

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024 | 2:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL B. O'QUINN, COMMITTEE CHAIR

Councilor(s) Present: O'Quinn, Alexander, Clarke, Tate, Williams, Woods

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Council President O'Quinn.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Action Taken:

Councilor Alexander Motioned to Approve.

Councilor Williams Seconded the Motion.

The May 18, 2024 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes were Approved as Recorded.

3. **Council Administrator's Report - Cheryl Kidd, Council Administrator**

Staff has been working to expend the funds in the 2023-2024 budget. There is approximately \$293K being requested before the Administration to provide purchase orders for various items that Councilors have requested.

There are three (3) existing positions that are opened in 2023-2024 budget. The Administrators are seeking to fill two of the vacancies immediately. A videographer will come on staff July 1, 2024. Kim Garner is actively speaking with an interviewee on another PIO vacancy. The Administrators are seeking further, through the Council President, as to the third position in case in the 2024-2025 budget two position that are being proposed for approval are not granted. The third position is the vacancy of the position held by Lamford Johnson.

4. **Legislative Update & Council Office Employee Policy - Pro Tem Wardine Alexander, Chair, Administration and Government Affairs Committee**

Per Pro Tem Alexander, as part of the Administration and Governmental Affairs Committee, an update on the 2024 Legislative Agenda and items presented to the State Legislature during the last session.

The Jones Group presented the update.

The group was able to secure \$1.5 million for the upcoming World and Fire Games, as well as \$892K for Birmingham Promise, \$200K for Birmingham Rapid Transit, \$100K for Birmingham Civil Rights Museum, \$250K for the City Walk Maintenance Program.

2024 City of Birmingham Bills of Interest/Passed

SB9 submitted by Senator Coleman-Madison – allows Class 1 municipalities to petition for in-rem foreclosure.

HB474 submitted by Representatives Treadway/Senator Smitherman – enables the deployment of an automated traffic enforcement system to enhance exhibition driving enforcement.

HB346 submitted by Representative Almond – creates the Workforce Housing Tax Credit. It provides a tax credit for qualified taxpayers with an interest in a qualified workforce housing project.

SB168 submitted by Senator Weaver – pertains to commercial development authorities in municipalities, defining projects to include single commercial enterprises.

Key Bills that did not Pass

HB437 submitted by Representative Tillman – dealt with Class 1 municipalities, vacant property.

Birmingham Housing Trust Fund submitted by Representative Hollis

SB3 submitted by Senator Coleman-Madison – the bill faced challenges by the Alabama County Commission Association and the Alabama Board of Realtors.

General Bills of Interest

Lottery and Gambling

Pornography Access Bill

Proposed Farm Center

Councilor O'Quinn stated that the Council is interested in having conversation with the Jefferson County Delegation about enabling local jurisdictions to be able to hold property owners accountable to local codes.

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Additional Bills Passed

HB365 – requires municipal officers to participate in complete training courses. It is authorized by the Alabama League of Municipalities.

HB182 – removal of unauthorized individuals; known as the anti-squatting bill – provides an owner method of signing and affidavit and getting someone out in 48 hours.

**5. Urban Neighborhood Zoning Code Amendment - Jess Blankenship, Senior Planner, PEP
Jess Blankenship presented information to the Committee.**

Mixed Use District Goals – a collaborative effort with the Department of Transportation and Community Development:

Promote Housing Choice – promote choices beyond the two extremes of either single family or large multi-family. Increase density in the City – looking at 2-12 units and creating a new zoning district with urban neighborhood. Urban neighborhood is designed to be compact and walkable, contain a variety of housing options, as well as some special commercial uses. It would be located within ½ mile of high-capacity transit. Buildings would be oriented to the street and parking will be in the rear, to the side, or located in parking structures that can serve multiple lots. Housing options in the zoning district will include small lots, single family, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, multiplexes, cottage developments and live work. The limited commercial uses that will be allowed are offices, bakeries, urban groceries, retail and restaurants.

Encourage Transit Options -

Create Vibrant Walkable Neighborhoods

Consolidating the Zoning Ordinance – currently working out of two ordinances.

There is a mix-match in the housing stock vs. the housing need.

Additional factors that are being considered include narrow lots that are suitable for small lots, single-family areas with high vacancy, and historically dense neighborhoods that already have the development pattern on the ground. The neighborhoods will be primarily adjacent to downtown.

Text Changes to Zoning Ordinance

Dimensional Regulations

Urban Neighborhood – require 750 sq. ft. per unit/6 ft. minimum and 18 ft. maximum front setback/0-ft. rear setback/5 ft. setback on each side (left and right for a total of 10)/height is capped at 35 ft.

Mixed-Use L – require 750 sq. ft. per unit/6 ft. minimum front setback/height capped at 45 ft.

Mixed-Use M – require 500 sq. ft. per unit/6 ft. minimum front setback/0 ft. minimum side setback/25 minimum/65 maximum height.

Design Standards

The dwelling design standards will apply to all the character districts – urban and mixed-use neighborhoods.

Dwellings will have to be oriented to the street. Porches are required at the main front façade. They may be roofed or screened, but not covered. The front porch including the steps may extend into the front yard setback, but it must be at three feet from the property line.

Windows are required on walls facing streets or common areas and must cover at least 20% of the wall area.

Flat roofs will have to be enclosed by a 42-inch minimum parapet. Shed roofs are only allowed in the rear yards, and they must be attached to the primary structure.

Doors and windows shall be equal to 25%-75% of the total frontal façade and they cannot be spaced further than 20 feet apart.

Building rooftops should be designed to effectively screen mechanical equipment from street level view.

Decks are not allowed in the front yard.

Permitted Uses Table

Added definitions for multi-plex, automobile parking structure, grocery store, and urban grocery.

Removed all auto-dependent uses from mixed-use districts.

If a property is rezoned to a mixed-use district category, auto-dependent/carwashes uses would no longer be allowed (mixed-use low, mixed-use medium, mixed-use high and downtown, both automated and manual).

Removed the D-6 zoning district.

Action Taken:

Councilor Clarke Motioned to Recommend Approval of the Text Changes.

Councilor O’Quinn Seconded the Motion.

Item Recommended to the Planning and Zoning Committee/City Council Agenda.

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6. **Mayor's Community Safety Plan- Uche Bean, Director of Community Safety Initiatives**

Uche Bean presented an update of the Mayor's Community Safety Plan

There is currently a \$1.75 million investment in community safety from the city budget.

The Mission of the plan is to improve the quality of life for all residents of the city of Birmingham through reimagining public safety and public health with data-driven informed decision-making and empowering community.

Since 2015, Birmingham has seen 100 or more homicides per year where 80-90% were gun-related; making Birmingham top ten of the most dangerous cities in America.

The FBI's Uniform Crime Report indicates that Birmingham has a violent crime rate of 1,485.0 incidents per 100,000 people.

Comprehensive Strategy

The Office of Community Safety Initiatives, operating within a best practice framework of community-based public safety and violence intervention, is committed to realizing the Mayor vision to reimagine public safety.

The focus transcends conventional law enforcement, understanding that a holistic public safety strategy begins by addressing social determinants and treating gun violence as a public health crisis and not a law enforcement issue.

Current Investments in Community Based Public Safety

There is currently a \$1.75 million investment in community safety from the city budget. As mentioned previously the impact of gun violence in Birmingham is accessed at \$37 Million. This does not include the negative economic and development effects on communities and residents.

City Budget - Total: \$1.7 million

- Common Ground- \$1 million
- RESTORE- \$225K
- Credible Messenger- \$250K
- ASPEN- \$225K

Grants - Total: \$1.9 million

- Community Violence Intervention Programs Initiative DOJ grant-\$1.9 million (October 2023)

Philanthropy- Total: \$0

- \$0

AARP Funding- Total: \$2.5 Million

- VIP -\$2 million
- Credible Messenger- \$500K

Action Taken:

No Action – Information Only.

7. **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

None

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Action Taken:

Councilor Alexander Motioned to Adjourn.

Councilor O'Quinn Seconded the Motion.

Meeting Adjourned.