

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 9, 2017
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Michele Papai, Chair
Peter Kotses, Vice-Chair

Other Council Members: Kent Butler
Chris Fahl
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Lighting Upgrade & Replacement Project East State Street (ODOT LPA agreement)
-Mayor – this is no cost to the City – between Della Drive and Route 50
- Athens Public Transit (APT) – HAPCAP (update)
-Papai – will be discussing best practices with our transit system
-Mayor – shared the following figures on our transit growth: 2011 ridership was 62,887 and in 2016 increased to 325,175 – September, 2017, monthly record was broken with 59,747 riders – projected ridership for this year is 400,000 – Athens Public Transit has multiple contracts: the Bobcat Pass, The Summit and University Courtyard – City has already designated HAPCAP as grantee through December 31, 2019, and would like HAPCAP to do all the services in-house – it will streamline operations, efficiency, and flexibility of the system as APT continues to grow – HAPCAP would be responsible for acquiring, owning, and disposing of all Federal and State APT vehicles

-Jessica Stroh, representing HAPCAP – HAPCAP has been administering APT for five years – is confident HAPCAP has the experience to manage the change in service delivery

-Fahl – asked about any pass-through funding
-Stroh – HAPCAP is currently receiving all Federal and State funding for APT operation

-Risner – asked where the vehicles are physically kept
-Stroh – the City owned APT garage on West State Street – the buses will remain at that location – HAPCAP maintains the facility

-President – asked for clarification on the difference in the change

-Stroh – currently HAPCAP administers and handles, marketing, compliance, grant writing, invoicing, reporting, policies and planning, but it does not hire the employees and is not responsible for the day-to-day operations, so that is what would change, along with vehicle ownership

-McGee – asked who hires the current employees

-Stroh – McDonald's Transit Associates with parent company ownership in Paris, France

-Papai – clarified that the City would no longer have a contract with McDonald's

-Mayor – this change will retain things locally as opposed to an international conglomerate – removes a layer of bureaucracy and streamlines communications

-Papai – believes HAPCAP has the ability and experience to operate the system – no need for any additional contract – believes this would be a better operational model for employees since it will be local

-Stroh – will continue to report to the City, as needed, with important updates, and to coordinate and partner with the City on planning for APT's future

-Fahl – the City has always offered vehicles to be disposed of to other governmental agencies, or non-profits – asked if that is something HAPCAP would be able to do

-Stroh – ODOT would require them to go out to bid, with money going back into the capital replacement fund – most vehicles at the time of disposition are worth less than \$1000 – sometimes they are sold for scrap

-McGee – asked if the City currently subsidizes HAPCAP and, if so, would this continue under the new arrangement

-Mayor – City would continue to subsidize the local match, which will continue as a service to the public

-McGee – asked if the increase in ridership is due to the GoBus

-Stroh – no, GoBus numbers are not included in the ridership totals presented this evening

-Papai – Bobcat Pass has been huge

-Papai – asked about any needed legislation associated with the change

-Stroh – from ODOT's perspective no legislation is needed with changing to in-house services, however, ownership of the vehicles may require legislation

-McGee – asked about expanding routes into the Strouds Run area

-Stroh – citizens can contact HAPCAP about interested routes so it can be incorporated into their routes planning process

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. LPA

MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017
CITY & SAFETY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Kent Butler, Chair
Peter Kotses, Vice-Chair
Arian Smedley, Member

Other Council Members: Chris Fahl
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- WTP (Resolution of Tentative Award)
 - Mayor – would like Council's support of a tentative award of \$5.1
- WTP Improvements Project
 - Mayor – need authorization for construction and construction engineering
 - S-S Director – will need Suspension of the Rules on Monday in order to meet a September 25 deadline
 - Risner – asked whether construction will begin yet this year, or not until next
 - S-S Director – this year, a lot of the improvements are to the plant's interior
- ARTS/West Renovations (re-bid)
 - Butler – understands the bids came in too high
 - Mayor – estimated cost was \$115,000, and bids exceeded \$200,000 – will re-bid

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. WTP Tentative Award
2. WTP Construction

MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 p.m.

Council Members in Attendance: Kent Butler
Chris Fahl
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Michele Papai
Jeff Risner
Arian Smedley

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

Items Discussed:

- City Financial Implications of Athens City School District Building Changes
-President – citizens have been expressing their concerns to the Council Members – at this time, the City has no direct role in this issue, but believes this is an appropriate opportunity for City Council Members to at least talk about what some of those financial implications might be, and then the meeting will be open for comment from those in attendance this evening

-Papai – pointed out that City Council is the financial body for the City of Athens, and our conversations need to reflect our concerns from a financial aspect – for the past 15 months, the Athens City School District (ACSD) has been in conversation and planning regarding their facilities and programming – she has recently become interested in a conversation about a land donation from Ohio University to the (ACSD) – she has heard concerns from many constituents about the elementary school campus model – there is anxiety and concern with citizens and business owners – this conversation by the Council offers another avenue for City voters to share their thoughts, as they are taxed both for City infrastructure and the (ACSD) – believes there are significant financial implications for all options being discussed by (ACSD) – she promotes thoughtful and progressive development, and this is paramount for the future of Athens – she has many questions related to the cost of infrastructure, including safe travel to the site of an elementary school campus on the proposed land, as well as issues such as runoff, erosion, water and sewer expansion to the site – these issues will certainly have to be addressed in time – another impact is on the housing in our current elementary school neighborhoods, and conversations regarding trading buildings for infrastructure – this (ACSD) decision will affect the

City's economic development, real estate, job recruiting, and overall quality of life
– maintaining open, transparent conversations is important

-Fahl – changing locations of schools impacts all and is a community-wide issue
– not knowing and being part of the (ACSD) plans stymies the City's ongoing Comprehensive Plan update – options being discussed by (ACSD) impacts every neighborhood in our City – all stakeholders need to be informed of the process

-Smedley – hopes focus stays within the authority of City Council – understands no decision has been made on the direction (ACSD) is taking, and it may be too early for City to get involved, wouldn't want premature discussion, however, the City needs to be mindful and prepare for all scenarios

-McGee – questioned whether the City has been negotiating with Ohio University regarding property for a future school site

-Butler – the (ACSD) planning is of paramount importance to his constituents – this is an issue that has serious implications for many generations to come – encouraged dialogue and openness among the City, University, and (ACSD) as this issue moves forward

-Kotses – believes it is still early in the process, and is okay with waiting for (ACSD's) proposal – he has spent time with Supt. Gibbs, and he has reached out to many other groups to discuss this issue – everyone needs to work toward a compromise – the school district is larger than the City, and he wants all included in the process

-Risner – asked if the end result of the discussion this evening will be a forthcoming resolution

-Fahl – as a major stakeholder, a resolution identifying City issues will be considered

-Risner – so, no definitive statement about direction, but a list of questions

-Fahl – issues need to be identified now for good planning, and City Council should be included as representatives of the citizenry and economics of the community

-Papai – agrees, the Council should play a larger role in the process

-Smedley – pointed out that she believes (ACSD's) planning process has been forthcoming

-Kotses – agrees with Smedley

-Mayor – responded to McGee that the City has no ongoing negotiations with Ohio University for any type of land transfer regarding (ACSD) – (ACSD) Supt. has diligently been working toward a plan through this long process – Mayor served on the Steering Committee and conveyed the importance of keeping schools within the City limits – finds it unfathomable to think otherwise as it relates to City growth, economic development and quality of life – for a sundry of reasons, ideas throughout this process keep changing – has been assured by the Supt. that it is not the plan to move the schools outside the City, nor is it the plan to move the Middle School; it will remain in its current structure – as a member of the Steering Committee the only option he fought hard for was the Pre-K through 5 model within the City – updating the City's Comprehensive Plan will need to look at how we envision the schools in the City moving forward

-Barbara Stout, East State Street – this is a community issue and we all have to live with the results – first and foremost she is concerned about the quality of education, and what creates the fairest and most equitable education for our students – current configuration does not serve special needs students well – combining elementary campuses will help

-Jason Heinrich, resident – promotes the idea of a single K-5 campus based on the idea that low income children do better when integrated by socio-economic status, and because it improves access to disability services – (ACSD) continues to take more input and deliberate more about these issues – is pleased with the responsiveness of (ACSD)

-Kurt Montle, resident – is a small business owner that supports the small elementary school initiative – quoted an article from the *Institute for Local Self-Reliance* group, "Small schools also build strong communities. Parents and neighbors are more likely to be actively involved in the school. The students benefit from community support, and the school in turn fosters connections among neighbors and encourages civic participation. State and local policies often favor the construction of new, sprawling schools on the outskirts of town over renovating smaller, more centrally located schools. Examples of these policies include minimum acreage requirements, state funding programs that support new construction, and limit funding for renovation and inflexible building codes designed for modern construction methods." – he believes we have the ability to solve these problems within our small community setting – the socio-economic integration can be solved – the disabilities issue can be helped tremendously – there are viable concepts that have been introduced – on the City's west side, the school is the only anchor, there is no community center, there is no pool, and there is no library – the closure of West Elementary, in his mind, would be catastrophic – it would turn those houses into substandard dwellings, only inhabited by college students and greatly lessening that specific community's value – he encouraged Athens City Council and the Mayor to promote our small community schools, and strongly encouraged the Mayor to

openly convey all future communication on this topic in forums like this, so that all are kept informed

-Amber Duff, resident – unfortunately the current school configuration is not sustainable with expected decreasing enrollment and state funding cuts – according to (ACSD) Supt., in order to keep the status quo there would need to be a significant tax increase -- (ACSD) does not currently provide adequate special education services

-Y. Ting Wang, resident – focused on two points: (1) structuring a good educational system, and (2) about our neighborhoods – City Council represents neighborhoods while (ACSD) considers a good educational system, to improve student performance – we are a creative community – vacating a neighborhood school brings new opportunity for development that can fulfill the neighborhood's needs – challenges are opportunities

-President – City Council will deliberate with caution, but also with the concerns of the community at large as they proceed

- Rules of Council (amend Rule #5)

-President – recommended that Rule #5 be amended to state that the President Pro Tem will retain his/her right to vote on all matters as a member of the Council – this is in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, and past practice of City Council

-Risner – questioned whether legislation is required

-President – this will come forward as a motion by the Council and will go into effect immediately

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. (ACSD) Resolution

MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 11, 2017
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members in Attendance: Chris Fahl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Vice-Chair
Patrick McGee, Member

Other Council Members: Kent Butler
Peter Kotses
Michele Papai
Arian Smedley

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson
Service-Safety Director Horan Moseley

Items Discussed:

Fahl announced the City Comprehensive Plan Update will begin with a public visioning session at the Athens Community Center, Room ABC at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 21. This is only the first step for public input; the process will include several community-wide planning meetings and neighborhood level meetings.

- Tenant/Occupant Education Form (ACC 29.03.08.1)
 - Fahl – this form has not performed to the expected level, and it requires the Code Enforcement Office to maintain too many documents – proposed amending to remove this form and replacing it with a different medium to educate our rental occupants about important City information and regulations – Administration is suggesting a required poster to be placed on the back of the main entrance door of each rental unit (see attached)
 - Papai – is familiar with the educational efforts by Ohio University's Off-Campus Living through email, texting, and social media, so a lot of this information is being shared – initially it was the property owner's responsibility to share this information with their tenants – she understands Code Enforcement's problem with the amount of filing and disposing of so many documents, but stressed the need to disseminate this information in the best possible way

- Mayor – it will be required that this compliance poster be hung in a prominent location in every domicile that is a rental unit – if this poster is not displayed at the time of a rental inspection, a violation will be assessed
- Butler – agrees that it is time for a more contemporary way to communicate this information – adding, he doesn't believe it is the City's responsibility to spoon feed young adults
- S-S Director – effective date is expected to be January 1, along with the annual rental permit renewal
- Risner – suggested that the poster could be a refrigerator magnet
- Kotses – asked if a QR Code has been considered
- Housing Commission
 - Fahl – December, 2016, the City of Athens and Ohio University Task Force submitted a recommendation report on Affordable Housing, co-chaired by Council Member Papai and Ohio University Vice-President Steven Golding – one of the recommendations of the report, and a first step, is to establish a Housing Affordability Commission -- this Commission will be appointed by City Council, to include a designee by the Mayor, a designee by the Ohio University President, a City Council designee, and representatives from the following: real estate, a designee from the Metropolitan Housing Authority, neighborhoods, finance, tenants, and a general citizen advocate
 - Smedley – this is a wonderful opportunity to have a positive impact on the community addressing an existing issue
 - Mayor – suggested, instead of designee, that the Metropolitan Housing Authority be the Executive Director who would be quite an asset in moving this plan forward

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Tenant/Occupant Education
2. Housing Commission

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2017
7:00 p.m.**

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ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Richland Avenue Pedestrian Improvement (Project #311)
 - Papai – there are safety issues with the current crosswalk on Richland between South Green Drive and President Street – this area has captured the attention of ODOT who has awarded the City a (\$1,812,195) grant for this project through the Transportation Alternative Program as a priority corridor for improvements
 - Mayor – engineering design of this project is (\$260,000) – this grant award funds up to 80% of the eligible costs – estimated total cost of the project is (\$2,357,824) – this is an area that has encountered many pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, some serious, and has needed to be corrected for quite some time – this project would raise the road bed 3 – 3 1/2 feet and would create a wide, well-lighted, causeway underneath the street
 - Papai – reiterated that the City and Ohio University have been working together in the development of this plan as part of the overall Richland Avenue improvements – the current crosswalk area was identified many years ago by the City to be problematic
 - Mayor – this corridor is very congested – this project will ensure pedestrian safety and lessen the impact experienced by those driving through

-S-S Director – clarified that there is no Ohio University cost share assigned to this project, but certainly needed cooperation

-McGee – asked about the City's share of this cost

-S-S Director – about (\$350,000)

-McGee – questioned whether alternatives to the underground causeway were considered

-President – ODOT was tasked with finding the safest and most reasonable solution

-Kotses – some pedestrian traffic flow has changed since the opening of Bobcat Lane – he questioned whether the causeway entrance has already been decided, and whether an engineering firm has been hired – also, constituent concern has been raised about the closing of Richland Avenue again so soon after the most recent improvements

-Mayor – decision was based on the location of utilities, so the current crosswalk area is where the causeway will cross – Burgess and Niple will be engineering this project – is sympathetic to those impacted by another closure, but this is for enhancing safety

-S-S Director – not sure this project will address those trying to cross over to Bobcat Lane

-Papai – requested both north and south of the current pedestrian walkway be considered within the design element in order to funnel as many pedestrians into this causeway as possible

-Rob Delach, citizen – upon reviewing the initial design he forwarded a response to the Transportation Committee, Mayor, and Engineer – this causeway could create unintended consequences with increased vehicular speed and pedestrians continuing to cross further north and south of the intended crossing, making it riskier and potentially much more dangerous for pedestrians choosing to cross in other areas – should look at options, and also look at ways to mitigate risks that could be a product of this project

-Papai – agrees these elements should be added to the engineering plan to discuss these issues – speed will likely increase and need to be managed

-Delach – thinking about how bicyclists will navigate the causeway should also be considered – the “S” curve at the end could be problematic

-Mayor – responded that the Serpentine design is an ADA element

- JPAC Barbeque (street closure)
 - Smedley – legislation is needed to close Park Place and a portion of Court Street, between West Mulberry and President, on Tuesday, September 26, with a rain date the very next day, from 5-9 p.m. – this kickoff event is sponsored by the Joint Police Advisory Council (APD and OUPD) – intent is to develop and maintain productive relationships between the community and law enforcement
 - S-S Director – may need to close West Mulberry for safety purposes
 - Mayor – this is a good law enforcement partnership and community policing model – the City's contribution will be \$3000 and Ohio University will contribute \$3000 – student organizations are being lobbied for an additional \$3000 – Sheriff's Office will attend as well as the State Highway Patrol – hope to bring students and community together with law enforcement – past events have been well attended
 - McGee – commends JPAC for this activity

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Richland Pedestrian Design
2. JPAC Barbeque