

CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES
January 21, 2020

The City Council met this date in a regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall at #4 E. Lockwood at 7:37 p.m.

Present at Roll Call: Mayor Gerry Welch
Councilmember Frank Janoski
Councilmember Bud Bellomo
Councilmember Laura Arnold
Councilmember Pam Bliss
Councilmember David Franklin
Councilmember Emerson Smith

A quorum was present.

Also present: Mr. Steve Wylie, City Manager
Mr. Jon Bruntrager, Acting City Attorney
Ms. Katie Nakazono, City Clerk

Mayor Welch stated that this is the last City Council meeting for Councilmember Frank Janoski. She read a tribute to Councilmember Janoski. We want to recognize and thank Frank Janoski for his four years of outstanding service as a Webster Groves City Council Member. Frank has been a diligent and thoughtful member of the Council and he has earned our respect as he has devoted countless hours of service to this City. Frank has been a model Councilmember with a record of exceptional work on behalf of this community. Councilmembers receive a great deal of written information when we consider a policy. Frank not only read everything, but he read with the thorough and questioning perspective of a good attorney, which he is. His thorough thoughtfulness often forced us to consider the long-term consequences of a decision that weren't always immediate. The community is better for your work in that regard, Frank. When he wasn't physically present because of a work commitment, he joined us through the phone. He is serious about his responsibilities, but importantly, Frank has always put the good of Webster Groves as a community first. He was not and is not a man with causes or an agenda other than making and keeping Webster Groves the wonderfully stable and desirable community we have created. At the heart and head, Frank's decision was always the good of this community. He personified so well this most important and fundamental characteristic for the good Councilperson. We will miss Frank Janoski's personality on this Team Webster and wish him well in the new life he is creating on the other side of the state. We hope he will not forget us and weigh in from time to time on the working decisions of this group. When our time is done with whatever we have helped to create, it is always good to look back at the positive results we have left for others to enjoy. Frank has much to be proud of.

Councilmember Bellomo stated that he has known Frank for eight years now, and I have nothing but respect and admiration for Frank. Everything he has done, sometimes he is the rock in the Council. He pulls us together when we start straining apart. A lot of that is lawyer skills, but a lot of that is just Frank. He has a way to do that. We are going to miss you Frank.

January 21, 2020

Councilmember Arnold stated that she put some of her thoughts down in a note, but one of the things I will say in terms of learning how to do this job, the best example you have given me is your attention to detail. It is easy to want to jump a paragraph here and there, but you demonstrated to me that it is our responsibility to look at everything and to look at everything closely. I think that is a valuable lesson. I also said I would do my best to get everything seconded. Thank you.

Councilmember Bliss stated that she highly regards our discussions and we had point/counterpoint but they were always civil, thoughtful, and engaging. I am going to miss that aspect.

Councilmember Franklin stated that he also wrote a note last night. Too often in this you forget there is a human behind what you are doing. Last year when my sister passed away, Frank reached out to me and immediately provided me a lot of guidance and insight. I just think too often in politics that kind of kindness goes out the window. It really meant a lot to me and demonstrated the importance of being a human in what we do.

Councilmember Smith stated that he hasn't had the opportunity to work with Frank too long, but I have been following your career with the City. I want to wish you well and thank you for all you have done for the City.

Councilmember Janoski stated that he didn't know this was coming. This wasn't anything I had ever aspired to do. I was happy to be on a Commission to work with people on the City Council and I was asked a number of years ago to consider running, and I did. This has been a very fulfilling experience. One of my great life experiences. I have been very fortunate to have a number, whether in the Army or in the practice of law. What I do appreciate is the fact that all of the City Councilmembers I have worked with, we haven't always agreed, but there has been a lot of civil discourse that occurred here. I think we as a community are much better for it. That is what I really love about Webster Groves. I have spent about half my life in Missouri and almost half in Webster Groves. Webster Groves may not be a place where I grew up but it is a place that will always be near and dear to my heart. Not just a cliché, but raised a daughter and had many great experiences in the community. I think it is a great community. I love the fact that people care about what is going on in the community. And that is what makes Webster Groves very special. We may not always agree, and there are always different perspectives, but I have tried to, like I have in my law practice, look at the other person's perspective. I may not always agree with it but that was one thing my dad taught me growing up. I didn't realize we were poor growing up because we had a lot of fun. There was a lot of respect for people's opinions even though you may not agree, you always considered them. I just want to thank the residents for the opportunity and I hope that I have done a pretty good job.

Mayor Welch stated that she hoped he would return in April for cake.

REMARKS OF VISITORS

Mayor Welch stated that Reverend Hayes is I'm sure going to bring up this development issue. I want to say how sorry we are that we missed the communication efforts here. There is no way we want to do anything to harm what I consider to be our mother church.

Reverend Eric Hayes, Old Community Missionary Baptist Church, stated that some of our officers, deacons, and trustees are here. We are here and just got word about this redevelopment on Wednesday. We have some concerns. Thank you for your apology. We were concerned why we had not heard anything about this redevelopment. It was a shock to the church. We have been bombarded with phone

January 21, 2020

calls asking why the church had been sold and no one knew about it. It was a shock not only to our members but also the community that we were not informed or notified in any shape, form, or fashion. Secondly, we were concerned about this redevelopment. It felt more to us that it was something done under the carpet because we didn't know why it came up and what was going on. Our main concern now is really what are the future plans for this redevelopment and what areas will it entail. How much will it affect where we are located? We saw the article and the shaded areas, it also surrounds where the church is. We are just not sure what is going on. If you all could enlighten us. Our congregants are in an uproar. They are asking questions, we have a meeting tomorrow and I have no answers to give them.

Mayor Welch stated that she would be happy to attend the meeting tomorrow. This is a redevelopment proposal for that area. We will see what comes back. You are included in that in the event if Old Community wanted to do something. If you would want to work with the redevelopment that would be fine. I don't think any of us wants to do anything that would harm your church. If Old Community wants to stay just the way it is it is just fine with us. This is an opportunity to say to folks, what do you think we can do with this area that has been largely underutilized for a lot of years. I hope that helps. Again, I am so sorry that we did not speak with you ahead of time to at least tell you what was coming and that we would do everything we can to protect whatever it is that you want to do with your church.

Sarah Richardson, 46 Chestnut Hill Lane, stated that she would like to speak about the request for proposals in the North Webster area we have been discussing. As a public body, transparency is so very critical in gaining and maintaining trust from your community. Many of you were elected, but some of the individuals directly involved in this decision are not. Please make sure you are doing your very best to make this whole process as transparent as it can possibly be. I understand that some elements are required to be held in closed session, but the proposal is out, and it is public. I would love to see you connecting more with those who will be impacted most by this decision. Do you at this time have plans to work directly with them? Another way you could be transparent on this would be to be more clear about what it is you are looking to do. I understand you just responded to that a little. We as a community are concerned about the area around Old Community Baptist Church and we would like to know your goals. What kind of development would you like to see? The request is light on specifics and that feels like an intentional but potentially dangerous decision. There is much room for interpretation. Too much room if it is truly your intent to build trust with the community. More ways to be transparent: share the bids you receive with the public, invite them into the decision-making process, or at least offer them a window into it, be intentional about opening up this process in whatever ways you legally can.

Elyssa Sullivan, 229 Kerruish, I would like to address some questions I have about the redevelopment proposals you are seeking for the area of Porter's Subdivision and Vinegar Hill. I am relatively new to Webster Groves, and have learned much history in my time here, thanks to folks like Ed Johnson for helping to take time to guide my understanding, especially regarding the significant and special history of the black community. Significant not only to our town, but to the entire region. The piece of land in question, and especially the Old Community Baptist Church, are intertwined with the establishment of black freedom, black land ownership, black education, and black excellence in our region. When I read the article in the newspaper describing the RFP process and plan, I thought this could be dangerous but hold some benefit for the community if they are doing this inclusively. Maybe affordable housing could be worked into a prime area. Because Porter's Subdivision and Vinegar Hill hold such significance and include this church, maybe they will create an enterprise zone for black entrepreneurship. I hoped to read on and hear that leadership and voices of Old Community and other affected property holders would be at the forefront of the entire process. It really did hurt my heart to hear from Reverend Hayes that he found out about the issue the same way I did, happened to see it in the paper. I hope you can answer

January 21, 2020

these questions on the record for the community as a whole. Why did the body make the conscious decision not to include the church or leadership in their planning to entertain this redevelopment option? Which business owners and residents have been consulted? The City Attorney is quoted in the newspaper explaining that, the proposal request indicates the City's openness to proposed redevelopment in the area. The proposal indicates the City's desire to remediate conditions that could lead to blight and to remove conditions that constitute an economic or social liability to the City. The proposal calls for new development and ways to enhance stability in the area." If you could please provide transparent clarification on the City's definition of social liability. Which current establishments and organizations in this zone are being defined as a social liability? Which conditions exactly are you meaning when you say you want to remediate conditions that could lead to blight. I would ask that you please enumerate the ways you plan to utilize and center community voices in this process of cultivating openness to redevelopment. Because this land holds our literal cornerstones of black freedom, black land ownership, and black education in our community. You are well aware that our nation and our region are rife with examples of use of eminent domain and the destruction of property rights, especially for black families. Indeed, in this same volume of history which Ed helped me understand so much about this area, there are examples here of how this community has done this before. I think that we well-meaning white people cannot be naïve in thinking that we are somehow above the considerations of the past and I think we need to be twice as thoughtful moving forward.

Michael Whittaker, 444 W. Adams, stated that he is a member of Old Community Baptist Church and is on the Deacon board. I have two questions to ask you. What is the timeline for this redevelopment proposal of the Kirkham Corridor. What is the criteria that will be used to purchase property?

Mayor Welch stated that this is a request and we will see what comes in. There is a timeline on the RFP. The deadline is February 4.

Dave Buck, 124 S. Elm Ave., read the following statement, "I did not come here to talk about the redevelopment project, but I agree with the speakers tonight and their serious comments.

Given that affordable housing was a key topic of discussion in your earlier work session, I would like to reiterate my previous remarks on affordable housing to help the cause.

Molly Metzger of Washington University in St. Louis is a nationally-recognized expert on affordable housing. She has spoken on numerous occasions to different groups in Webster Groves. She consistently has said that, in her knowledgeable opinion, "the endgame of affordable housing is moving people out of poverty."

In Webster Groves, the latest census data shows that 4.24 % of Webster Groves' total population of 23,000 lives in poverty. This is 975 individuals. We know who they are and where they live. And they need our help now.

In my project work for Beyond Housing in the 24 communities that comprise the Normandy Collaborative (Normandy School District) and, primarily, in the community of Pagedale, we conducted extensive one-on-one research with people living in poverty. Here's what they shared, among many things:

- The term, "Affordable Housing", is not preferred. Why? First, housing can be affordable but can still be an unsafe dump and rat hole. Thus, they desired that the term first be revised as "Affordable QUALITY Housing." Second, the word, housing, is most associated with

January 21, 2020

apartments and tenement buildings where there is much mobility, a lack of stability, low quality, lack of safety and dealing with a sometimes unjust landlord. As such, they preferred the term, "Affordable Quality HOMES."

As such, among the many possible strategies to deal with affordable housing, Beyond Housing and the City of Pagedale together focused and put all of their energies into Community Land Trust (CLT) Homes, both building new homes and rehabbing others. They were funded by a generous benefactor and the Foundation he created.

A CLT Home is made affordable as the bank owns the land, but the family pays for and owns the home only. Home ownership comes with a long list of other important benefits, financial and otherwise. The result is a growing neighborhood of the cutest, high quality homes owned by families who have made the move out of poverty. Many of these families are led by a single black mother with multiple children, who now live in quality, safety and stability. And, for the mother, she gains self-respect, dignity, freedom, control and pride, because she can say, "This is MY home."

Gerry, I share this because I do not think it is on your list of 5 things. I think it should be. And after that, my hope is that City Council select and focus on doing one on the list extraordinarily well. Thank you."

Maddy Heikkila, 143 St. George Place, stated that she wanted to share some concerns about the materials being used on our playgrounds. I just wanted to put out for consideration that as playground equipment is replaced, we consider using or investigating the materials we are using to make sure they are not toxic and that the temperature doesn't get too hot. I tried to look up a little bit about the Parks and Rec Commission and I don't see any meeting minutes from them since 2015. I know some parks we enjoy in the City are using wood chips instead of rubber on the ground. I have heard shared concerns from other toddler moms.

Mayor Welch stated that we had this discussion in the Work Session and right now we are in a planning mode with regard to the Blackburn Playground. There are lots of considerations and our Parks and Recreation Director is very very well aware of a need to balance all of these considerations and make the right decision. No one wants to do anything that would be toxic or harmful to kids.

NEW BUSINESS – MAYOR, COUNCILMEMBERS, CITY ATTORNEY, CITY MANAGER

No New Business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BILL #9110 - THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Smith, seconded by Councilmember Janoski, **BILL #9110 ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE SUBMISSION TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES OF AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY, ALL OF WHICH SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE ELECTORS AT THE REGULAR ELECTION ON APRIL 7, 2020, AND PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO ELIMINATE THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR THE CITY ATTORNEY; TO REQUIRE A BALLOT INITIATIVE EVERY EIGHT YEARS REGARDING THE FORMATION OF A CHARTER REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD**, having been introduced and read twice on January 7, 2020, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #9110.

January 21, 2020

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #9110.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: JANOSKI, BELLOMO, ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #9110 was approved.

BILL #9111 - THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Bliss, seconded by Councilmember Janoski, **BILL #9111 ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE OCCUPANCY INSPECTION ORDINANCE**, having been introduced and read twice on January 7, 2020, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #9111.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #9111.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BELLOMO, ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH, JANOSKI

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #9111 was approved.

BILL #9112 - THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Bellomo, seconded by Councilmember Janoski, **BILL #9112 ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE DANGEROUS BUILDINGS ORDINANCE**, having been introduced and read twice on January 7, 2020, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #9112.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #9112.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH, JANOSKI, BELLOMO

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #9112 was approved.

BILL #9113 - THIRD READING

On motion of Councilmember Janoski, seconded by Councilmember Arnold, **BILL #9113 ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI AMENDING CHAPTER 80, ARTICLE II "FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT" BY REVISING SECTION 80.040 "PROVISIONS FOR FLOOD HAZARD PROTECTION" AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO**, having been introduced and read twice on January 7, 2020, was taken up its title read a third time and placed upon its passage to become Ordinance #9113.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on Bill #9113.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH, JANOSKI, BELLOMO, ARNOLD

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that Bill #9113 was approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Arnold, seconded by Councilmember Janoski, to approve the Consent Agenda.

January 21, 2020

Mayor Welch called for the vote on the Consent Agenda.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: FRANKLIN, SMITH, WELCH, JANOSKI, BELLOMO, ARNOLD, BLISS

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following consent agenda was approved:

- **Approval of Minutes** – January 7, 2020
- **Liquor License** – Application for a Temporary Liquor License for Mary Queen of Peace Church, 676 W. Lockwood Ave., to Sell Beer and Wine by the Drink for Consumption on the Premises Where Sold at Their Fish Fry on March 6, 2020 and April 3, 2020

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

No Appointments to Boards and Commissions.

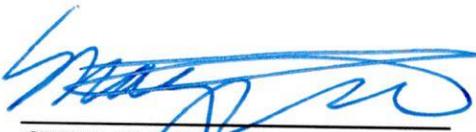
EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION

No Executive (Closed) Session followed the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. on motion of the Mayor, duly seconded.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 4th day of FEBRUARY 2020.



CITY CLERK



MAYOR