indicated the trees were in good health, but that was prior to the ice storm. City Council requested staff work with a professional arborist to assess the health of the trees, survivability, and aesthetic appeal long term. In addition, Councilor Freilinger would like to have a better understanding of why a sequoia cannot exist by itself. Councilor Smith asked if the arborist could present their findings during a City Council meeting.

IV. CITY MANAGER UPDATE

City Manager Ron Chandler announced a webinar hosted by the League of Oregon Cities regarding legislation on shelter and homelessness. He reported on updated mask guidelines for fully vaccinated individuals and said the leadership team at the City is ready to move forward with opening City Hall to the public Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. He also asked if City Council is ready to begin holding in-person meetings again. City Council discussed the idea of holding in-person meetings and did not want to be in the position to have to check people's vaccination status. They decided to hold off on making any changes to how their meetings are being conducted until further guidance is released from the Oregon Health Authority. Councilor Smith would be open to meeting in-person if the indoor space has a good clean air system. She also suggested a hybrid approach where City Council could be in attendance and the audience could participate through Zoom or having completely masked meetings with limited attendance. Councilor Miller suggested City Council voice their meeting preference through the City Manager.

V. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Miller voiced his concern with the parking strip that separates the Civic Center from the park area. He asked if there could be cut-ins on the sides of the site to allow for angled parking instead of the cut through which could be a safety issue with the high pedestrian traffic. He also suggested speed bumps in the parking area if angled parking is not an option. Mayor Palmer said that parking area has been informally called Festival Street, because it could be the site for the Farmers Market and other events. He also said City Council did look at angled parking, but there was a concern that ODOT would not allow that type of parking on Water Street based on their criteria. Director Gottgetreu said the Design Team is looking at traffic calming measures and better pedestrian access from the park to the Civic Center.

Councilor Freilinger reminded everyone there is still 24 hours to drop off ballots in the drop box located at the Lewis Street Parking Lot.

Mayor Palmer gave kudos to the Kiwanis Club for bringing back the Pet Parade. He said the community needs these events and is looking forward to this being the first of many festivals this year.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Smith made a motion to adjourn and Mayor Palmer adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

/s/Angela Speier, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk