

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

MAY 10, 2016 – 7:00PM

Presiding – Ron Alcock, Mayor
Present – Matt Horn, City Manager

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Camera, Clr. Gramling, Clr. Marino, and Clr. Eddington
Absent: Clr. Greco, Clr. Hagerman, Clr. Valentino, and Clr. D'Amico

2. City Manager Horn told everyone that the process is underway and the first presentation for the public was done last night. The County and City Planning Boards will see the Comp Plan later in the month. He asked Council to think about any parts of the Plan that they don't think look like Geneva. He noted that comp plans are strategic, broad sweeping themes as to where we are heading in the next 15 years, and not a checklist. Council needs to prioritize and say "no" when we have to, and get big things right.

Mr. Horn said that this is a great comp plan with tools that steer our decision making. We need to prioritize our projects and say "no" when we have to. He said that council will be asked to take less perfect projects and score them according to the principles you agree upon. It will be important to get the big things right.

Mayor Alcock said he wanted to make it clear that this is not a bible that council has to live by. He then questioned the section about seeking outside funding and says Geneva needs to attempt to fund everything on its own. He asked where the city would be without outside agencies. Clr. Camera said he wanted to say for the record that he is not against IDA's. Mayor Alcock said the city needs to aggressively go to IDA's and LDC's because there is no way we can fund all projects. He also said that he wants to be careful about the keeping of animals in the R-1 district. City Manager Horn said that if something is a priority, it needs to be a priority. If State funding requirements do not go against our core values, we need to use it.

City Manager Horn said that the Plan is a broad based planning document, and if the language is too explicit, there is a process to modify the Plan every five years. We are working on clarifying our social justice goals.

Clr. Gramling said that this whole process was amazing, and the entire community has the opportunity to give input. As he looks at it more, he sees that it does not address everything, and Council needs to articulate to the entire city how the Plan will affect everyone even though we are not investing directly in specific neighborhoods.

Clr. Camera said that Council needs to be friendly and provide reasons why we do things and explain how it is being done.

There was mention of attracting mid-income families vs. keeping children of current families from leaving Geneva, and City Manager Horn said that we need to find things in the community we have control over and eliminate barriers. We want kids to come back to Geneva if they want to, and the critical way is to grow. We should recruit households that share our values.

City Manager Horn said that he would like to be more explicit about (1) Growth of middle income households that share our values and (2) transitioning lower income households into middle income ones. We need to elevate the standards on housing by making sure that DSS and Section 8 houses meet certain requirements to keep them from getting rundown. We need to make it clear in the document that we will engage in any collective impact effort that impacts the school district because it is a vital community development tool.

Clr. Gramling said that the Plan gives mixed messages about the housing stock. In one part it glorifies older housing; then it says that improvements are needed. City Manager Horn said that the city does not have new housing development, so we need to evaluate ways to make new construction possible as well as keep older stock.

Mayor Alcock said he feels the downtown is too big for our city and wondered if it should be condensed. Mr. Horn said that there is a recommendation to focus on what has the opportunity to be the most economic winner. Council needs to focus on a concentrated, core area first and move outwardly in a spiral motion.

Clr. Camera said he doesn't like saying the downtown is too big. Mr. Horn noted that the Plan says that there are too many underutilized spaces, and Council needs to start by focusing on the challenges, but not to continually focus on them.

City Manager Horn said that the Community Compact Group suggests outreach to target places in order to reach lower income residents to help them succeed. He added that Council needs to be very detailed in its charging documents for the task force.

Clr. Gramling asked about consolidating to save money, and Mr. Horn said that there is no such thing as consolidation for a city. We cannot merge with the Town, but rather, one of the municipalities would go away. Mayor Alcock noted that we need a willing partner, and Clr. Camera said that there are ways we can work together with the Town.

City Manager Horn told Council that as they continue to read the Plan, think about what is going to make Geneva advance.

Clr. Camera read the following three-paragraph statement that he wanted to be included in the minutes:

Landfilling and Recycling

The City of Geneva Comprehensive Plan (CP) envisions a pristine natural environment surrounding the City, providing the foundation for an agri-tourism business future for residents and visitors - Uniquely Urban, quiet enjoyment of clean air and water and scenery. The City and its residents will be active developers and practitioners of

sustainability practices that will achieve a 75%+ recycling and diversion rate from landfills and include elimination of leachate deposits in the waste water treatment process and diversion and capture of run-off from City streets and properties that impact Seneca Lake.

Gas Storage, Mining and Related Industrial Activities

The City government will actively oppose mining, landfill expansion operations (including train supply), in both the City and surrounding towns and villages that could potentially negatively affect the physical environment and agri-tourism businesses and their customers by way of direct or indirect vectors - such as air, water, soil pollution or excess truck or train traffic. Mining and related operations such as salt brine extraction, gas storage, clay, or various types of large, open-air extraction are not appropriate activities in or near the City of Geneva or where they threaten local water supplies, air quality, significantly increase local traffic (>5% of vehicles), impact scenic venues, and/or increase ambient/background noise levels.

Railroads

It should be the long range goal of the City to move substantially all of the Finger Lakes Railroad train yard and storage operations currently located at the north end of Seneca Lake to an area north of the City in the Town of Geneva where it may be better accommodated and shielded so that its visual, noise, light, and other negative impacts on the populace and the Geneva region is reduced. This move would further accommodate the development of the City of Geneva's 6th Ward into a vibrant new multi-use area that would grow the tax base and help relieve the stress on City finances without compromising or reducing or impinging on the open-air, lakeside recreation and current festival operations on the City's Lakefront Park. With the removal of the railroad operation, the City would also have the room to pursue a wide, pedestrian/bicycling bridge-ramp across 5 & 20 linking the Lakefront Park to this new development and the rest of the 6th Ward. This bridge would also become an integral connector of the future integrated bicycling network envisioned for the Town and City.

3. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Eddington; seconded by Clr. Gramling

MOVED THAT this meeting be adjourned at 7:29pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-4absent)