

***Proceedings of the Council of the City of Joliet, Illinois  
held on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, A.D. 2007***

PRE-COUNCIL MEETING of the Council of the City of Joliet, Illinois held on Monday, December 17, 2007 at 3:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers, Joliet Municipal Building, 150 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: MAYOR PRO-TEM ANTHONY UREMOVIC and DISTRICT 2 COUNCILMAN TIMOTHY M. BROPHY, COUNCILMAN AT LARGE THOMAS C. GIARRANTE, COUNCILWOMAN AT LARGE JAN QUILLMAN and DISTRICT 1 COUNCILMAN JOSEPH R. SHETINA.

ABSENT: MAYOR ARTHUR SCHULTZ and DISTRICT 4 COUNCILWOMAN SUSIE A. BARBER, DISTRICT 5 COUNCILMAN WARREN C. DORRIS and COUNCILMAN AT LARGE MICHAEL F. TURK.

ALSO PRESENT: CITY MANAGER JOHN M. MEZERA and CORPORATION COUNSEL JEFFREY S. PLYMAN.

1. Citizens to be Heard

a. Trista Brown re: Drainage Issue

Ms. Brown of 7 N. Raynor Avenue stated whenever it rains or snows, water flows right in the middle of her yard and to her home, and her house is actually sinking. She said on November 22, 2006 she reported the drainage problem and put in an initial claim, and she has been in contact with the Public Works Department. She said they did come out and view the property and estimated it would cost about \$9,000 to repair. She said she is still waiting for an answer from last year just to let her know what's going on and she hasn't heard anything. She said she has been in contact with the Legal Department and has made several calls, but hasn't gotten any calls back.

COUNCILWOMAN BARBER arrived at the meeting at this point.

The Director of Public Works said they have looked into this a few times and there are drains from the sidewalk to the driveway out to the street to curb and gutter. He said there are catch basins at Jefferson and Raynor and another one at John and Raynor that are 160 ft. apart and there is adequate drainage there. He said he has looked at the house and it appears to have adequate pitch a little bit away from the house. He said there may be some issues and he's not sure how long the house has been there.

Ms. Brown said she has been there for 18 years.

The Director of Public Works said they didn't change the grade when they redid Raynor Avenue in 1995.

COUNCILMAN TURK arrived at the meeting at this point.

Ms. Brown said on March 5, 2007 they came out for the third time and evaluated it again and gave an estimate of the cost about the drainage.

The City Manager asked the Director of Public Works if he had a copy of those reports.

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The Director of Public Works said he does and it may help a little bit, but basically it says we didn't change the grade when we did the street and the water does drain out from her property out to the street and it drains down to the catch basins. He said he's been there himself a couple of times and the only place we could put a drain might be in the parkway. He said if anything, water might sit a little bit in the parkway, not on her property. He said her house is higher and her driveway slopes off to her neighbor to the south.

The City Manager asked the Director of Public Works to meet with Ms. Brown and her neighbor and see if there is something we could do.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY asked the Director of Public Works to let him know what he would recommend and said we could consider it for an NIP project.

Ms. Brown also commented on the City's towing policy for victims of crimes, her frustration with not knowing who to contact with certain questions and her willingness to serve on a committee and be involved in the community.

b. Aaron McLeod re: Isaac Singleton Community  
Development Corporation

Dr. Isaac Singleton, Sr. said he was present on behalf of this new Community Development Corporation that is being formed and that he hopes the Council will indulge. He said they are not in competition with anyone and are not here to work against anyone. He said he has been trying to do some things for the community on the east side of Joliet since 1970, and he hopes the Council will support this.

Mr. Aaron McLeod began a PowerPoint presentation and said in an effort to address the urban blight on the east side of Joliet, members of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church congregation have worked to develop the Isaac Singleton Community Development Corporation. He explained what a CDC is and said they are primarily focusing on City Council Districts 4 and 5. He said they are going to focus on affordable housing, economic development, social services, educational development and health awareness. He said they have a residential development plan that they are trying to work out and are looking for inclusionary zoning to increase economic diversity, promote mixed-income neighborhoods, increase ethnic diversity and reverse exclusionary development patterns. He said they are also looking to do some mixed use economic development.

Mr. McLeod said they are proposing a partnership with the City to build a stronger and safer community on the east side of Joliet. He said they already have infrastructure and have a facility that is worth about \$1.2 million which is the multi-purpose center at Mt. Zion Church. He said they need to upgrade their computer lab and they are looking to receive support and approval for economic development projects, for future affordable housing projects, provide consultation on some of their development projects and would like the City of Joliet to allow a Joliet City planner to serve as a liaison to their advisory council.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC said he found in working with the grant coordinator at Joliet Junior College and looking at CDC's in this area, that there isn't any in Joliet. He said he thinks the State of Illinois has about 14 registered CDC's with five in Chicago, one in Rockford and one in Decatur. He said usually they have some type of working relationship with a bank institution because if you're going

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to be working on affordable housing that's part of it, you have to have that linkage. He asked Mr. McLeod if they are registered already because he didn't see them pop up on the website for CDC's in Illinois.

Mr. McLeod said they are a new organization and they are registered as a non-profit organization in the State of Illinois and they have done their 501(c)(3) application.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC said so you're not registered yet.

Mr. McLeod said they are not registered yet. He said he's not sure how accurate those statistics are that there are only five CDC's in Chicago because he knows that's not true.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC asked if we require non-profits like this to file a registration with the City.

The Corporation Counsel said a couple of years ago we approved an ordinance that requires any not-for-profit organization that receives City funding for any purpose to essentially give us a copy of their Attorney General filing that all not-for-profits have to file with the State. He said then we know what the management and financial structures are and we make sure that the organization has been approved by the Secretary of State.

Mr. McLeod said that's not a problem; he has all that stuff and has already filled out the Attorney General charitable organization forms and they've also filed their articles of incorporation with the Will County Clerk.

The City Manager said he thinks it's a little bit confusing for some of us as we're just beginning to learn who all wants to be a CDC, and for over a year now we've been working with another group, the Quality of Life Taskforce, and they represent Districts 4 and 5. He said they have started the CDC and they've asked for funding.

Mr. McLeod said they started the CDC after them.

The City Manager said now you are here after we've been working with the other one for a long time with a mission statement that is very, very similar to theirs and it seems like a duplication of service. He said there are two agencies forming at the same time to do the same thing and asking for the same money. He said if we had five other agencies that wanted to do the same thing, then we're all trying to split a very small pot of money. He said he would think that we would try to encourage you to merge with the other one so that there's not a duplication and so the small amount of resources that are available in the community can be focused.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said there's no doubt the work to be done in Districts 4 and 5 is larger than any one group can handle, and more may be better. He said competition may be good or cooperative incentive could be good, and it doesn't have to be competition. He said if the Council earmarked money for a CDC project and encumbered it but waited for the project to become real, whoever brought the project that was real and ready for the money we could approve.

The City Manager said he doesn't think it's a project that will come to you.

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COUNCILMAN BROPHY said he thought we are earmarking money and telling them to go find the project. He said we aren't giving them money for salaries and operations, we are saying find a worthwhile project.

The City Manager said he doesn't think it's going to come to you like that. He said he thinks CDC's generally start a staff and they need money to support themselves. He said so you're going to get a request probably similar to this one from the other CDC and you already have one that says we need the money and we need it now. He said COUNCILMAN DORRIS has already been working with them and indicating that he and COUNCILWOMAN BARBER are going to provide money because they need to employ people. He said he doesn't know whether Mr. McLeod might be a staff person that needs some funding for himself. He said the average CDC has a staff of 10, and if 10 people work for \$40,000 a year that's \$400,000 in just staff for a CDC. He said he thinks the request is going to be \$50,000 for this one and \$50,000 for the other one. He said he's wondering why they can't work together initially when their goals in the area seem to be the same.

Mr. McLeod said he doesn't think that duplication of services is a bad thing. He said he thinks there is a large area of work that needs to be done and one organization can't do it all by itself. He said he can't speak for the other organization, he can only speak for what it is that they do. He said he's not sure that their missions are the same, the only thing he would say that is very similar is the geographic region.

The City Manager said it seems like the items that you're doing are the same items that they're doing. He said economic development, affordable housing and those kinds of things are all the same. He asked Mr. McLeod if they have met with the other group to talk about it.

Mr. McLeod said they have. He said they are not going to merge and they are not going to dissolve. He said he thinks they can work together peaceably as two respectable organizations and he thinks that there will be opportunities where we can partner on different endeavors. He said right now it's not an issue of who gives more or who gives less, it's who can actually start doing some things. He said they've been building meaningful things for at least the last 30 years and they haven't come to the City Council for any of those projects. He said now they are starting to take on bigger endeavors and they need a little assistance. He said the City is not going to be their only funding source, they will go other places, but they know they will not be able to get any development done if they don't have the Council's support even if that's coming through your approval of projects, TIF grants and things of that nature. He said we want you to know who we are and more importantly respect who we are and use us as a resource in a meaningful way.

The City Manager asked him if they have a proposal of what you would do with the City's money if the City were to give you any money.

Mr. McLeod said yes they do and if you would be willing to meet with us we can go over those things in a more confidential setting and hash it all out.

The City Manager said then generally, would it go for staff or what would it go for.

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Mr. McLeod said primarily it would go through us and we've already streamlined things that we've already done. He said to be quite honest with you, this is nothing new for us, just the tax implications and the corporation implications are new. He said the facility that we've built and the community building that we've done already has taken place at least since 1984 when that edifice was erected; they just didn't have that 501(c)(3) tax status. He said it's a trend within organizations like us, not only on a national level but on a local level, that once you get to a certain size and your outreach begins to grow, you need to tap into other resources which will manifest themselves through a non-profit status that does not have a religious affiliation.

The City Manager asked if their staff is already in place and funded through another source.

Mr. McLeod said right now they are working with a volunteer staff who are competent staff members who are sharing their time whereby their primary jobs are allowing them to sustain their well being, but you have people who are demanding good money as well as their organizations that they work for are demanding top services who are now volunteering to share their talent to push this organization forward. He said that's not going to last forever.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said he likes the idea of two groups because if we have two we'll have a comparison. He said it intrigues him to have two operating together to see which may be better streamlined at operating, which may be better at accessing grants from Washington D.C. and which may be better at simply finding opportunities and possibilities. He said he knows it means additional expense but it intrigues him to pursue the possibility of both of them.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said we just spent how many thousands of dollars with the CDC and Dave Evans and his group, in the range of \$250,000.

The City Manager said probably around \$150,000 for the consulting report.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said we got a pretty good report and we did a lot of work with it and it seems to him that it's in its formative stages and at this point we don't know where it's going either. He said he would like to see them both compete but without our money. He said personally he would not support another \$50,000 to anybody at this point knowing that the first shot out of the box is with our original CDC. He said he thinks they've appointed some Board members and said he would like to see people on that Board from Joliet. He asked Mr. McLeod what he does for a living.

Mr. McLeod said he is an attorney in Joliet.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said he doesn't like the timing on this at all, with two organizations versus one and one that hasn't started yet. He said we have spent a lot of time on it and now we've got another competing organization that wants to come into the City. He asked him what the \$50,000 would be for.

Mr. McLeod said it would be for infrastructure. He said it's not necessarily start-up money and you are not funding rental space or to hire people, they have that there. He said in essence he thinks the money is well spent with their organization and he's not saying anything against the other organization.

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COUNCILMAN SHETINA said he respects Reverend Singleton very much but you are saying a lot of things and they are very clever and he is very nervous about what you're doing. He said we have an organization in place that we and our staff have spent a lot of time with and it seems like an opportune moment for somebody else to come along and say we want a piece of the pie and we want to compete with them. He said he personally can't see that. He said he understands what COUNCILMAN BROPHY is saying and if they were doing it without our money that's fine, go out and get organizations to donate and do the competitive situation. He said he knows it doesn't have to be competitive but we have to be competitive; we're spending a ton of money and our budget is hurting.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said it reminds him of the art project they had going and we had one source for art and we decided maybe one source wasn't such a good thing and maybe we have to look at another group and let them flourish too, and we branched out a little bit. He said he knows this is very much different than art but we spent all our money in one place and after a while we decided to branch out.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said and that was a wise choice but we're not funding anybody now.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE asked if there is any way to work this out without contributing money. He said he knows we already paid for the study. He said we've got money budgeted and is there any way that we can get these two groups to compete to see which one we should support.

Mr. McLeod said it's not his job to lobby for the other group. He said he understands your initial investment of \$150,000 but don't look at it as a bad investment if you don't fund the initial group of people who put the taskforce together. He said maybe when you did the initial study you overlooked organizations that were already in existence who could have been the best conduit to do community development whereby you are not funding the start-up fees, and you haven't possibly looked into the organizations that have done substantive building and community work and have the constituency to undertake a project like this. He said the CDC is not going to flourish based on the City investment alone, you have to go out and raise money and have people support it. He said he thinks they have the people, the vision and they want to see change. He said he thinks giving them some money and support and partnering with them in creative ways will allow them to do some good things.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE said there is no way he feels he could support both of them. He said by supporting one are we going to hurt the other, and that's why he's looking for some competition between the two of them with us putting money in to see who we should support.

Mr. McLeod said as far as collective bargaining is concerned, the zero sum game does not work for either organization. He said they don't have to distribute their resources where one group loses and the other group loses, there is enough to go around. He said there are enough people here who have committed to working together whereby they can put their heads together to figure out a way to make it work. He said we are not trying to x-out the other group or do anything negative towards them; we are saying we're a player here and we want to do work, we need your support. He said if you give us nothing and we don't have your support to do a building project, we still lose. He said what we are saying is

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there is value on the table and don't leave it on the table by saying we're only going to support one group.

COUNCILMAN TURK said in one slide of your presentation, you have the names of the Rialto, the City of Joliet, Westfield Mall, Slovenian Women's Union and the mansion on Broadway. He asked if they have all endorsed the concept and also endorsed any kind of financial commitment.

Mr. McLeod said they have not. He said they are just in his opinion staples of Joliet.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said we're going to ask the staff to review this and come back with some sort of way to proceed with this. He said we didn't know we'd have this issue in front of us today.

Mr. McLeod said he has one more request and it is in the spirit of a positive discourse that they be added to the agenda for tomorrow's Council meeting.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE asked if this has to go back to the Finance Committee.

The Corporation Counsel said you can't take final action tomorrow night on the request and this would go to the Finance Committee.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said if they come back tomorrow he has no problem but we should invite the other group here and let them listen to the discourse and see if they can begin a discourse with each other.

The City Manager said the other group became aware of this group and they had a meeting to talk about this cooperation and maybe forming one CDC at least for the first year or so. He said it is his understanding that this group has said no, they don't want to do that and they want to do their own. He said so the other group is very much aware of this and there already has been a meeting and some discourse. He said he doesn't know that the other group wants to do that in a public forum.

Mr. McLeod said we just want to let them know who we are and what we do and the best way to do that is tomorrow at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC said he thinks what the staff is trying to tell him is that there are limited resources as COUNCILMAN SHETINA has pointed out. He said the budget is not as favorable at this point in time as everybody would like it to be and with that said and with limited resources, he thinks we should take a step backwards and look at the organizations and make sure that you're comfortable and know what we can do and what you can do. He said no action whatsoever would be taken tomorrow night. He said he doesn't know if it's appropriate to come without the other agency either. He said he would like both of them to come at the same time, not separately.

Mr. McLeod said they would still like to come tomorrow for informational purposes.

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COUNCILMAN SHETINA said he would like to hear them and he has a lot of questions for this organization. He said it seems very unusual that all of a sudden we have two. He said we've been working with the other group for a year.

Mr. McLeod said we have had this on the table before the study came out. He said it's not like we are trying to undercut the other group or the taskforce is fueling what we've done.

The Corporation Counsel said it will take a vote of the Council to waive the rule that citizens to be heard can occur at the Tuesday night meeting.

COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN moved to allow Mr. McLeod to make his presentation at tomorrow's Council meeting.

Motion seconded by COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE.

Motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILWOMAN BARBER, COUNCILMEN BROPHY, GIARRANTE, COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN, COUNCILMEN SHETINA, TURK and MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC.

NAYS: NONE.

The City Manager then went to the beginning of the agenda to explain the items.

The City Manager explained Council Memo #1469-07 dealing with concurring with the Illinois Department of Transportation for the Elevation of the intersection of Seil Road and Illinois 59/I-55. He said this authorizes the Mayor to execute a Letter of intent with IDOT summarizing the work they will do at this interchange and their intent to raise the profile to accommodate the full interchange in the future. He said IDOT's project on the west side of I-55 has a cost of approximately \$20 million and the City's share of this cost for elevating the intersection is about \$2,009,645.

COUNCILMAN GIARRANTE asked how do we know that once we spend this money the project will happen, and what guarantee do we have.

The City Manager said the first project which is on-going right now is guaranteed to happen, which is the widening of Route 59, so that \$20 million roadway project is going to happen and that will complete the intersection with Seil Road and Route 59. He said they have talked with IDOT and they have said that once it is built, they wouldn't allow it be raised later. He said it has to be done now if you're ever going to do it in the future. He said what we're doing is creating a window of opportunity for us now that will allow you to do any project in the future.

MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC asked if this obligates us in any way to move further to make it a full interchange.

The City Manager said it does not. He said all they'll do is raise the intersection up with fill and we're paying for the placement of that fill to be wide enough, so should we ever want to do anything in the future to make it a full interchange we can do it.

COUNCILMAN UREMOVIC said or a developer could do it.

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The City Manager said yes, absolutely.

MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC asked if we are obligating ourselves to something that we're not necessarily going to do in the future as a City.

The City Manager said we have no obligation to go any further than that.

The City Manager explained Council Memo #1475-07 dealing with Declaring Certain Properties as Public Nuisances. He advised that the property at 1417 Plainfield Road will be withdrawn from the list as the property is now being managed by the owner's son and should no longer be a problem.

The City Manager explained Council Memo #1477-07 dealing with the Vacation of Beech Street and a Portion of a 16.5' Wide North/South Alley at McDonough and Center Streets. He said the petitioner, Illinois Marine Towing/Seaways, Inc., is requesting the vacation to accommodate a future building project.

COUNCILWOMAN QUILLMAN asked if Mr. Shane Gordon of 404 S. Center Street, who appeared in opposition at the Plan Commission, has been satisfied.

The City Manager said he believes Mr. Gordon got a good explanation; he was concerned about flooding. He said actually no one has changed the elevations of any of the property down there. He said Mr. Gordon, having the lowest property, has probably experienced some flooding in the past, and what they have said is they'll try to work with him on anything they do to see if they can help alleviate any concerns that he might have. He said he's actually lower than the adjacent roadway so there's not too much that we can do to help him at this point.

MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC asked if this area has complied with all the standards.

The City Manager asked the Director of Community and Economic Development if there is anything that he knows of that is in violation of our ordinances. He asked if there's any screening requirements or any other requirements.

MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC said maybe they can do some fencing or beautification because it doesn't look real good.

The Director of Community and Economic Development said they've been in operation there for so long he thinks a lot of the operation has been grandfathered in. He said they are going to do more beautification than they've ever done before.

The City Manager asked what they will do in terms of beautification and screening.

Planner Kendall Jackson said they have already fenced it off with a solid stockade-like fence. He said they are going to submit a plan for their new building at some point in the future. He said there will be a new storage structure on site and at that time we'll do a full site plan review, including landscaping and additional screening to the west.

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The City Manager said one of the concerns that MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC may have at this point is that if we approve this vacation we might be able to get some consideration now in terms of screening that our ordinances might not require in the future. He said there is industrial property on a couple sides of this and for the motorists going by there now they see right into that yard. He said we might want to ask them whether they would screen it all the way around now knowing that they're going to come in later, and see if we could get a commitment.

MAYOR PRO-TEM UREMOVIC said there needs to be some beautification because it doesn't look good at all.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY stated the little building in front of it was for sale recently for a small amount and he asked what the odds are of encouraging them to buy it and level it as part of this. He said it's right on the corner on Railroad Street.

The Director of Community and Economic Development said the company Ozinga was trying to buy a lot of the properties down there and that is separated by the Center Street right-of-way so it really wouldn't help these guys that much. He said Center Street is still in use as a public way. He said he thinks Ozinga may have gotten it.

COUNCILMAN BROPHY said he was going to say why don't we give them that portion of Center Street as well.

The Director of Community and Economic Development said they've had a lot of discussions with the owner of the house down there about vacating it and he needs Center Street to get access to his house. He said it's one problem compounding the other.

The City Manager asked the Director of Community and Economic Development if he could meet with the petitioners and get a screening commitment now as part of the vacation consideration, and then later on that wouldn't be an issue when they come in for their redevelopment. He said and in the meantime the motorists would get some benefit from this screening.

The City Manager explained the remaining items on the agenda.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA asked about the condition of DesPlaines Street from City Hall down to about where the Housing Authority starts. He said that is the worst stretch of road he has seen in Joliet, it's terrible and it's right by our front door. He asked if we have ever asked that to be done.

The City Manager said we did part of it when we did City Hall and the police station but there was never any funding through the Neighborhood Improvement Program and we've never looked at using the City's regular budget. He said if the Council wants that to be a priority, we could look at something with that in 2009 through the City's Vehicle, Road and Bridge program.

COUNCILMAN SHETINA said it is just terrible, there's water under the viaduct and the whole thing is shot. He said there are only a couple of homes there and it's very embarrassing.

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The City Manager asked the Director of Public Works to look at that for 2009 in the Vehicle Road and Bridge Program.

The Corporation Counsel announced that the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board will be holding one of their public hearings for the Silver Cross Hospital relocation issue in the Council Chambers on January 22, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

The City Manager advised that there was no need to go into closed session.

The meeting adjourned.

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ARTHUR SCHULTZ  
Mayor

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JANET K. TRAVEN  
City Clerk

Recorded on Tape