

Aiken City Council Minutes

August 12, 2002

WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Cuning, Price, Smith, Sprawls and Vaughters.

Absent: Councilmember Clyburn

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Ed Evans, Larry Morris, Richard Pearce, Sandra Korbelik, Sara Ridout, Karen Daily of the Aiken Standard, Josh Gelinas of the Augusta Chronicle, and 8 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Traffic Impact Ordinance

Dyar, Roger

ARCADIS

Mr. LeDuc stated in May City Council received information from Roger Dyar, Traffic Consultant, concerning our city-wide traffic study and ordinance. Over the last 60 days we have taken traffic counts at several locations and have completed much of the field work necessary for this study. We agreed then that he would come back to City Council this summer to discuss the results he received and the steps for the future. Mr. Dyar is present to give Council an overview of what has been accomplished to date. Mr. LeDuc stated it is hoped to bring this back to Council in November for final approval.

Mr. Roger Dyar, Consultant, made a presentation and gave Council copies of the Traffic Impact Ordinance Status Report. Mr. Dyar gave a brief update on the work done to date. He said the major phases of the project were to develop a baseline report, which is what will be presented at this meeting. The next phase is to begin to develop details of the program needs and address the issues, and the third phase is to prepare the ordinances and policy/procedure documents.

Mr. Dyar stated basically all the traffic counts had been completed. The traffic safety data analysis is in progress. He said he has collected all the collision data, which is referred to as crashes instead of accidents. He said the crash data had been collected from 1999 through 2001. He said there had been over 3,000 crashes on the street network being studied during the three year period. He said he still needed to look at some special conditions and do some additional peak hour counts and travel time runs. He said there were some special conditions to be considered in the divided streets.

Mr. Dyar stated in May ARCADIS made more than 60 traffic counts to determine ADT's. He said this was done in May while school was still in session. He said he had also assembled the available count data from the SCDOT which was available back to 1998. He said he has a 5-year history of the traffic counts of the city. He said ADT's had been developed for the entire study network, which encompasses about 62 miles of streets. He said they had determined and estimated the growth rate for traffic at count locations for 1998-2002. He said that information was used to estimate what the year 2007 traffic volumes would be if the existing trends for the past 5 years continue. He said they had estimated the capacity of each street segment. He said using the volumes for the years 2002 and 2007 lets them estimate the Level of Service (LOS) for each street segment for 2002 and 2007. Mr. Dyar stated a program called ARTPLAN, along with data from ARTS and SCDOT, had been used to determine the daily capacity figures.

He said the daily capacity is the maximum number of vehicles that can travel a street segment during a typical 24 hour day. Level of Service (LOS) is a description of the quality of traffic flow provided to drivers of vehicles on a street segment. The LOS

ratings range from A (excellent) to E (poor). He said the A level is less than 30% of the capacity of the street is used, while E is 90% to 100% of the capacity of the street is used.

Mr. Dyar gave an example of the procedure using Whiskey Road from the Aiken Mall to Dougherty Road. He said Whiskey Road is a four-lane road with about 4 signals per mile and left turn lanes. Using the ARTPLAN program and current data on traffic volume and other factors, the maximum daily capacity is 32,000 vehicles per day. The current volume of 26,000 in year 2002 makes the current Level of Service (LOS) as a D or 70% to 90% of the capacity of the street. He also used Hitchcock Parkway from Huntsman to SC 421 as an example. Hitchcock Parkway is a two-lane road with turn lanes at signalized intersections and a speed limit of 55 mph. Using the ARTPLAN the daily capacity is 16,300 and the current volume is 9,000. Therefore the LOS is a C.

Mr. Dyar stated they had collected and had begun an analysis of the traffic safety data. During the 3-year period of 1999 – 2001 there were 3,450 crashes on the 62 miles studied. This is about 6.21 crashes per million miles of travel. He said he felt this was a little high for the size of Aiken and he will be researching this further. He pointed out the streets with the highest number of crashes were Richland Avenue 785, SC 19 474, Whiskey Road 411, Pine Log/Silver Bluff 383, and Laurens Street 257.

Mr. Dyar then reviewed briefly the status of capacity and Level of Service for 2002 and for 2007. He stated for 2002 the streets falling in LOS D's and LOS E's total 45.9% of the study network, with all others being 54.1% of the network. In the year 2007, projecting that the growth rates of 1998 – 2002 will continue to 2007, the LOS D's and LOS E's total 49.4% of the study area, with the other streets being 50.6%. This means that some of the streets that were C's may go to a D, etc. He said presently almost half of the street system studied was already at a Level of Service that is just acceptable or already at capacity in 2002.

Mr. Dyar stated to forestall the street system becoming over capacity, some road improvements need to be made, access management such as connector roads, good planning and zoning and an effective Traffic Impact Program. Mr. Dyar then reviewed the major elements of a Traffic Impact Program, such as a baseline report and access management plan with updating, specific requirements for traffic studies for new developments and specific parameters on how to use the studies, access management, adding turn lanes, and impact fees where appropriate. He reviewed the different types and levels of traffic impact studies and what would be included in a study and estimated costs.

Mr. Dyar stated they should have all the data analysis completed by the end of September. By late October he said he should be back with the complete framework for the traffic impact program for adoption in November and have the program functional by January 1, 2003.

AIKEN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTERS

Justyn, K. D. Hospital

Ms. K. D. Justyn who recently replaced Ricky Satcher as the CEO/Managing Director of the Aiken Regional Medical Centers was present to briefly discuss the major expansion plans which are planned over the next couple of years at the hospital. Ms. Justyn stated Universal Health Services was the parent company of Aiken Regional Medical Centers, which was purchased in 1995. She stated she had been with Universal Health Services in the CEO role for the past 19 years. She stated her role is usually to expand a facility and that was what she was asked to do in Aiken because of the growing nature of Aiken and because of the growing technology that has happened over the last 7 years. She stated the new MRI, the new CT scanner and the Cath Lab are already under construction, and she expects all three to be finished the first week in October. She stated they had just received word that the COM for the 5th floor expansion has been complete. She said it would probably be in November before that is completely approved. She said this involves 34 private rooms on the 5th floor of the hospital. She said this would expand the number of private rooms to 70. Aiken is a 225 bed licensed facility with about 180

rooms acute care. She said that construction is expected to start before the end of the year. Another project is the building of a new cancer center. Currently there are 7,500 square feet, which has been outgrown. The new building will be 15,000 square feet. This should be cleared soon. She said those projects cost \$15 million. She said the next \$15 million will be for expansion of the emergency department, centralizing the admitting process, expanding the bays for ambulances, and on second floor of the expansion will be a new 36 bed ICU/CCU. She said they wanted to be sure they could address the health care needs of the senior citizens who are moving to Aiken. She said the proposed improvements are well thought out, and look at the growth of Aiken and the type of population Aiken is attracting and the current needs. The expansion also addresses technology.

TOWERS

Cell Towers

Silver Bluff Road

Town Creek Road

SBA Properties

Mr. LeDuc stated earlier this spring Council reviewed the request for a 190' cell tower at the corner of Silver Bluff Road and Town Creek Road. SBA Properties out of Boca Raton, Florida, would like to build the tower on City of Aiken property at the water treatment plant. The leasing company has tested the site and feels that it would adequately meet the needs of the local citizens by improving the cellular signal for this area. At the meeting this spring Council asked for further information concerning this new cell tower. Council asked (1) that the automatic renewals be reduced from ten additional terms of five years to only four terms of five years. They have agreed to this. (2) that an automatic increase be placed in the lease for every five-year renewal period. They have agreed to a 4% increase every year in this lease. Council also asked that we review the proposed \$700 per month lease payment and compare this with lease agreements in other cities. They have now agreed to a payment of \$1,000/month. In the memo from T. L. Paradise, titled "Cell Tower Fees," he states that very few land leases by governmental agencies were found. Typically most local governments lease space for communications equipment on existing structures such as water tanks. The City of Aiken currently has three of these located on the water tank at York and South Boundary and receive \$10,000 per year on each lease. As he states in the memo, those cities that do have land leases receive from just under \$10,000 per year to \$16,000 to \$18,000 per year in the City of Goose Creek. The contractor has also agreed to allow us to co-locate our antenna on this tank, which would be helpful since we do not have a good signal in this area. We have been discussing this with their representative, Jonathan Yates who is present to answer any questions by City Council. Before we move forward on this lease we need to know if Council wants to allow a tower at this location, and, if so, under what conditions.

Mr. Jonathan Yates SBA Properties stated they had been working on this project for about a year for Triton PCS, known locally as SunCom, to find a location to fill a void in coverage they have in Aiken. He said they started discussions with the city last November, and then went to the Board of Zoning Appeals in January and received a favorable vote for the tower. He said they had reviewed data on cell sites in the two Carolinas and had come up with a very favorable rate for Aiken, which is \$1,000 per month. He said they wish to lease 3,600 SF of property. For this they are offering \$12,000 a year or about 3 times the average they are paying at other locations in the Carolinas. He pointed out when the antenna is placed on a water tank they don't have to build a tower, so the costs are less and the rents are higher. He said SBA had accepted all changes requested by the City, and they are included in the lease document to accommodate the city. He said they are requesting permission to move forward. He said SunCom has a void in coverage in this area, and they are anxious to move forward. Mr. Yates pointed out the tower would be a monopole. He said it was pylon construction and would be under 200 feet, so no lights are required. He said the area is the center of the coverage objectives, but it is tucked enough back on the property to give it very little visibility.

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In response to a question by Mayor Cavanaugh, Mr. Yates stated there would be three other positions available on the tower. It was pointed out the proposed lease does allow the city to locate on the tower.

Councilwoman Vaughters asked what kind of buildings would be beneath the tower. Mr. Yates stated it will mostly be small pads with equipment boxes. He said the lead tenant will have about a 10' x 16' x 10' shelter in which the equipment would be housed. He said usually there is one shelter and the other carriers usually have small pads with equipment boxing.

Mr. LeDuc stated if Council is agreeable the ordinance to allow the lease agreement would be placed on the agenda for first reading on August 26, 2002, with second reading in September.

REGULAR MEETING

August 12, 2002

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Cuning, Price, Smith, Sprawls and Vaughters.

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Pete Frommer, Larry Morris, Ed Evans, Glenn Parker, Anita Lilly, Sara Ridout, Karen Daily of the Aiken Standard, Josh Gelinias of the Augusta Chronicle, and 22 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Mr. LeDuc led in prayer, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

RECOGNITION

Boy Scouts

Troop 121

St. John's Methodist Church

Mayor Cavanaugh recognized Boy Scout Troop 121 from St. John's Methodist Church.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to approve the agenda. Councilman Smith moved, seconded by Councilman Cuning and unanimously approved, that the agenda be approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of July 22, 2002, and the work sessions of July 15, 17, 22, and 29, 2002, were considered for approval. Councilman Cuning moved that the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Councilman Sprawls and unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

Municipal Association Safety Award

Award

Safety Award

S.C. Municipal Association Award

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council had a presentation from the South Carolina Municipal Association.

Mr. LeDuc stated the City of Aiken recently received the Municipal Association of South Carolina Safety Award for cities with over 150 employees. This is a great accomplishment for the city's employees, especially considering our previous safety record. Up until two years ago the City of Aiken fell near the bottom of their category as far as the number of injuries and their related costs.