

# SYCAMORE CITY COUNCIL

## AGENDA

September 16, 2002

### City Council Committee Meeting

#### **6:30 P.M. Meeting of the Streets and Walks Committee**

The Committee will meet at the new Public Works facility on North Cross Street for an informal tour of the new facility at 6:30 p.m. A more formal open house will be scheduled for later this fall when all of the interior finishes and furniture are in place.

At about 6:45 p.m. the Streets and Walks Committee will begin its deliberations in the break room of the new facility. The Committee will adjourn about 7:15 to return to City Hall for the regular Council meeting.

The Committee will address the following items:

- a) Parking on North Sacramento Street, north of Exchange Street.
- b) Semi-Truck traffic on Mason Court.
- c) When Informational Signs Might be Appropriate on Major Thoroughfares.
- d) Traffic Control on Susan Street.

Some background information on each topic is offered below:

- ◆ Parking on North Sacramento Street, North of Exchange Street. This corridor carries a mix of commercial and residential traffic. Most of the vehicular traffic consists of redi-mix trucks heading to and from the Floit facility. Nevertheless, the stretch from Exchange Street north to Page Street has a number of residences, mostly on the east side of the two-block area. Residents from the area have asked the City to consider prohibiting parking anytime on the west side of the street between Sycamore Street and Page Street. This frontage principally consists of commercial property with off-street parking capacity. The staff support this proposal.
- ◆ Semi-Trailer Traffic on Mason Court. Neighboring propertyowners have recently complained about semi-truck traffic on Mason Court that does not seem to be involved in local deliveries. It is unclear what has prompted this traffic. Although it is understood that this narrow public way should not accommodate truck traffic except for local deliveries, Title 6 of the City Code (Section 6-4-18) does not cite Mason Court as a street on which such traffic is prohibited This could be remedied. In addition, our Police department could target this public way for increased attention for a period to identify the source of the problem and to remedy the apparent nuisance.
- ◆ Establishing Guidelines for Informational Signs. Recently, some local organizations have asked if they could erect congratulatory signs in city rights-of-way to highlight the accomplishments of their members. From time to time the City has posted such signs but no policy exists to guide further action. If the Council is interested in some uniform response to such inquiries—and the staff recommend a consistent response—

then we might look at what other communities have done. Our brief research has revealed that larger communities tend to borrow from the state (IDOT) guidelines and some smaller communities have a more reactive approach. The state guidelines were established in 1987 and are attached. In 1994 some new recommendations were debated at the District 2 offices, but the 1987 guidelines have apparently prevailed over time. In general, the qualifying signs for placement in the rights-of-way are as follows:

- a) Town name signs with population.
- b) Community Awards Signs
  - aa) Athletic and Scholastic Awards. Typically, these honor only first place achievements in sectional and state contests, or first-through-third place finishes in national or international contests. Formal presentations of the signs in some ceremony usually precede any placement, to assure that there is legitimacy to the honor in the eyes of the local school or institutional authorities as well as the local government. Such signs usually remain in place for one year only.
  - bb) Civic Awards. These usually denote a state or national designation, such as “Governor’s Home Town,” or “Certified City,” etc. They likewise only have a one-year life, and may be placed on or near city entry signs.
  - cc) Civic Program Signs. This is a more elastic category that could include “Neighborhood Watch,” “Drug-Free School Zone,” “I-Search” and other public safety messages. These are not typically placed in the rights-of-way, but may be when they are specific to a certain site.

The state guidelines also reference signs that may honor famous local individuals (e.g. “Miss Illinois”), prominent local industries, etc. Such signs are not typically permitted in state rights of way, but can be erected on private property subject to local zoning provisions.

To avoid a profusion of signs—including those that recognize achievements that may seem honorable to some groups but objectionable to others—it may be prudent to adopt the more limited parameters that the State of Illinois’s transportation officials recommend at this point, until some experience is gained.

- ◆ Traffic Control on Susan Street. Residents of the Windfield Meadows and Maple Terrace subdivisions have asked for the Council’s consideration of traffic control where Susan Street intersects with Windfield Drive, Axcel, William, John, Larson and Janet Streets. Ald. Paulsen has suggested a traffic control plan, a copy of which is attached for the committee’s consideration.

Using Ald. Paulsen’s plan as a guide, the City Engineer and City Administrator recommend some minor modifications in keeping with past practice in similar subdivisions (e.g. Landahl). The changes are as follows:

- a) Eliminate the stop sign at Swanberg Court. The traffic to and from this short cul de sac is not sufficient to warrant precautions beyond those prescribed by the Illinois Rules of the Road.

- b) Install yield signs rather than stop signs at Susan and William, Susan and John, and Susan and Larson Streets. Because of the quick succession of intersections, the placing of stop signs will tend to encourage coasting through the intersections by impatient drivers who will tend to treat such intersections as “yield” rather than “stop” locations.

Committee direction is recommended.

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**Regular City Council Meeting  
7:30 P.M.**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. INVOCATION**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**
- 6. CONSENT AGENDA**
  - A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of September 3, 2002;
  - B. Plan Commission Minutes for the Meeting of August 12, 2002.
  - C. Payment of the Bills for September 16, 2002.
  - D. Monthly Budget Report for August, 2002.
- 7. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BILLS.**
  - A. Proclamation Honoring Bishop Thomas of the Israel of God Church on his 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- 8. REPORTS OF OFFICERS**
- 9. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**
- 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS--None**
- 11. ORDINANCES**
  - A. Ordinance No. 2002.36— An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of B&B Development for Approval of a Final Plat for Phase Five of the Heron Creek Planned Unit Development. First and Second Reading.**

The attached plat depicts the fifth and final phase of development for that portion of the Heron Creek subdivision that is south of Plank Road and east of Illinois Route 23. Thirty-seven single-family lots are depicted on the plat, which meets all locally adopted codes and ordinances.

The Plan Commission reviewed the plat at its regular meeting of September 9 and unanimously (9-0) recommended its approval. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

**B. Ordinance No. 2002.37—An Ordinance Concerning the Recommendation of the Plan Commission With Regard to the Petition of Grainger Construction, Inc., Ted Getzelman Carpentry, and Versluys Construction for Special Use Permits for Attached Single Family Dwellings Having a Common Wall Along a Lot Line in Accordance with the Requirements of Section 8.02.10 of the 2001 Zoning Ordinance for the Purpose of Dividing Two Family Dwellings Into Separate Properties at 1901, 1903, 1117, 1119, 1125, 1127, 1133, 1135, 1141, 1143, 1181, 1183, 1126, 1128, 1134, 1136, 1150, 1152, 1174, and 1176 Penny Lane. First and Second Reading.**

On July 15, 2002 the City Council created authority for the administrative processing of certain limited re-subdivisions of land such as those contemplated in the attached ordinance. However, such authority did not extend to special use permitting, annexation, rezoning or other actions for which public hearings and Council action is required by state statute.

The lots in question are in Phase One, Unit Two of the Townsend Woods planned unit development. On July 16, 2001 the Council rezoned these 19 lots from “R-1” One Family Residence to “R-2” Two-Family Residence but no special use permits were issued, since at the time the applicable zoning provisions required later action to subdivide when future owners were identified.

The attached ordinance would establish special use permits for the subdivision of 18 lots for their eventual sale in fee simple. The City Engineer, as designated plat officer, will then handle the proper filing and recording of the necessary subdivision plats.

The Plan Commission reviewed these special use requests on September 9 and unanimously (9-0) recommended their approval with findings of fact. City Council approval of the Plan Commission recommendation is requested.

**C. Ordinance No. 2002.38—An Ordinance Amending the City Code of the City of Sycamore, Title 3, “Business and License Regulations,” Chapter 2, “Liquor Control,” Section 6, “Classification of Licenses, Fees, Hours and Days,” Subsection H, “Outdoor Restaurant Liquor Sales, to Make Permit Approval Mandatory if Conditions “A” Through “I” Are Met in the City of Sycamore, Illinois. First and Second Reading.**

At the regular City Council meeting of September 3, the Council clarified its intent regarding the outdoor consumption of alcoholic beverages. The attached ordinance represents that consensus.

City Council approval is recommended.

## 12. RESOLUTIONS

### A. Resolution No. 420—Concerning Medicare Coverage for Employees in the City of Sycamore, Illinois.

This resolution addresses a dilemma that may face present employees who have not paid into Medicare, or who do not have spouses who have paid into Medicare. This dilemma would arise as they reach age 65.

Section 1-10-16 of the City Code addresses medical insurance coverage for retired employees of the City of Sycamore. The Code addresses two separate groups of retirees: (1) those who were hired before May 1, 1982 and who retire with twenty years of service; and (2) those hired after May 1, 1982 but before May 1986 and who retire after twenty years of service.

The Code guarantees “full city insurance benefits” for the employees and their spouses in the first group until their death, and for the employees only after the age of 65 in the second group. Blue Cross defines “full insurance benefits” for retired employees and their spouses who are age 65 and older as *“the benefits and provisions described throughout [the] Certificate [policy provisions] that apply to you; however, in determining the benefits to be paid for your Covered Services, consideration is given to the benefits available under Medicare”*. The Blue Cross Certificate further emphasizes that, *“when you have a claim, you must send Blue Cross and Blue Shield a copy of your Medicare Explanation of Benefits in order for your claim to be processed. **In the event that you are eligible for Medicare but have not enrolled in Medicare, the amount that would have been available from Medicare, had you been enrolled, will be used.**”* According to Susan Kelly, our Blue Cross Account Representative, this carve-out provision regarding Medicare is one that is mandated by Blue Cross and is not subject to change at the request of the City. Therefore, retirees who do not enroll in Medicare when they become eligible will receive reduced benefits through Blue Cross. They are also subject to a ten percent (10%) penalty for each year that they delay enrolling in Medicare.

Until April 1, 1986 Police Officers and Firefighters did not pay into the Social Security or Medicare systems. The Social Security Act was amended to require that Police Officers and Firefighters hired after April 1, 1986 begin to pay into Medicare. The amendment did not require those personnel hired prior to April 1, 1986 to begin to pay into Medicare as well. We currently have 16 active Police Officers and Firefighters who fall into this category. Since they have never paid into the system, they will be required to purchase not only Medicare Part B, as all eligible workers do when they retire, but Medicare Part A as well (workers who have paid into Medicare and have 40 quarters of credit do not have to pay for Part

A when they retire). Currently, Medicare Part A costs \$319.00 per person per month. For those persons who have 30 – 39 quarters of Medicare-covered employment, the cost is \$175.00 per person per month. Employees who have spouses who work in Medicare-covered employment will be eligible for Medicare coverage through their spouse.

In order to aid those Police Officers and Firefighters who have not paid into Medicare through their jobs with the City of Sycamore and who also will not have Medicare coverage through an eligible spouse, we are asking the City Council to consider entering into a Section 218 Agreement with the Social Security Administration. A Section 218 Agreement is a voluntary agreement between the State and the Social Security Administration to provide Social Security and Medicare (or Medicare only) coverage for State and local government employees. These agreements, once passed, are irrevocable. The Council would need to pass a resolution allowing the City to participate in the Agreement. If the resolution is passed, we will receive information from the State Social Security Administrator on how to conduct a referendum amongst the employees who would be affected by this Agreement. The employees must be given three-month's notice prior to the vote.

The Council will need to make the following decisions:

- Whether or not we will hold the referendum.
- Whether, if passed, the referendum will be a majority or divided referendum.
  - i. In a majority referendum, if a majority of all eligible members vote in favor of coverage, all current and future employees in these positions under the retirement system will also be covered.
  - ii. Under a divided referendum, only those employees who vote “yes” and all future employees in those positions will be covered; members who vote “no” are not covered so long as they maintain continuous employment in a position within the same retirement system.
- Whether the referendum will concern Medicare only or Medicare and Social Security.
- Whether the affected employees (and the City, in making the required matching contributions) would make retroactive contributions for up to the past 5 years, start contributions currently, or begin making contributions at some future date. There is no interest charged on retroactive contributions. Currently, employees contribute 6.20% of their gross pay for Social Security and 1.45% of their gross pay for Medicare.

To assist the Council and our employees in making this decision, a survey was sent to the 16 affected Police Officers and Firefighters. Of these 16 employees, 8 returned their surveys. Of the 8 surveys returned, the results were as follows:

- 2 employees voted not to participate in the Agreement.
- 5 employees voted to participate.
- 1 employee did not indicate a yes or no as to participation.
- 2 employees voted for a majority referendum.
- 5 employees voted for a divided referendum.
- 5 employees voted for a Medicare only referendum; no one voted to also consider contributing to Social Security.
- 2 employees voted to have contributions begin on January 1, 2002, while 1 was undecided as to when to start or have retroactive contributions.

Since a majority of the affected employees voted to participate, and a plurality voted to do so in a divided referendum, we ask that the Council consider passing the attached Resolution that would enable us to hold the referendum. Further, the Administrator asks that the Council support the concept of a divided referendum.

### 13. **CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **A. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation for a Joint Meeting of the City Council and the Plan Commission During the Regular Workshop Meeting of October 7 or, Alternatively, November 11.**

During the week prior to the Council meeting of September 16, the City Administrator and City Engineer interviewed the two firms that submitted proposals to perform the mapping for the proposed Comp Plan update. Upon the award of a contract for such services (see below), the City staff will meet with the consultant to plan public meetings during the fall that will be instrumental to the process of updating the plan and creating a new sub-area plan for the northeast side of the city.

One of the first steps will be to develop an understanding of community values. The tool we will use is the Image Preference Survey which is a consensus-building technique that helps a community articulate its values. The methodology relies upon the presentation of images or slides depicting land uses, neighborhood amenities, development possibilities, transportation scenes, and parks and open spaces. These images will include historic as well as current depictions of local scenes, and will also include additional images showing alternative building and streetscape designs highlighting scale and character, land use relationships, and environmental conditions.

Before the survey is administered to the community at large, the Plan Commission and Council will be asked to preview the images for comment and evaluation. The purpose of this preview will be to determine if the images are sufficiently broad to cover known issues (such as those raised in the open houses in July), and whether they sufficiently inclusive to cover the possible range of

solutions. It may be possible to prepare such an assortment of images as early as the Council workshop meeting in October. If not, the workshop meeting in November is an option. The City Administrator is interested in the Council's opinion about a possible joint meeting in either October or November.

**B. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation to Award a Consulting Contract to Land Vision in the Amount of \$19,800 for Assistance with the 2002 Comprehensive Plan Update.**

A request for proposals (RFP) for mapping services was circulated by the City Administrator on August 7 with a deadline of September 3. A copy of the RFP is attached. Two firms—Land Vision of St. Charles and Baxter & Woodman of Crystal Lake (with a new office in DeKalb)—submitted proposals. Interviews with the two firms were conducted during the week of September 9.

In addition to a request for services relating to the re-mapping of our Future Land Use Plan, Existing Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan, and Greenways Plan, the consultants were asked to bid on services relating to the preparation of a sub-area plan for the northeast corridor. Further, the consultants were asked to provide a price and an explanation for the “visioning” process known as the Image Preference Survey (see above). In the course of the interviews with the two consultant teams, it became apparent that only Land Vision anticipated working with the community as a whole, both in their prospectus and their price. The Baxter & Woodman team read the RFP much more narrowly and only anticipated working with the City Council, Plan Commission, and Economic Development Commission in a joint session through a power-point presentation. Land Vision proposed a public outreach plan that would involve any and all interested residents in answering the image preference survey at advertised public meetings, followed by a distillation of their preferences to a public forum consisting of the Council, Plan Commission, and Economic Development Commission. Land Vision also proposed to use primarily local images rather than stock images from other surveys to help identify the “likes” and “dislikes”. Baxter & Woodman's price of \$10,500 was thus significantly understated and the difference from the Land Vision price (\$19,800) is largely attributable to this understatement of effort.

The staff recommend a contract with Land Vision. Their price is within the estimated budget (\$25,000). Their prior work in Sycamore on the Bethany Road Sub-Area Plan demonstrated their planning expertise and responsiveness in a way that bodes well for the ambitious “visioning” ahead. The firm also has the contract with the Regional Planning Commission to do mapping and planning work in behalf of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, and would be well situated to streamline Sycamore's role in that process. Finally, it was apparent in the interviews and through our background review that Land Vision is a firm focused on land planning and town planning. Baxter & Woodman is an excellent engineering design firm that has recently expanded its personnel to explore the traditional planning domain. In view of the present challenge of growth in our

community, the City Administrator would prefer to work with the firm most experienced in forging broad community visions.

City Council approval of a contract with Land Vision is recommended.

**C. Consideration of an Engineering Department Recommendation to Award the Fall Tree Planting Contract to Stran’s Garden Center in the Amount of \$25,155.**

City Engineer John Brady recently solicited bids for the fall tree planting program. This program makes available a range of tree species with diameters of 2 to 3 inches for planting in the City parkways or in the front yards of various Sycamore properties. An excerpt from the bid packet that describes the species is attached.

Two firms—Stran’s Garden Center and Blumen Gardens—picked up bid packets but only one, Stran’s, submitted a bid. The City Engineer recommends the award of the contract to Stran’s Garden Center in the amount of \$25,155.

**D. Consideration of an Administration Recommendation for a Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Matters and Land Acquisition.**

**14. APPOINTMENTS**

**15. ADJOURNMENT**