

Des Moines City Council Meeting 1.24.22

- Black History Month proclamation
- Amending the procedural City Council Rules
 - Indira: public outrage since rules were amended Friday, DSM register came out publicly against rule changes, council should take some time to reflect before making any changes due to the public perception
 - Connie wants to add a second, had wanted to add them for a long time, she's never served on a board without a second, offers an option for the minority to be heard, gives opportunity for understanding, extending time to 60 seconds – addresses concern about not having enough time to speak.
 - Public: we don't want it (said from public seating)
 - Cownie: 22, 24, 29
 - Indira: small thing: I wasn't provided a physical copy like everyone else. When we're speaking about minority and majority, we have to recognize we're in a country where the majority of white people committed genocide. We need to recognize the fact that it's an unnatural majority. We've only had three Black council members ever, and the timing of this after the only Black member currently was elected is concerning, is undemocratic, and not even speaking for myself, what I've heard from my constituents, they are being silenced.
 - Vote: 6 yes, 1 no motion carries.
- Approving agenda
- Scott Sanders mumbling some shit to Cownie
 - Indira: clarifying the rule change
 - Sanders: the rule just changed, public needs to contact council members to remove consent agenda items, considering whether or not they're going to count requests made before this meeting.

- Indira: is there any opportunity for public to speak?
- Lawyer dude: council would have to make a decision
- Indira: I would love public comment
- Linda: individuals requested 13 and 17, 20 and 21
- Cownie: we can pull 20 and 21 from request from Indira, Indira requests 13 and 17 to be moved for public comment, no second
- Cownie: hearings, one item bid rejection no public comment, other zoning items, parties and interests only, general public
- Item 25, speaker asking to be recognized on 4, denied because consent has already been approved
- Taylor gets up to the mike and asks about the speaking rules, “not limiting time on these rules”
 - Cownie: germane!! (three times)
 - Taylor: we shouldn’t be having easements on storage facilities, corporations get a free pass for things that don’t contribute to community, also the lack of clarity around rules is difficult
 - Indira: I wanted to understand the correction of the vacation, was there a mistake before? It’s adjacent to the park, wasn’t going to be zoned as a park before.
- Item 26: applicant from Shelden holdings speaking, engineering and resourcing group, there on behalf of the person who is leasing,
 - Indira, asking about if they can choose the option with no improvements and letting the lot stay
 - Connie asks how many cars are typically there being repaired
 - Joe: are we asking them to do a site change?
 - Site plan was approved in November, got an extension to finish landscaping because of winter, everything else has been completed. The only reason we had to provide site plan was because of the change of

use. Previously, there was an auto repair shop, but not sales. With the addition of sales we had to update the site plan. No previous zoning problems. It's been an auto repair shop for a long time.

- Josh: asking about neighborhood association feelings about the site.

Indira: The neighborhood doesn't think it lines up with the current revitalization plan (gentrification.) There are other auto repair shops around it.

- Josh: staff recommended three spots. Answer: Owner would prefer 6. 3 would be better than zero.

- Luke: I just wanted to speak in favor of either plan b or c, and ideally encouraging a young business owner by allowing them to have those 6 spots (which as a dealership is pretty limited.) They're making good points, some of our zoning rules are ridiculous, a matter of 20 or 30 feet preventing people from expanding their business. Frankly, the neighborhood association recommendation doesn't make a ton of sense. I would hope you'll vote to give him his six spots.

- Taylor: If his name was Menard's, this wouldn't even be a discussion. A smaller business is trying to serve a larger need in the neighborhood. A motion should be put forward to give him six spots.

- Indira: what are y'all thinking. (to rest of council.)

- Josh: I would prefer to go with staff recommendation. Josh: I would prefer to go with Indira's recommendation, because it's in her ward.

- Connie: would prefer to go with staff recommendation. Discussion about spots/clarification about frontage. Clarifying: asking about where the spots will be going.

- Gatto: if this were only a dealership, I would be okay with more. Since it's a repair, there will be cars sitting in the lot that we'll have to deal with. With the neighborhood's letter, I would be more comfortable with the three spots and staff recommendation.

- Indira: in the spirit of compromise, while we have the revitalization district, we need to not undercut minority businesses.

- Joe Gatto: we need to be uplifting all businesses (public boos)

- 27: Glad Tidings Assembly of God Church: Sanders said they need to continue discussions.
- 28 Drake: property will add to vitality, with zero direct displacement. (got a little behind.) Saying they listened to community engagement. Indira: did your feedback include students? (answered in the affirmative.)
- Abby Bankes: I live in neighborhood, and am undergrad at Drake. I live off campus and might be a little out of the loop, but I would hope that in the future, students are more involved in making decisions about our communities, and that development are encouraging diverse businesses, and that we aren't contributing to further gentrification of the neighborhood.
- Adam: community engagement piece: I don't trust that Drake has done community engagement, after the Drake stadium. That's still in a weird limbo, and I don't know that we should be making decisions with Drake. Said there's zero direct displacement, what about indirect displacement?
- Taylor: that comment was concerning to me. I went to my first planning and zoning meeting. Urban renewal project will be coming through related to this area, and the affordability aspect is concerning. What's the affordability index for a two bedroom apartment in this area? (\$1400) That's not affordable. You can't just hope this is a thing that's going to be equitable, you need to make sure it is equitable and won't be displacing people.
- Indira: I'm torn about this. When I spoke to economic development department, the projected rents for this building lined up with or were lower than the median income in the area. 62% of HUD income. Still was up in the \$1000s range. Having been a college student, I know that's very expensive. The other point that gives me pause is watching the Drake neighborhood change over my lifetime. The upzoning (price increases) along University corridor is concerning. High rise, expensive apartments that college students and other people that live in the neighborhood can't afford. This makes me hesitant. I'd like to make a movement to just do the first consideration, and continue discussion.
- Josh: this is a good project, I appreciate the work that Drake has done. Previously, most of this was parking lot, and we're building housing. It's density in area that is close to the most accessible transit line. A piece of

affordability, people can live here without having a car and can get around the community without a car. I'm grateful Drake has brought this project forward, we need to keep working on affordability in this project and others. There is plenty more to be done. This project is including affordability in it.

- Connie: would like to thank Drake for taking a parking lot and creating housing, more taxable, encouraging more business. Utilizing spaces, density along the corridor is what we've been talking about. More property land that has been nontaxable should be transformed into something more livable.

- Taylor: 2000 for maintenance, we have way more parking garages than we need. We could use parking garages as a bare minimum warming shelter.

- Luke: Second Taylor's motion, we talk a lot about moving towards sustainability, this is a decision that incentivizes car traffic within the city. We need to use public transit more. We need to open up a warming shelter, when we talked about that last Friday, with projects like this that aren't time sensitive, it's fine to shell out \$2,000. It's hard to understand your priorities.

- Indira: I'm not in favor of parking garages, we need to be moving away from parking, we were just talking about density and this is the opposite of that.

- Item 30: pedestrian signal improvements.

 - § Taylor: this is a good thing for safety.

 - § Indira: are there accessibility features on this? Part of a larger program where we're extending walk times.

 - § City engineer Steve, improving accessibility for crosswalks, in compliance with ADA

Item 32

- Chris Green, has a business in the middle of this resurfacing project, this is a much needed project, this is a busy area, it's antiquated and worn out. We're making movement not to do a total tear-up and repair, it's a

renovation for patching and approving. (timer dings and they allow him to keep speaking.) (It goes without saying he is an older white man.)

- Noah Johnston, due to a campaign donation, I would ask for Connie Boesen to recuse herself.
- Natalie: this person gave \$1,000 to Connie's campaign, council members need to recuse themselves from projects they may be potentially benefitting from.
- Mark: I didn't plan to speak on this, but what was brought up, there's one person here who got the majority of small donations (Indira), we should be upfront about where we're getting money from
- Josh: want to thank staff, one of the items on the infrastructure plan, connection to Fleur, this isn't the recommendation. I want to get this done.
- Connie: would like to second this. (does not acknowledge her personal gain.)

· Item 33

- Sanders, thanking staff again, it's about more road reconstruction.

· Item 34

- I would like to point out that there was a \$1000 campaign donation to Connie Boesen from the construction company's building. This has been an ongoing issue. Calling for an ethics investigation. Connie argues, saying it's not germane, it's the father of the company owner. Connie has gotten money from the person who will get money from the contract.
- Taylor: ten foot sidewalks are good. It's wild that there's conflict of interest here. (lawyer dude talks to Scott behind Connie's back.) We need to be paying attention to conflicts of interest.
- Lawyer: regardless of donations, according to state law it is not a conflict because it was a public bidding. Scott: council members are not involved in the bidding process. (Could they deny if it wasn't their donor.)
- Marco: less invasive gov, when I was campaigning in the at-large race, I walked down a lot of roads, this does impact what roads are in what condition. It's not a matter of current policy, but it does play a role.

- Indira: according to state statute, is this an appearance of a conflict of interest?

- § Lawyer: we can do research, but it says items that are publicly bid are not a conflict. Other bidders have a chance to get the contract, some legal bs

- § Indira: the bid is not the conflict, but is the vote a conflict or an appearance of conflict? If we have to research should we be approving this?

- § Brandi: You need to take another look at this, it's an appearance of conflict of interest, literally the definition. When I was looking into the bs ethics that were voted in, they were very weak, and I wanted to take this moment to say that Connie knows you should recuse yourself. You're hella corrupt.

- Item 35

- I spaced out for a sec but there's general confusion over rules and who moved it but the motion carries without discussion.

- Cownie: going back to Item 20. (Racist cop-money war on drugs bullshit.)

- Indira: I forwarded this to you already, reading from a document from constituents. References raids from the past year, which militarizes police and traumatizes communities. (Find full statement to read here.) Puts neighborhoods at risk. Statement from PTH and BLM from July 21st 2021. We won't get the result we want from increasing police funding, if we're going to be spending money on heroin use on safe injection sites, on naxalone, methadone, to humanely help those who are suffering from addiction, with self-determination, to get to a life they want. Enforcement from police doesn't help. (applause from public.)

- Item 21: more cop bullshit

- Indira: reads a statement about police murders and brutality. It is not ethical or right to fund more money for traffic enforcement by cops. Moves to reject it. Can I get a second. (Note that a cop walked up to the room once consent agenda items started.)

- Ordinances in first consideration

Public comment:

- Marco Battaglia: ran against Carl, libertarian, works for the jail (boo) Congratulates Indira on win, thanks her for bringing up homelessness. This issue has so many areas it increases our spending, our ability to deal with basic humanitarian issues for our constituents. We need to not just brush it aside. Carl, I hope that you consider working with Indira on this issue. Houston, San Diego, other cities have cut their houseless populations. They've saved taxpayer money and done good for people. By policing homelessness, and nonviolent drug times, moving to less policing needs to be addressed.
- Taylor: talking about the special meeting, rule changes. Indira wouldn't have been able to get the special meeting. Going through rules and why they're bullshit. (I got distracted and stopped typing, sorry.)
- Natalie: statement on rules (see statement in PTH chat.)
- Adam's statement (see statement) Indira: do we have a SWAT team? (not in their official capacity) How many cops are here?
- Bridget: how many cops are here? Speaking about cold weather, talking to Linda
- Noah: The rules were changed to silence an active member of the council. They are not accessible. I had to reach out to a council member, who had to direct me to a third party site.
- Abby Bankes: I knew getting Indira elected wouldn't fix everything. It wasn't a symbolic victory. We did it in a way that maybe you would think was germane.
- Jolene (took her mask off) incredible performance tbh
- Linda bullshit about central iowa shelters