

WORKING SESSION - NOVEMBER 9, 1992

The working session of the Ann Arbor City Council was called to order at 7:32 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber by Mayor Elizabeth S. Brater.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Tobi Hanna-Davies, Kirk D. Dodge, Peter Fink, Robert C. Grady, Nelson K. Meade, Peter Nicolas, Thais Anne Peterson, Robert Eckstein, Mayor Elizabeth S. Brater, 9.

ABSENT : Councilmembers Larry Hunter, Kurt Zimmer, 2.

WORK SESSION

Mayor Brater welcomed members of the Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority Board and Housing Policy Board, and expressed appreciation for their work on the Central Area Plan issues.

CENTRAL AREA PLAN / DOWNTOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Director Karen Hart and City Planners Wendy Rampson and Andrea Brown introduced the Central Area Plan, adopted by the Planning Commission in October, 1992. Wendy Rampson and Andrea Brown gave a slide presentation on the plan's background, planning process, problems and priority actions.

Ms. Rampson reported that the central area includes the downtown, central campus and older residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown and campus areas, and that the mission of the plan was to identify issues most critical to the area's quality of life and to create strategies for preservation, revitalization and redevelopment, with emphasis on preservation.

Ms. Brown reviewed the public participation process which helped determined the plan's issue categories (housing and neighborhoods, circulation and parking, downtown, development and redevelopment, park, open space and public areas, and historic preservation), as well as the priority actions for each category.

Following presentation of the plan's highlights, a discussion with Council ensued.

Mayor Brater suggested exploring establishment of design review standards.

Councilmember Fink encouraged involvement of developers at the earliest stages of plan implementation to determine whether some of the goals can be accomplish, and further suggested starting with small projects before making large investments.

The Mayor stated that implementation of the 1988 Downtown Plan is an essential component of adoption of the Central Area Plan, and expressed concern that much of the Downtown Plan, including necessary ordinance revisions, has not been done. Mayor Brater requested that the Planning Director obtain Council input concerning priorities for ordinance changes, and suggested establishment of premium provisions as a high priority.

The following reports were distributed to Councilmembers and are on file in the City Clerk's Office: "Central Area Plan", "Central Area Plan Summary", Central Area Demographics and Land Use", and "Ann Arbor Downtown Plan Summary, 1988".

ANN ARBOR INN

Mayor Brater reported that she presented the Ann Arbor Inn issue as a project at the "Mayor's Institute for City Design" seminar, and that the seminar participants, while disagreeing on the disposition and use of the building, all agreed that the City should obtain control of the site.

The Mayor stated that the City has an opportunity to acquire the Ann Arbor Inn for \$50 from the State for public use, and that it may be reasonable for the City, with the help of the Downtown Development Authority, to conduct a Request For Proposal (RFP) to determine interest for redeveloping this site.

Downtown Development Authority Board Member David DeVarti spoke in favor of obtaining the rights to the building before conducting an RFP.

Downtown Development Authority Board Member Edward Surovell expressed concern with the City taking possession of the Ann Arbor Inn because of the substantial liabilities.

Housing Policy Board Member Timothy Wintermute stated that the Ann Arbor Inn should be considered as a potential housing resource and suggested that housing be included in the RFP.

Housing Policy Board Member Kate Warner spoke in favor of the RFP, but stated that the

first step should be the City's acquisition of the building to show its commitment.

Housing Policy Board Member Larry Fox stated that the City should develop a plan for housing low-income and homeless people in the Ann Arbor Inn building and not bother with an RFP.

Mayor Brater stated that the City needs to move forward with this issue since it involves a key site in downtown Ann Arbor, and that she would be interested in further input from Council and the Boards and Commissions. Ms. Brater requested a recommendation from the City Administrator after review of the various questions and concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, it was moved by Councilmember Fink that the meeting be adjourned.

On a voice vote the Chair declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Janet L. Chapin
Acting Clerk of the Council
Recording Secretary