



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND /PUBLIC WORKS  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
January 12, 2009**

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The Community Development/Public Works Committee of the Merriam City Council met on Monday, January 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers present included: Chair Gayle Stephens, Councilmember Chad Rowe and Councilmember John Crabtree. Councilmember absent: Councilmember Christine Evans Hands. Staff present included: Phil Lammers, City Administrator; Bryan Dyer, Community Development Director; Hye Jin Lee, Assistant Community Development Director/City Engineer; Randy Carroll, Public Works Director; Susan Hayden, Director of Parks and Recreation; Tim Murphy, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation; Dave Smothers, Recreations Supervisor; Chief Bill Lietzke, Chief of Police; Beth Linn, Neighborhood Services Manager and Judy Devere, Recording Secretary.

**Public Items**

Councilmember Rowe stated that he had received an e-mail from a resident requesting that a speed bump be installed in the 5100 block of Garner Lane. The resident said that cars are speeding down Garner Lane from 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and then cutting onto Hayes and they were concerned about the safety of the children in the area. He suggested increasing the policing of the area, adding a speed sign on Garner Lane or placement of the speed measuring device mounted on a trailer in the area. Councilmember Rowe said that he drove the area and did not see a speed sign on Garner Lane but did see a 25 MPH sign on Hayes. Chief Bill Lietzke suggested trying placement of the speed measuring device first. Ms. Linn noted that one of the things Scott Crain, former City Engineer, did before he left was at the committee level, the council talked about some criteria for a speed table and one of the things asked for was the counter information and then it looks at the street itself and anything that might impede the speed table there, the maintenance of it and also if you get to that level if it meets all the criteria, then it asks for a survey to be sent to the residents and at least 50% have to write back that they want it.

**1. Discussion regarding Turkey Creek Festival Location**

Chair Stephens noted this was brought up during a council meeting and a couple of other councilmembers that are not on this committee requested that this item be discussed regarding whether or not the location of the Turkey Creek Festival or Parade should be moved. Susan Hayden, Tim Murphy, and Dave Smothers of Parks

and Recreation had provided in depth information in the staff report. Chair Stephens stated that this comes up every year before council and in her opinion; Antioch Park was the ideal location for the festival but had a question about the parade. She said she did not know if the downtown businesses are still interested in having the event downtown and would like to hear their view point or if there is something else that could be substituted in the spring, maybe a spring festival with the opening of the Farmers Market and have a parade. She thanked Ms. Hayden and her staff for the preparation of the documentation.

Susan Hayden, Director of Parks and Recreation, stated that the Merriam Turkey Creek Festival has a long and rich history. It started out back in early 1980's on Merriam Drive and at that time the festival was led by the Chamber of Commerce with assistance from the City of Merriam and throughout the years it has grown to become a city sponsored event. In the mid 1990's, the festival became the city's responsibility entirely and at that time, the attendance of the festival had dwindled over the years on Merriam Drive. There were a lot of logistical challenges with hosting the festival downtown. It is a very linear street and not a lot of side streets to channel traffic and no place for shade. Ms. Hayden said that downtown Merriam has been improved and it is much more aesthetically pleasing and now has the Farmers Market and Werner Park but that entire area where the festival might be relocated would be in the area of the Marketplace, the Community Center and along Merriam Drive and still is only about 10 acres as opposed to Antioch Park which has 44 acres. She said there was information provided in the packet about the pros and cons regarding the site plan of the festival. Ms. Hayden said that Antioch Park is just beautiful and offers ample shade, fixed shelter houses to provide activities, concert venue, two lakes for pedal boating, a nature trail, and two large parking lots so it just provides more structural and logistical support for what the city needs for the size of the event. She said over the 12 or so years the city has had the festival at Antioch Park, it has grown to over 10,000 people a year and that is a testament to the success of the event and it shows people are interested in it and will support the festival in that venue. She said the venue itself probably has more to do with the success of the event than anything else the city has done.

Ms. Hayden said there were some members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board attending the meeting that may want to comment regarding the festival. She said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board discussed the item the day following the November council meeting and she told them about some of the comments at the council meeting regarding the location of the festival and some councilmembers had asked for review of the pros and cons of the site for the Turkey Creek Festival.

Ms. Hayden referred to the attachment of the excerpt of the minutes from the Merriam Parks and Recreation Advisory Board of November 25, 2008 with the results of their discussion that were very well thought out by the board members and hit the high points of the festival. She noted that the city offers so many events at the Marketplace including the Farmers Market, concerts, car show, Fields for Freedom, tree lighting and why wouldn't the city want to provide exposure to another beautiful part of the city. She added that another comment by the board was "Don't fix what isn't broken". She said if the city were to move the festival back downtown to Merriam Drive, it would not be as good an event and would not represent the city as

well as it does now. She said there are some logistical challenges with Antioch Park because of the hills and the city does rent courtesy carts to ferry people up and down the hills that have trouble walking the incline. The people who come to the festival are used to that by now and have navigated their own best parking places including the Sears Grand parking lot that is not advertised.

Councilmember Rowe stated he really appreciated Ms. Hayden's preparation of the material and really confirming the way he felt. He said he was involved in the first Merriam Days with the Boy Scouts and put up a booth and sold hamburgers, etc. He said the event was only a fraction then of what it is now and he thought moving the festival to Antioch Park was a great thing and he had no interest in moving it back to downtown. He said that as far as the downtown merchants, he thought the things Ms. Hayden mentioned like the Fields for Freedom, Farmers Market, the Car Show does bring some good traffic to downtown and what the city is doing now is the right way to go. He said one thing he noticed from Ms. Hayden's information was that the peak time for the festival was right after the parade and the parade does help support the festival in Antioch Park and in his opinion, it is beneficial to have the parade on Antioch. Ms. Hayden agreed with Councilmember Rowe's comments noting that festival goers plan their activities around the parade and that is a testament to the value of the parade.

Councilmember Crabtree stated that he really wanted to see the parade back in downtown Merriam because it is an outstanding spot. He said he does event planning for a living and it is just not logistically feasible. He said it would be great to have a spring festival but as far as Turkey Creek Festival, he did not see it as a reality and there are numerous bullet points in the information provided by Ms. Hayden explaining why it would not be. Councilmember Crabtree said it was a great festival and great to see it grow year after year and because of that growth, it keeps it from going back downtown.

Chair Stephens stated that she wanted to discuss the parade and said she was astonished by this year's attendance and thankful it was not so political because she thought the parade was for kids. She said she was basing her discussion on requests from downtown businesses for the city to hold some kind of event downtown. She suggested holding a Merriam Festival Day in downtown in 2010 since the schedules for the Farmers Market have already been approved for 2009. Discussion followed about having a parade as a kickoff for the beginning of the Farmers Market. Chair Stephens added that she would like some input from downtown businesses and if there is any interest, then have further discussions. Ms. Hayden asked if Chair Stephens was suggesting input from the Downtown Merriam Partnership with the Chair replying she would like input from the Downtown Merriam Partnership as well as downtown businesses.

Councilmember Crabtree said the festival is geared toward children and family and suggested a continuation of the festival for evening adult entertainment at Merriam Marketplace, perhaps a street dance. He said it is cooler in the evening and could still include the downtown businesses and the Merriam Marketplace. He said there would not be as big of a crowd because this continuation would be geared toward adults. Ms. Hayden said this was a good idea but first needed to get the Downtown Merriam

Partnership to sponsor the evening street dance or other adult type event. Ms. Hayden agreed with Councilmember Crabtree that it would make a very long day for staff to continue the festival into the evening hours. It was suggested that the festival could start on a Friday night downtown with an adult venue or continue on Saturday evening.

Chief Lietzke commented that the concert at night would be a draw for downtown Merriam noting that it takes the entire Police Department for the 8 hours on the day of the festival but could release some of his staff after the parade was finished and that was the beauty of having the festival at Antioch Park because it is so easily contained. He said his staff would be stretched pretty thin when you get into the late hours and they could do it either Friday evening or Saturday evening but it would be better for scheduling his staff if the event continued into Saturday night. Chief Lietzke said he realized it would be a long day for Ms. Hayden's staff for a Saturday night event.

Chair Stephens asked for a cost for the parade. Ms. Hayden said that last year the city spent a little over \$1500 on items for the parade and there was a breakdown provided for staff cost for the event day and was not separated by festival or parade. Chief Lietzke noted it was about \$800 for the police department officers cost for the parade. Ms. Hayden commented it was about \$2,000 for the parade.

Councilmember Rowe said he had some concern of what kind of support there would be for a festival on Saturday night but the city would not know if it wasn't tried. Chair Stephens said it could be done some other day and is a good idea for Merriam. Ms. Hayden pointed out that there was discussion of adding a street dance in the evening with the car show this year.

Chair Stephens requested that staff provide some costs and get with the downtown businesses to see if there is any interest in an additional evening street dance event downtown in 2010 and bring back to the council at a later date for further discussion.

Kathy Rowe, member of the Merriam Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, thanked the councilmembers for putting this item on the agenda because this has come up before and is a good thing to look at it to see if the downtown Merriam merchants are interested or not. She said having worked with the Downtown Merriam Partnership on the Christmas Dinner, the Fields for Freedom and the Car Show; she would almost tend to think they have their hands full and that they may think they can not handle one more big event. Ms. Rowe referred to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board minutes pointing out it was the consensus of the board that it was a lovely, lovely event where it is being held in Antioch Park at this time. Ms. Rowe said because of her experience with her own family, they attend the parade then everyone walks down and goes into the park and begins their activities and that would be very difficult if the parade is moved to another location. She said you might lose some people that would come to the parade and not go to the festival. Ms. Rowe said she thought it would be good to get some feedback and to look at it but it was the board's consensus that they wanted to leave it at Antioch Park.

Kevin Buchta, 7203 Grandview, stated that over the last few years this has come up that the DMP has expressed an interest in moving the festival back downtown or

sharing. He said they are not interested at this point not in necessarily highjacking the festival back to downtown but trying to establish something in the fall as a second type of celebration. Mr. Buchta said there are a lot of things going on downtown but they are ongoing events that become an expected and routine event. He said the DMP is looking more at something of an event nature that can help draw attention to downtown and retain people while they have that audience. Mr. Buchta said the idea of contacting the DMP for their input is a logical one and would give the councilmembers a better idea of where their thinking is leading because it has not been discussed at a meeting over the last four or five months. He said he thought the DMP had gotten the impression that there was no interest on the City's part to create an event downtown so it has not been a front burner item but he thought the councilmembers interest would help rekindle that interest from the DMP and see if they can't do something to help showcase downtown. Mr. Buchta added that everyone knew if the DMP got involved in something they really got involved and a good example is the Fields for Freedom.

## **2. CIP Monthly Update**

Beth Linn, Neighborhood Services Manager, presented the CIP monthly update stating that requests for easements had been sent to property owners for Residential Streets Group II. Staff anticipates a bid opening on March 5, 2009 and construction is anticipated to begin in April 2009.

Ms. Linn stated that regarding 47<sup>th</sup> Street/County Line Road Street, all easement documentation, revised plans and affidavits had been sent to the property owners at 9725 and 9801 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street by the deadline established by the City Council as discussed at the December council meeting. She said the deadline for the property owners to return the signed and notarized documents is January 22, 2009 in preparation for council packets for the January city council meeting.

Ms. Linn reported that the contractor had completed the construction of the two lower pools and is ready to begin construction on the upper pool for the Vavra Park Buffer Feature Phase III. She said the subcontractor will begin installation of the rock waterfall on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Once the rock waterfall is complete, she said the remaining landscape walls will be completed. Vanum anticipates being complete with construction, with the exception of the landscaping, before the end of January. Ms. Linn stated that staff will suspend construction time until the weather allows for the installation of the landscaping in mid March.

Ms. Linn stated that as the news had indicated, President-Elect Obama has indicated his plans to fund an economic stimulus package that will include infrastructure projects. Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is compiling a list of possible projects for each city in the metropolitan Kansas City area. She said that staff submitted the seven projects listed below for the City of Merriam.

- 2009 Mill and Overlay Project
- Carter/Grant Street Improvement Project
- Citywide Neighborhood Sidewalk Program
- Johnson Drive Bridge over Turkey Creek
- Northeast Johnson County Stormwater Improvements

- South Park Square
- Waterfall Park and Trail System

Ms. Linn explained these were shelf-ready projects that could be ready to go in six months and why these specific projects were chosen to submit to MARC.

Chair Stephens and the councilmembers thanked Ms. Linn for all her years of service and dedication to the City of Merriam and wished her well in her new position as the Community Development Director of Raytown, Missouri.

### **3. Consider approval of purchase of two 7400 International Truck Chassis**

Randy Carroll, Public Works Director, stated that these two trucks would replace Units #8 and #9 purchased in 1993 that will soon be 16 years old. He noted these trucks have a life expectancy of 14 years.

Mr. Carroll stated that for the past nine years the City has purchased vehicles in cooperation with Mid-America Council of Public Purchasing (MACPP). Purchasing through MACPP saves municipalities money on vehicle purchases due to large volume purchasing.

Mr. Carroll stated he was requesting approval for purchase of two 7400 International truck chassis model year 2009 purchased from KCR International for \$143,526.00 replacing two GMC truck chassis. He noted that the 2009 budgeted amount for the two truck chassis is \$160,000.00.

**COUNCILMEMBER ROWE MOVED TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE FULL CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL OF THE BUDGETED PURCHASE OF TWO 7400 INTERNATIONAL TRUCKS, MODEL YEAR 2009 CHASSIS, FROM INTERNATIONAL TRUCK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$143,526.00 AND PLACE ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

### **4. Consider approval of purchase of two Dump Beds and Hydraulic Systems**

Randy Carroll, Public Works Director, started that to go along with the two truck chassis; he was requesting two dump beds that set on the chassis of a dump truck used to haul materials such as sand, rock and asphalt.

Mr. Carroll said he was requesting approval of the purchase of two truck dump beds and hydraulic systems from American Equipment in the amount of \$54,544.00. The 2009 budgeted amount for the truck beds is \$60,000.00.

**COUNCILMEMBER CRABTREE MOVED TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE FULL CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL OF THE BUDGETED PURCHASE OF TWO DUMP BEDS AND HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS FROM AMERICAN EQUIPMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$54,544.00 AND PLACE ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **5. Discussion regarding Sustainable Development Code Initiatives**

Bryan Dyer, Community Development Director, said that the committee as well as the council has been concerned and interested in doing things for green initiatives and energy savings. He said staff would be working with the Planning Commission at the February meeting to start looking at some code revisions, specifically windmills and solar panels. These are things other communities are already looking at and staff is trying to get ahead and get some regulations in place. He said it looks like the governor is going to put forth for reverse metering of windmills and solar panels allowing individuals that generate electricity to sale excess energy back to the utilities. Mr. Dyer said that staff would be working with the Planning Commission to come with some ordinances and hopefully in the spring or summer it would be before the council for their consideration.

## **6. Update on development projects**

Bryan Dyer, Community Development Director, reported on the following developments:

- Shawnee Mission Medical Center  
Staff is working furiously and diligently with the contractors to meet the deadline for the grand opening.
- Medical Office Building  
The project is moving forward and staff is working with the contractors on inspections.
- Merriam Village  
No new information to report.
- Merriam Pointe  
There will be discussion at the next council meeting.
- Pointe at Prairie Haven  
Dirt was being removed from the site and staff stopped the activity due to expiration of the building permit.
- Timber Ridge  
The owner of the property is to be in court tomorrow on charges of not filling in of trenching at the site.

## **7. Personnel Update**

Bryan Dyer, Community Development Director, stated that Elliot Lahn has filled the position of Planner I. He welcomed Ms. Hye Jin Lee as the new Assistant Community Development Director/City Engineer. Mr. Dyer said that Beth Linn is leaving the City of Merriam to take the position of Community Development Director in the city of Raytown, Missouri and expressed his appreciation to her for everything

she had done to help him, especially in the CIP area, since his arrival in Merriam. He wished Ms. Linn good luck in her new position.

**COUNCILMEMBER CRABTREE MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Devereey, Recording Secretary