MINUTES
DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
December 16, 2019
City Hall: 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Garrett called the Regular Meeting of the Decatur City Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, December 16, 2019.

PRESENT: Mayor Garrett, Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Drake, Smith and Walsh; and, City Manager Arnold.

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of December 2, 2019 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, all voting “aye.”

Mayor Garrett recognized former Mayor Jim Baskett and former Mayor pro tem Fred Boykin.

DECORATE DECATUR CONTEST WINNERS.

Special Events Coordinator Jacqueline Moore stated that the 2019 Decorate Decatur Contest winners were Kristin and Colton Ebersold of 208 Maxwell Street.

Mayor Garrett presented the award to the Ebersold family. She added that the runners-up were the residents at 950 Clairemont Avenue and 211 West Hill Street.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS.

Planning and Economic Development Director Angela Threadgill presented the recommendation from the Planning Commission meeting held on December 10, 2019. Ms. Threadgill stated that Cooper Carry provided the original 10 month-long master planning services that resulted in the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan, which was adopted by the City Commission on December 3, 2018. She stated that this master plan listed 39 recommendations that included adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings and housing villages on the north and south ends of the property to provide affordable housing. She stated that the City Commission authorized the City Manager to execute a “Contract for Additional Services” with Cooper Carry and Bleakly Advisory Group to provide planning services that would assist the City in further defining affordable housing options on the property.

Ms. Threadgill stated that Decatur Legacy Park was annexed into the City through state legislative act that became effective in July 2019 and that, upon annexation, the property was assigned a land use and zoning classification of Institutional. She noted that the Master Plan served as the comprehensive development plan. She stated that the Housing Addendum could be used by the City in its request for qualifications and request for proposals (RFQ/RFP) process when seeking future development partners. She added that the Planning Commission recommended approval of the supplemental housing study to the Legacy Park Master Plan.

Allison Bickers with Cooper Cary presented the details of the Housing Addendum report.
Geoff Koski with Bleakly Advisory Group presented the City’s housing trends.

Ms. Bickers mentioned some options that could make the project more attractive to developers.

Ms. Threadgill stated that the options could be taken to control scaling to align with the City’s vision.

Mayor Garrett opened the meeting for public comment. There were no comments and the public comment portion of the hearing was closed.

Mayor pro tem Powers thanked Ms. Bickers and Mr. Koski for the presentation and lauded Ms. Threadgill and her team for developing a good partnership with Cooper Cary and its team.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Mr. Koski explained the different possible unit sizes and stated that it would be ideal if the goals would guide the policies.

In response to a question from Commissioner Smith, Mr. Koski stated that several variables would need to be analyzed to estimate the project costs.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Koski stated that the site development costs had not been included in the analysis.

In response to a question from Commissioner Walsh, Mr. Koski stated that a mixed income approach may result in not more than 20% affordable housing without external subsidies.

Commissioner Smith stated that this project provided the City with a great opportunity.

Commissioner Walsh stated that she appreciated the opportunity to have the City study the various scenarios in more depth.

Commissioner Drake concurred with Commissioner Smith. He added that the property had become a part of the City at a large financial expense and that the project could provide the City with an opportunity to recover some of the cost.

In response to a question from Mayor pro tem Powers, Ms. Threadgill stated that the Affordable Housing Task Force had considered reducing some of the high performance building requirements to make the construction costs more amendable to affordable housing.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake; and, all voting “aye,” Ordinance O-19-Z-12 was adopted as recommended.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ACTION ITEMS.
Mayor Garrett opened the meeting for public comment. Hearing no comments, Mayor Garrett closed the public comment period.

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT.

Building Official Mark Ethun requested approval for the creation of Section 10.1.2.(B)2, amending the Unified Development Ordinance of the City of Decatur, Georgia. He stated that the adoption of the amendment would be effective on January 1, 2020. He stated that by allowing permissive use of the International Existing Building Code (IEBC), the State of Georgia would be affording municipal officials the opportunity to recognize and understand that local building conditions drive re-development. He explained that the new building codes had eliminated Chapter 34 “Existing Buildings” and had moved those provisions into the IEBC. He added that without the IEBC adopted by the City, staff would either require all buildings be brought up to current codes or allow them to remain “grandfathered” with no provisions to incrementally increase life safety.

In response to a question from Mayor Garrett, Mr. Ethun stated that the ordinance would apply to multiple-family residential units, if approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Drake, second by Commissioner Smith, and, all voting “aye,” Ordinance O-19-Z-13 was adopted as recommended.

FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 AMENDED GENERAL FUND BUDGET.

City Clerk & Budget Director Meredith Roark recommended the adoption of Resolution R-19-30 amending the general fund budget for fiscal year 2018-2019 to reflect changes in expenditures since the revised budget adoption on June 17, 2019. She stated that after adoption of Resolution R-19-28 at the December 2, 2019, additional changes were found to be needed and Resolution R-19-30 incorporated those final changes. She added that there was no change to the bottom line of the general fund budget.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake, and, all voting “aye,” Resolution R-19-30 was adopted as recommended.

BUDGET INCREASE AND CHANGE ORDER-STORM WATER MASTER PLAN.

Assistant City Manager David Junger recommended approval of an increase of $20,000 to the Storm Water Master Plan budget and a change order to the contract with AECOM Technical Services in an amount not to exceed $29,000. He stated that this would increase the project budget from $550,000 to $570,000 and the AECOM contract amount from $532,000 to $561,000. He added that funds for the changes were available in the Storm Water Utility Fund.

On a motion by Commissioner Drake, second by Commissioner Smith, and, all voting “aye,” the project budget and change order recommendations were approved.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS.
Jim Baskett, 160 South Candler Street, thanked the City Commission for the work it did in 2019. He also congratulated and thanked Commissioners Drake and Smith for their service to the community.

Fred Boykin, 220 Ponce de Leon Place, congratulated Commissioners Drake and Smith for their years of service and wished them the best for future endeavors. He also requested the staff and consultants to carefully review the RFP/RFQ that would be sent out in reference to the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan to ensure the maximum return on investments for the City.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake, and, all voting “aye,” the 2020 City Commission Meeting Schedule was approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Drake, and, all voting “aye,” the appointments to boards and commissions were approved as recommended.

City Manager Arnold stated that the Active Living Board, Environmental Sustainability Board and Lifelong Community Advisory Board would be accepting applications until the vacancies were filled. She added that the residents who were rolling off of the Boards and Commissions would be surveyed to receive critical feedback.

City Manager Arnold recognized Ms. Roark and her team for receiving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from Government Finance Officers Association for the FY 2019-2020 budget. She noted it was the City’s 12th consecutive year of receiving the honor.

City Manager Arnold thanked the elected officials and staff for a productive and successful year in 2019.

City Manager Arnold thanked Commissioners Drake and Smith for their service to the community.

Commissioner Walsh thanked all the involved members of the Affordable Housing Task Force for presenting at the evening’s work session.

Commissioner Walsh thanked the consultants and staff for working on the supplemental housing study to the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan.

Commissioner Walsh congratulated Commissioners Drake and Smith for the legacy they had created and thanked them.

Commissioner Smith thanked the residents, staff, elected officials and his family for their support throughout his term as an elected official.

Commissioner Drake thanked the residents, staff and elected officials for working hard and creating a beautiful community and encouraged the residents to be more engaged.
Mayor pro tem Powers thanked Commissioners Drake and Smith for their passion and dedication to the betterment of the community.

Mayor Garrett invited everyone to the Grand Menorah Lighting on the Decatur Square on December 29, 2019 at 9:00 p.m.

Mayor Garrett invited everyone to the 2020 Strategic Planning kick-off event on January 23, 2020 at the Decatur Conference Center at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Garrett thanked the public safety staff for continuing to serve the community during the holidays.

Mayor Garrett commended the work done by the Affordable Housing Task Force.

Mayor Garrett congratulated City Manager Arnold on the successful completion of her first year as City Manager.

Mayor Garrett congratulated Commissioners Drake and Smith for their years of service on the City Commission and wished them well.

The City Commission wished the community Happy Holidays.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Meredith Roark
City Clerk