

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

January 18, 2007

The Study Session was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Cannella with the following in attendance.

PRESENT: Vice Mayor Phipps, Council Members Lane, Ochoa, Vierra and Mayor Cannella.

Eminent Domain Policy.

Kenneth Craig, Community Development Director, discussed the concept of eminent domain outlining the history and requirements for its usage. Staff is requesting Council feed back in order to obtain policy direction on an important and critical aspect to successful development and policy implementation in the City. Specifically, the City's policy on use of eminent domain has significant implications for the City's ability to implement Council goals and existing General Plan policy of Master Plan development. It also has significant bearing on the City's ability to successfully implement infill development in non-Master Plan areas.

Because of the unique nature of each specific condemnation area, staff recognizes that the determination to undertake condemnation is project specific. Each project will be required to be supported by a Resolution of Necessity approved by the City Council before condemnation proceedings can proceed. Staff is not seeking a "blanket" policy to condemn properties for public improvement. However, for the Master Plan areas, staff and the development community needs to be able to develop the plans based on the City Council's desire vis-à-vis this necessary action to address development of required or desired infrastructure. Staff also believes that policy direction is important for future planning and implementation of a public facility and infrastructure program throughout the City.

Council Recommendation:

Council accepted staff recommendation to support condemnation as a last resort as required by state law;

Council will consider condemnation after applicant/developer has demonstrated that they have made every attempt to secure the necessary property before requesting City intervention.

Council will review each eminent domain proposal carefully to ensure that it is necessary and appropriate.

Staff will return with a resolution for City Council approval.

Take Pride in Ceres Campaign Status Report.

Staff gave an overview of the accomplishments of the Code Enforcement Unit and the Take Pride in Ceres Program. Under Council direction, staff was to focus their attention on specific problem areas in town in order to achieve the following objectives: attract quality businesses; attract investments in the community; improve the quality of life in Ceres; accelerate overall economic development; improve the community's level of self-respect and image and decrease the opportunity for crime.

In order to continue on the same course of action, the TPIC program would require additional funding. Staff requested Council's input, recommended changes or concurrence with the programs present direction.

Council Recommendation:

Council affirmed that the current areas of clean-up efforts are consistent with their expectations. Accepted plans to continue with the same course of action (that being the emphasis on clean-ups at key locations throughout the city) for the next few months. Later staff will become more enforcement oriented and spend more time with recalcitrant property owners or renters. Proposed ordinance revisions (for shopping carts and forced clean-up issues) will be forthcoming.

Smyrna Skate Park Parking Lot Closure.

Recently there have been several illegal activities taking place at our two larger parks: Smyrna Community Park and CRBR Park. Staff addressed Council regarding the policies, procedures and safety measures that are being taken to help reduce illegal activity in both Parks outlining both current safety measures and proposed future safety measures.

Council Recommendation:

Create a list of improvements and estimated costs to improve security at Smyrna Park and Ceres River Bluff Regional Park. *Police to develop a plan to increase security of Smyrna and CRBR parks.*

Install gates at the parking lot entrances on Rose Ave and Moffett Rd. Have the gates opened at dawn and closed at dusk 365 days a year. *This should be done within the next 8 weeks.*

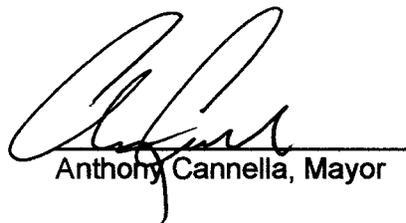
Improve the lighting in the parking lots.

Strategic Plan implementation status.

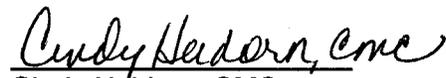
Report accepted.

Schedule Future Study Session Items.

Report accepted.



Anthony Cannella, Mayor



Cindy Heidorn, CMC
Deputy City Clerk