

## CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES

May 18, 2021

The City Council met this date in a regular session, via Zoom, which was available to the public via teleconference, at 7:40 pm.

Present at Roll Call: Mayor Gerry Welch  
Councilmember Laura Arnold  
Councilmember Pam Bliss  
Councilmember David Franklin  
Councilmember Emerson Smith  
Councilmember Karen D. Alexander  
Councilmember Sarah Richardson

A quorum was present.

Also present: Dr. Marie Peoples, City Manager  
Mr. Neil Bruntrager, City Attorney  
Ms. Katie Nakazono, City Clerk

### **REMARKS OF VISITORS**

The Deputy City Clerk read submitted Remarks of Visitor comments received by 4 p.m. on May 18, 2021, into the record (Exhibit A). Submissions were received from:

- Timothy Fahrner
- Wayne Davis
- Roslyn Croft (on behalf of the North Webster Neighborhood Coalition)
- Dave Buck
- Bud Bellomo
- Daniel Bruzzini

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

No New Business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **SET PUBLIC HEARING DATE – FISCAL YEAR 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Mayor Welch stated that the FY-2022 Budget Public Hearing will occur at 7:30 p.m. on June 1, 2021.

### **BILL #9149 – FIRST AND SECOND READING**

Councilmember Richardson introduced **BILL #9149 – ENTITLED: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEBSTER GROVES, MISSOURI, AMENDING CHAPTER 33, “ANIMALS”, SECTION 33.232 “GOATS” AND AMENDING SECTION 33.310 “KEEPING OF WILD ANIMALS PROHIBITED” AND MATTERS RELATED**

May 18, 2021

**THERETO**, and at the Councilmember's request, the Bill was read twice, first and second times by title only, and placed on the agenda for future consideration of the Council.

Councilmember Arnold thanked the City Attorney for his work on the ordinance.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Councilmember Bliss, seconded by Councilmember Smith, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Welch called for the vote on the Consent Agenda.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: ARNOLD, BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, ALEXANDER, RICHARDSON, WELCH

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Consent Agenda was approved.

The following consent agenda was approved:

- **Approval of Minutes** – May 4, 2021
- **Resolution #2021-24** – Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into Contracts for the Blackburn Park Trail Renovations
- **Liquor License Application** – Temporary Liquor License for the Lions Club to Sell Beer at Community Days, July 1-4, 2021, at Eden Seminary, 475 E. Lockwood Ave.

### **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

- Ceci Bartels was appointed to the Business Development Commission.
- Dr. Tina Clark Scott was appointed as the WG School District Representative on the Police Community Engagement Board.

### **EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION**

Councilmember Arnold made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Bliss, to go into Executive Closed Session per Attorney-Client Privileged Communications [MO Statute 610.021(1)], Personnel [MO Statute 610.021 (3)], Negotiated Contract [MO Statute 610.021 (12)].

Mayor Welch called for the vote to go into Executive (Closed) Session.

MEMBERS VOTING:

AYES: BLISS, FRANKLIN, SMITH, ALEXANDER, RICHARDSON, WELCH, ARNOLD

NOES: NONE

Mayor Welch stated that the Council would go into Executive (Closed) Session.

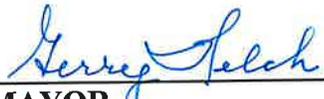
Prior to adjournment, Mr. Bruntrager stated that a referendum petition has been received in the City Clerk's office. He reviewed a rough timeline, and stated that he has spoken with the Election Board to see what we need to do in order to get it on the August ballot if needed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m. on motion of the Mayor, duly seconded.

May 18, 2021

PASSED AND APPROVED this 1st day of June 2021.

  
MAYOR

  
CITY CLERK

Exhibit A

**Katie Nakazono - Re: Fw: WG Council Message**

---

**From:** "Fahrner, Timothy" <fahrner@wustl.edu>  
**To:** Katie Nakazono <nakazonok@webstergroves.org>  
**Date:** 5/11/2021 9:28 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: WG Council Message **ROV**

---

Yes, please.

Tim

---

**From:** Katie Nakazono <nakazonok@webstergroves.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 10, 2021 5:23 PM  
**To:** Fahrner, Timothy <fahrner@wustl.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: WG Council Message

\* External Email - Caution \*

Thank you, Timothy. Your email will be forwarded to the Council.

*[Timothy, I did not see **Remarks of Visitors** in the Subject line. Did you want your email read into the meeting record of the May 18, 2021 Council meeting? If so, please advise by 4 p.m. on May 18.]*

Katie

Katie Nakazono, City Clerk  
City of Webster Groves  
314-963-5318 (phone)  
314-963-7561 (fax)

>>> "Fahrner, Timothy" <fahrner@wustl.edu> 5/5/2021 9:08 PM >>>

---

**From:** Fahrner, Timothy <fahrner@wustl.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 5, 2021 4:26 PM  
**To:** Fahrner, Timothy <fahrner@wustl.edu>  
**Subject:** WG Council Message

Members of the Webster City Council and others who may be concerned,

It is with regret, pain, and yes, some anger that I am compelled to write this message. Having only recently gained knowledge of the property zoning change ordinance, I virtually attended the Council meeting concerning it last night and experienced a total loss of confidence and faith in my local government. Particularly painful are the votes of those members whom I once vigorously supported for office. Watching the officials vote for this proposal, after over 90% of resident messages denounced it, is a spectacular testament to tone deaf government. The sanctimonious insults of Council members referring to dissenting residents as "ill informed" (ignorant) and racist made the experience even more vexatious. All but two voting even had the audacity to do so while protecting their own properties from harm. Indeed, the disdain with which they hold their fellow residents is nothing short of breathtaking.

I submit that disrupting neighborhoods and damaging the lifetime investments of residents is not a necessary element for the evolution of diversity in a community (if that is indeed the aim). Furthermore, how is diversity served when the new residents arrive at the detriment of those already living in the neighborhood? Would it not instead be more efficacious to find ways for low-income people to get loans and buy property? A simple internet search reveals several options for low-income buyers to afford a home- was any of this even discussed? Such an approach would not only be acceptable to those already residing in the area but would be a boost to the economic well-being of the incoming residents. An ownership approach would allow residents and potential residents to facilitate integration rather than leaving the shape of their neighborhood to the whims of developers.

It was mentioned more than once that much research had been done to prove the dissenting commenters wrong. Why was not at least a summary of it presented at the meeting when members must have known they would hear much opposition? This only contributes to considerable skepticism that it exists. If it does, where is it? It is your responsibility to validate your positions to the people on such a volatile issue, and without said information it appears the height of arrogance to simply dismiss 50-100 opposing citizens.

Finally, we affected residents may be at present powerless against your vote (Laura Arnold, Pam Bliss, Sarah Richardson). We do however look forward to future elections and, to quote the Quebecois "Je me souveins!".

Timothy J. Fahrner

702 Clark

Webster Groves, MO

---

The materials in this message are private and may contain Protected Healthcare Information or other information of a sensitive nature. If you are not the intended recipient, be advised that any unauthorized use, disclosure, copying or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender via telephone or return mail.

---

The materials in this message are private and may contain Protected Healthcare Information or other information of a sensitive nature. If you are not the intended recipient, be advised that any unauthorized use, disclosure, copying or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender via telephone or return mail.

**Katie Nakazono - Re: Remarks by Visitors - City Coucil Meeting**

---

**From:** <waynesdavis@netscape.net>  
**To:** "Citycouncil@webstergroves.org" <Citycouncil@webstergroves.org>  
**Date:** 5/9/2021 11:54 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Remarks by Visitors - City Coucil Meeting

---

According to the newspaper most citizens spoke against the zoning change, and yet you passed it anyway. Who are you representing?! Obviously not us!

Wayne

-----Original Message-----

From: waynesdavis@netscape.net  
To: Citycouncil@webstergroves.org <Citycouncil@webstergroves.org>  
Sent: Mon, May 3, 2021 7:41 pm  
Subject: Remarks by Visitors - City Coucil Meeting

Why are you limiting this to the smallest of the A4 lots?  
The neighborhoods with the smallest lots are already stressing the infrastructure and allowable street parking.  
Larger lots would be better able support two-family dwellings.

Wayne Davis  
721 Greeley Ave  
Webster Groves

**Katie Nakazono - Remarks of Visitors**

---

**From:** Roslyn Croft <croftrj@sbcglobal.net>  
**To:** "citycouncil@webstergroves.org" <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>  
**Date:** 5/17/2021 12:48 PM  
**Subject:** Remarks of Visitors

---

The North Webster Neighborhood Coalition is a group of residents that supports the Planning Commission's and City Council's approval of text amendments that make it easier to permit two-family dwellings on some lots in A-4 districts that are of a specific size. The amendments also clarify large houses on small lots and help support a variety of residential housing types in the community. This is in compliance with the City's top goal to provide a broader mix of inclusive housing types for the community. The Coalition's belief is that these changes in the text amendments are in keeping with the Coalition's long-held vision of developing, collaborating, and fostering inclusion of residential and commercial development that creates and sustains a rich mix of racial, ethnic, social and economic citizen groups. We are committed to supporting the City of Webster Groves as it continues to be a vibrant and forward-thinking community.

Roslyn Croft (President) on behalf of the North Webster Neighborhood Coalition

---

**Katie Nakazono - Dave Buck "Remarks of Visitors", City Council Mtg., 5/18/21**


---

**From:** Dave Buck <dave@buckstl.com>  
**To:** "citycouncil@webstergroves.org" <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>, "people...  
**Date:** 5/17/2021 1:28 PM  
**Subject:** Dave Buck "Remarks of Visitors", City Council Mtg., 5/18/21  
**Cc:** "lchapman@seneca-cre.com" <lchapman@seneca-cre.com>, "phil@greenstreetst...

---

Mayor, City Council & Staff, SG Collaborative, and Friends,

This shares a small yet symbolic way SG Collaborative and their redevelopment project can further the Council's effort to build greater diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in Webster Groves. It regards the proposed project name, "Douglass Hill".

As background, Council's recent approval of the A4 rezoning proposal is a positive DEI step, as is the School Board's recent approval of the new K-8 social studies curriculum and its corrected, actual racial history.

No one is doubting the role Frederick Douglass played in AMERICAN racial history. The question is: What about our own proud, correct and actual LOCAL racial history? :

The Douglass name is most associated with and cherished in the black community of North Webster, where the Douglass School served this neighborhood for 86 years and Douglass Manor Apartments sits on its site. To many, the Douglass name already has a place and home in North Webster.

More importantly, in 1866, a year after the Civil War ended, former slaves built the First Baptist Church (where Old Community Baptist Church now sits) in **Porter's Subdivision**, which included **Shady Creek**.

In its basement, the church also housed the first school for black children in St. Louis County. Behind the church, the subdivision stretched up the hill to the area called "**Vinegar Hill**" where many of the former slaves lived.

In short, this area represents significant and special black history in our town and the establishment of our first black leadership, faith, freedom, land ownership and education.

There is always more than one right answer. Douglass Hill is certainly an option. But what about celebrating our local black history in this area via "Vinegar Hill"? "Porter's Crossing" or "Shady Creek Station"?

Or, Webster streets are named for many who built our town. So, what about celebrating famous local black residents, like "Ambrose Corner", "Robinson Connection", etc.?

There's always more than one right answer. I hope we consider others before deciding.

Thanks!

PEACE.

Dave

**Katie Nakazono - Remarks of Visitors**

---

**From:** Sebastian Bellomo <bbellomo90@gmail.com>  
**To:** <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>  
**Date:** 5/18/2021 11:35 AM  
**Subject:** Remarks of Visitors

---

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers;

As a resident in an A4 zone of Webster Groves I am writing to you in full support of your approval of the zoning text code amendments for two-family dwellings.

Some may not know that increasing the amount of affordable housing has been the written top goal of the Council for many years. The physical constraints of our city, however, significantly limit options to consider that could achieve that goal.

As a former council member, I worked with you and with others I served with on a previous Council to find a way that would lead to more affordable and diverse housing opportunities. We recognized the existing need for affordable housing for first time home buyers and renters as well as for empty nesters and seniors who no longer want to live in a large house but do want to stay in Webster Groves.

To be clear, I know, and others should know that these limited text amendments do not rezone any of our city and will not significantly change neighborhoods because a large number of houses in A4 zones are on lots too small to allow for two-family homes.

For those in our community who agree with the Council's goal for additional affordable homes but are against the text amendments, I would have two questions: If not this ... What? If not now ...

When?

Sincerely,

Bud Bellomo

118 Summit Avenue

## Katie Nakazono - Remarks of Visitors

---

**From:** Daniel Bruzzini <dbruzzini@gmail.com>  
**To:** <citycouncil@webstergroves.org>, Katie Nakazono <nakazonok@webstergroves...>  
**Date:** 5/18/2021 1:44 PM  
**Subject:** Remarks of Visitors

---

Municipality comes from the Latin *municipalis* – pertaining to a citizen of a free town that needs infrastructure, police, fire, and EMS. It is about the needs of all citizens not the special interests or politics of some citizens.

The nature of municipal government is supposed to be non-partisan, beholden to no particular citizen group, no favoritism, and certainly not as members of any special interest group who stand to benefit from their decisions. Simply put, sewers, potholes, and public safety aren't partisan issues.

It is high time the city council re-focus on these essential mundane municipal priorities, especially given its current financial crisis.

- Fiscal year 2020 ended with an \$859,000 dollar deficit.
- Fiscal year 2021 to 16 April 2021 is an actual 1.92 million dollars in debt that a one-time CARES Act with its trickle down trillion dollar federal bailout, reduced to 335,000 dollars of debt.
- The upcoming July 2021 to June 2022 Fiscal year 2022 draft budget projects a \$2.4 million dollar deficit.

On top of these million-dollar budget issues, we have million-dollar maintenance issues. \$1.6 million dollars are needed for City Hall and Service Center repairs. Still, there are plans for a new six million dollar Aquatic Center. The city council hired a second public relations firm for the SG Collaborative's Douglass Hill Old Webster Redevelopment Project. Webster's rapidly diminishing \$10 million-dollar reserve fund won't last long under the city's current over-spending on things, other than sewers, potholes, and public safety.

Like any family budget, niceties are put aside for necessities during lean times. It is unconscionable to threaten cuts for necessary services in order to protect pet projects. Do not use the financial crisis and lack of maintenance planning you failed to do as a justification to renew your push for more tax increases.

The residents of Webster Groves have not been ungenerous - having already approved 12 special tax increases in addition to accepting high property taxes. The city council must focus on the non-partisan issues that are the duty and purpose of municipal government – sewers, potholes, and public safety.

Trust the people of Webster Groves to make it a great place to live, work, and raise a family. We trust you to be responsible stewards of our tax dollars. *Nemo dat quod non habet.* – “No one can give what they do not have.”