

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING: February 24, 2015

A workshop of the West City Council was held on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the West Community Center to discuss the city's current building regulations and codes. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Members present at workshop: Mayor Muska, Cheryl Marak, Brian Muska, Stevie Vanek, and Al Vanek. Jay Gerik was absent from this meeting.

Mayor Muska opened the meeting with his ideas regarding options that the city could take to help lower building costs for our citizens. His main three points:

1. Compare 2009 vs. 2012 Residential Building Codes ---- could we go back to 2009 codes and if so, how much would it really save the home builder? He would prefer not to revert back to 2009 but is willing to see if it would be worth it to do so. A good comparison of the two codes showing pros and cons of each would be beneficial to making a decision on which code the city should enforce.
2. We currently use Bureau Veritas (which is a third party inspector) but another option would be to use local inspectors. He suggested that we could have a list of "city approved" inspectors that the home builders would be able to select from. More research needs to be done regarding the costs on both but he did state that Bureau Veritas does not charge a re-inspection fee whereas other inspectors do. Mayor also said that he had spoken to an area home builder and he said that the builder will charge the subcontractor if a re-inspection is needed since they are the party responsible for the mistake.
3. Currently our city ordinance states that the exterior of the dwelling must be at least 75% masonry. Mayor feels that the council might want to make a revision by lowering this percentage or base it on the neighborhood it is being built in. This would help people building in areas where most of the homes aren't brick so that they would not be forced to build with at least 75% masonry.

Steve Vanek spoke with one local inspector, Sam Golden about his inspection fees. Mr. Golden said he does the following three inspections on every new build: 1. Pre-pour 2. A/C – Plumbing – HVAC – Rough In 3. Final inspection for Certificate of Occupancy. The cost he charges for each inspection is \$150 for a total of \$450. For each re-inspection he charges an additional \$150 for each trip. Mayor reminded everyone that Bureau Veritas does not charge anything for re-inspections.

Currently the city is under the 2012 Residential Code but we can change to 2009 if needed. Bureau Veritas will continue to work with us even if we do go back to the 2009 residential code.

A question was brought up about the Energy Code and if we could remove it out of our code/ordinance. Since it is state law the energy code cannot be removed. We would still have to follow this to be compliant. Steve Vanek stated that the council's job is to ensure the safety of the city, but he feels that the resident should determine the energy efficiency that they would like.

Cheryl Marak said that we went from having no codes before the explosion to the very top 2012 codes. The county is currently using 2009 and she doesn't want us to lose any more residents or potential residents because of this. She feels that the costs associated with the 2012 codes are causing some people to look outside city limits to build. Steve Vanek agreed saying that we want people to build in town instead of out of town.

Mayor concluded the meeting by saying that he would like to see other local inspector's fees so that we can compare and make an informed decision. On the March 3, 2015 agenda he asked Cheryl Marak to have a representative from the Heart of Texas Home Builder's Association present and he asked Steve Vanek to have a list of at least three inspectors and their fees. Mayor also suggested asking Cathy Groppe to do plan review for us and Steve Vanek said he would ask her. Al Vanek was asked to bring a set of plans to look over for plan review at the next meeting. He asked our city attorney, Walter Reaves to look over our zoning ordinance regarding masonry requirements.

Cheryl Marak said she had a builder say that it took 3-4 days for an inspector to come from Bureau Veritas and this delayed the process. Scott Knappek said he never heard any complaints regarding that and to please tell anyone that has issues to contact City Hall so that we can take care of the problem. Al Vanek agreed saying that city hall should be notified if there are any issues because if they are not notified then how do we know that a problem does exist.

Mayor suggested that if we did decide to go with a list of certified inspectors that are approved by the city for residential builds/projects, then we should keep Bureau Veritas for commercial builds/projects only. Al Vanek agreed with the list of certified inspectors but he stressed that we must have a process in place before going forward with this.

Mayor stated that we will have a workshop to discuss all of this before our next council meeting on March 3 at 5:30 pm.

At 7:02 the council convened into executive session.

1. Executive Session: Under the provisions of Government Code 551, the Council will meet in Executive Session to discuss:

1.) Executive Session: A closed meeting will be held pursuant to Section 551.074 of the Government Code (V.C.T.A.) to address City Hall Clerk Position.

Council exited out of executive session at 7:11 pm.

On a motion by Brian Muska and seconded by Steve Vanek we adjourned at 7:12 pm.



Shelly Nors, City Secretary



Tommy Muska, Mayor