



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
October 27, 2020

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Rogers in the Maple Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Todd Rogers
Vice Mayor Jeff Wood
Council Member Steve Croft
Council Member Ariel Pe
Council Member Vicki Stuckey

PILLARS OF COMMUNITY/LEGENDS OF LAKEWOOD

Lisa Rapp, Director of Public Works, made a presentation based on the memo in the agenda and stated that at an earlier meeting, staff had presented a full scale mock-up of the proposed art piece that would replace the Pillars of Community previously located on the plaza in front of the Centre. The City Council asked staff to consider updating several photographs from the previous content, and to develop a means of displaying the names of the honorees. She explained that only the names of the original honorees would be included in the art piece and subsequent honorees were intended to be included via presentations on the two video screens that were included within the art piece and that the video concept was intended to allow easy addition of new honorees, while providing a finished look of the piece, rather than leaving blank spaces for the future. She reported that on the wall just outside the Maple room doors, there was a blank space that had three vertical framed prints, which would be replaced by brushed aluminum-like pillar silhouettes, similar to those used in the art piece. She provided sketches showing a piece with the maximum number of fifty-seven name tiles and another displaying what the piece would look like with twenty-three honorees. If there were three honorees every five years in the future, the piece would accommodate about fifty years of future recognition. On the original pillars, color photos were not compatible with the print on glass media that was used, therefore some photos that were originally in color were changed to black and white images, but could now be changed back to the color version. She added that some of the generic, unidentified photos of adult or youth residents participating in civic or sports activities were proposed to be changed to more contemporary full-color images that represented Lakewood's diverse population today. She stated that staff recommended that the City Council authorize staff to continue with the development and pricing of the Pillars of Community art piece and secondary name plaque piece.

MAYOR ROGERS STATED ON BEHALF OF THE CITY COUNCIL TO DIRECT STAFF TO CONTINUE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRICING OF THE PILLARS OF COMMUNITY ART PIECE AND SECONDARY NAME PLAQUE PIECE. THERE BEING NO OBJECTION, IT WAS SO ORDERED.

Mayor Rogers commended staff for the additional work and noted the imagination and innovation used in the presentation.

FRONT YARD LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

Abel Avalos, Director of Community Development, displayed slides and explained that in response to issues raised at a previous study session regarding the proposed ordinance on front yard landscaping and permeable/impermeable surfaces, various configurations of applying the 60/40 split would be demonstrated. He presented the different types of site layouts such as one car garage; garage in rear; two car garage in front; two car garage side entry; three car garages; cul-de-sac; circular drives; corner lots; and narrow lots. He clarified that an asphalt driveway would no longer be allowed whether for new construction or replacement of an existing driveway per the code.

Steve Skolnik, for the City Attorney, explained that the proposed ordinance would establish new ground rules going forward and would not be for purposes of pursuing enforcement of existing properties.

Mayor Rogers inquired whether the fact of existing property owners being grandfathered in as of a certain date would be codified. Mr. Skolnik stated that such properties would be considered to have legal nonconforming status; however, while not legally necessary, language to specify the grandfathered status could be included.

Mr. Skolnik noted the uncertainty of establishing when people made changes with regard to their properties since permits were not necessary for flatwork.

In response to Vice Mayor Wood's question regarding requiring a permit when property owners installed such elements as concrete with rebar, Mr. Avalos stated that the proposed ordinance included a site plan process to allow for review without requiring fees.

Mayor Rogers emphasized the importance of the public information messaging being carefully crafted to let people know of the new requirements, to provide guidelines and to include the reasoning behind them such as the legal and environmental considerations.

Vice Mayor Wood suggested that the information be included in the water utility billing.

Mr. Avalos concluded by stating that based on the direction received, staff would finalize a draft ordinance for review by the Planning and Environment Commission and then bring it back to the City Council for consideration and adoption.

2020 TREE LIGHTING EVENT AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Valarie Frost, Director of Recreation and Community Services displayed slides and made a presentation based on the memo in the agenda. She highlighted the elements of the Tree Lighting program that allowed for the lighting of the City's holiday tree and offered greetings to residents in a safe, socially-distanced manner. She explained that with no public attendees, there would be a short stage program with remarks from the Mayor and a countdown to the lighting of the tree with the Council Members and Santa Claus. A choral trio or quartet from Mayfair High School had been requested to perform, physically distanced apart from one another and other program participants.

2020 TREE LIGHTING EVENT AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY - Continued

Ms. Frost reported that staff had incorporated into the stage program the customary Project Shepherd gifts presentation from the City Council as well as from the Greater Lakewood Court, Miss Lakewood and Miss Lakewood Teen of their customary donation to Project Shepherd. A live broadcast of the Tree Lighting event would be provided on CityTV, similar to one that had been organized for Patriot Day. She added that the night of the Tree Lighting would present an opportunity to reschedule the July 3 fireworks show that had to be canceled and for which the contractor still held a 50% deposit. Artesia High School, Holmes Elementary School and Lakewood High School were agreeable to hosting a fireworks display. A 7:30 pm fireworks show would occur 30 minutes after the end of the Tree Lighting event, allowing residents a chance to move outdoors to enjoy the presentation in the sky from an open area near their home. There would be no spectator viewing areas or parking areas designated for the fireworks display and residents would be encouraged to watch from their own yards or public areas near their home. Staff had considered rescheduling the fireworks display on alternative dates in conjunction with traditional holidays such as Labor Day and New Year's Eve; however, it was anticipated that offering a fireworks display on such dates was likely not to be permitted by Los Angeles County for fear of creating large gatherings during the pandemic, which had been the County's position when they cancelled fireworks displays throughout the County surrounding the July 4 holiday and staff recognized the need for public safety personnel to support events scheduled on holidays as these events would tend to draw larger crowds of participants and/or spectators. She stated it was staff's recommendation that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a contract with Fireworks & Stage FX America for three fireworks displays throughout the City on Friday, December 4, with a contract price not to exceed \$39,000.

The Council Members expressed appreciation to the Community Promotions Committee and for staff's reimagining of the event and noted the value in engaging the community during the pandemic.

Vice Mayor Wood, noting the hardships experienced by many in the community, suggested that the funds might be better spent in support of schools or businesses that were currently struggling as a result of the pandemic.

Mayor Rogers stated it could be argued that the cost for the event would be partially offset by the amount that would normally be spent on the tree lighting. He also cited the limitations of the County's public health order, the ability to provide some type of a shared experience and the potential to promote Lakewood businesses, as opportunities to celebrate as a community in a safe, socially distanced way.

Council Member Croft concurred with many of the concerns raised. He added that as a member of the County's Library Commission, he recommended sharing information to make people aware of some of the libraries' offerings of electronic equipment and learning programs for students and seniors. He also noted that monies that would have been spent on canceled events, such as the Pan American Fiesta or the Civic Center Block Party, would be well spent on the tree lighting providing residents with something to look forward to and cause to celebrate.

2020 TREE LIGHTING EVENT AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY - Continued

Mayor Rogers stated that some sort of pledge opportunity to support an existing charity or a specific cause could be associated with the event.

Council Member Croft added that with the re-opening of the Lakewood Center, an emphasis on Shop Lakewood opportunities could be coordinated as well.

Ms. Frost also noted that many of the Lakewood restaurants provided fundraising opportunities benefitting local schools and that service organizations could be encouraged to participate and spearhead such efforts.

Vice Mayor Wood expressed concerns with the potential for participants bringing family members to the tree lighting event and therefore affecting attendance numbers allowed by the County. Ms. Frost responded by stating that staff would endeavor to maintain appropriate numbers and to work with the Mayfair High School students to make sure their parents waited in the vehicles during the short program.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROFT MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER PE SECONDED TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATIONS. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Croft, Pe, Stuckey and Rogers
NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Wood

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At 7:24 p.m., the Adjourned Regular Meeting of the City Council was recessed for the Regular Meeting of the City Council. At 8:23 p.m., the Adjourned Regular Meeting of the City Council was reconvened.

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2020 TREE LIGHTING EVENT AND FIREWORKS DISPLAY - Continued

Mayor Rogers summarized the discussion held prior to the recess and suggested that the Council Members route any additional ideas directly to the City Manager and then the Community Promotions Committee could reconvene to consider some of the recommendations.

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PROPOSED MUNICIPAL CODE CHANGES AFFECTING PARKWAYS AND THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

Lisa Rapp, Director of Public Works, made a presentation based on the memo in the agenda and reported that staff had previously presented photos of encroachments into the public right of way, in parkways and in the streets.

PARKWAYS AND THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY - Continued

She stated that the encroachments reflected safety concerns for pedestrians and motorists and a proposed version of the sections of the municipal code addressed the concerns raised regarding encroachments in parkways and the streets. She explained that while many of the items of concern were already not allowed under the code, some of the changes served to clarify the prohibitions, while other changes would either allow for prohibitions not previously enumerated, or allow for an expansion of the use of certain materials in the parkways such as artificial turf. She added that staff would prefer only turf grass, irrigation, and the City street tree; however, it was recognized that the drought had stimulated Lakewood residents to replace turf grass with more drought tolerant plants or materials such as small stones or artificial turf. She stated that staff recommended that the City Council direct staff and the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance for implementation of the proposed Municipal Code changes affecting parkways and the public right-of-way for presentation at a future meeting.

In response to a question from Council Member Croft, Ms. Rapp stated that residents would be notified and provided adequate time to perform any necessary removal and replacement. She added that residents would be given choices for what would be permitted in the parkways including decomposed granite, loose decorative stone and gravel no larger than three quarters of an inch in size in order to provide more drought tolerant options.

Council Member Pe expressed concerns about penalizing residents for their design choices and offered a more compassionate approach. Ms. Rapp replied that staff would only take proactive measures for plants with spines, thorns, or needle-like leaves.

Mr. McCormack concurred by stating that it was staff's intention to deal with only the dangerous conditions.

Responding to Vice Mayor Wood's question regarding spiky fences or other decorative installations, Ms. Rapp stated that staff would be limiting its proactive approach just to plant materials.

Ms. Rapp responded to Vice Mayor Wood's inquiry by stating that depending on what point in the season a tree was removed determined when a replacement might be planted. She added that trees were generally planted within a few months and more likely in the spring or fall rather than during the summer when they would have less of a chance to survive.

Mayor Rogers expressed concerns with the potential for misunderstanding of the code regarding the responsibility for irrigation of the parkway tree. Ms. Rapp clarified that the new section specified that the owner of the adjacent property would be responsible for the installation, maintenance and irrigation of all plant material which would include the tree in the parkway except for planting, trimming and removal.

City Council Minutes

October 27, 2020

Page 6

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Rogers adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Mayberry, CMC
City Clerk