

May 15, 2001

A regular meeting of the Common Council was held on May 15, 2001 at 7:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 25 Court Street, Cortland, New York. **A public hearing was held at 7:20 PM for a request for a zone change at 134 Homer Ave.**

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Tytler
Council Members Smith, Tobin, Abdulla, Strangeway, Hansen, Hyde and Hennessy
Deputy City Clerk, Jodi M. McLyman
City Clerk, William J. Wood
Corporation Counsel, James J. Baranello
Director of Admin. & Finance, Andrew J. Damiano

EXCUSED: Council Member Lissberger

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE FOR 134 HOMER AVE.

Harold Gregoire, West Main St., resident, is not in opposition but has a few suggestions. The building should be built in such a manner that it retains the residential quality. The tall bushes put back around the parking lot as they block the light. No bright lights. The machine at the hospital is very loud and he hopes that something could be don't with that. Please landfill the garbage.

Mr. Riley of Arthur Ave. speaks. He asked if there was any advantage to the property owners? He asked why this particular neighborhood?

Shirley Light of Alvena Ave. asks how the zone change would affect the value of the property? How will it affect the taxes?

Robert Shafer, Esq. states that Mr. Gregoire's points are well taken and those issues would be looked into. The reason for this neighborhood is the doctor's are looking for something close in proximity to the hospital. He can't really answer the question as to whether the properties will increase or decrease. Any site plan the hospital will pursue will be tax neutral.

The public hearing section was closed and the regularly scheduled meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Steve Muka, 73 Evergreen Street speaks regarding the water board and the cell-one revenue.

Karen Mastronardi reads a letter, which is attached and made a part thereof.

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MINUTES

On the motion of Council Member Abdulla, seconded by Council Member Smith, voted and carried,

Council Member Tobin corrects his statement in his ward report. He commented on how clean the downtown was this past weekend. Attorney Robert Shafer's comments were also included in the May 1, 2001 public hearing portion of the meeting.

RESOLVED THE AMENDED MINUTES OF MAY 1, 2001 BE APPROVED FOR FILING.

BILLS

On the motion of Council Member Hennessy, seconded by Council Member Hansen, voted and carried,

RESOLVED THE BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$61,880.85 BE APPROVED FOR FILING.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor reads proclamation for Emergency Medical Services Week. Also congratulates Jaime Plunkett for Cortland Youth of the Year. Channel 5 came down last week in Courthouse Park. They interviewed people and spliced them into the newscast on Friday. They were in awe of our community. It was refreshing seeing members of the media spending the better part of two days and having nothing but positive compliments. The water board by a 3-2 vote has requested all of the revenues from the cellular towers antennas. We have agreed to send the issue to a joint committee to discuss the solution. Mayor asks Council Member Hansen, Hennessy, and Abdulla to serve as committee members.

WARD 1 – Council Member Smith

Council Member Smith attended the meeting that Karen Mastronardi spoke of earlier in the public comment section. The magnitude of this project is devastating to that 5/8 of a mile that goes through the 1st ward. It is just a bypass from Cortland to Ithaca. He hopes the state will come up with an alternate route around the City. A lot of the traffic is bypass traffic, not local traffic. The noise level will be up, properties will be taken away and trees will be cut down.

WARD 2 – Council Member Tobin

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Quiet in the 2nd ward.

WARD 3 – Council Member Abdulla

Quite in the 3rd ward.

WARD 4 – Council Member Lissberger

Excused.

WARD 5 – Council Member Strangeway

Thanks DPW for the prompt response in repairing potholes in the 5th ward.

WARD 6 – Council Member Hansen

What happened to the water fountain? The Mayor responds that they are in the process of getting bids and getting it replaced. Request from a resident of Morningside Drive area regarding speeders in those areas. She has gotten together with the Chief of Police and a letter has been drafted if anyone should like to view it before it is mailed, please contact her.

WARD 7 – Council Member Hyde

Quiet in the 7th ward.

WARD 8 – Council Member Hennessy

She would like to support Council Member Smith's motion to have the 281 project reviewed. It is clearly over built for the area. She thanks the members of the library board who are here tonight.

Andrew Damiano addresses the issue and states that the City has not taken an official position with the Commissioner of New York State Department of Transportation with regard to this issue. He feels it may be inappropriate as a matter of protocol to go directly to the Federal Government before this Legislative Body airs this opinion to the State Commissioner in Albany first.

On the motion of Council Member Smith, seconded by Council Member Hyde, voted and carried,

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RESOLVED TO CONTACT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FIRST AND THEN FOLLOW IT UP WITH A LETTER TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

AGENDA

Item No. 1 – Consideration of a Resolution authorizing a zone change to “Professional Office” for a number of properties per a request submitted by the Cortland Memorial Hospital.

Council Member Hennessy excuses herself from the discussion and vote.

On the motion of Council Member Abdulla, seconded by Council Member Hansen, voted

Council Member Tobin states that there will be some devastating effects on the property values. The potential loss of tax revenue will be determined by the Assessor’s Office. He is not going to support this. He feels that there should be some kind of a comprehensive plan. Council Member Hyde states that he surveyed some people, which would be affected in the area. The majority of the residents were in favor of this. It is good for the community. His concern is taking property off the tax rolls and placing the burden on the taxpayers. Council Member Hansen asks Corporation Counsel Baranello if residential use is allowed in a Professional Office District. He explains that Single Family residences are allowed in a Professional Office District. Uses of right are One, Two, Three and Four Family Dwelling units.

Mr. Carmen from the Cortland Memorial Hospital explains that it would not be their intent to ask anyone to move immediately, especially the residents that have been there for a number of years. Council Member Hyde wants to make sure that this change will be used for medical purposes only. Council Member Abdulla states that the community needs a health care facility that can be utilized and one we can be proud of. Mayor Tytler responds that the Hospital has always been a good neighbor and also a positive asset to the community.

Attorney Shafer explains that there will be extensive review regarding parking issues, special permits, etc. Its no secret as to what the intention is of the hospital. They want to build a professional office building. They are not sure where it is going to be placed, as that will depend on the time frame of acquisition of property. This will all have to be approved before any building can take place. Attorney Shafer feels that this office building will be tax positive.

Council Member Hansen requests as a courtesy if they can get a commitment from the hospital to provide the Council with their site plans so this Council has an opportunity to comment on it. Attorney Shafer responds “of course”.

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Mayor Tytler reviews the SEQR.

On the motion of Council Member Hansen, seconded by Council Member Smith, voted and carried, Council Member Tobin voting No, all others in favor.

RESOLVED THAT THERE ARE NO ADVERSE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.

On the question,

Council Member Smith	No	Council Member Strangeway	Yes
Council Member Tobin	No	Council Member Hansen	Yes
Council Member Abdulla	Yes	Council Member Hyde	Yes
Council Member Lissberger	Excused	Council Member Hennessy	Excused

Resolution passes 4-2.

RESOLUTION APPROVED AUTHORIZING A ZONE CHANGE TO “PROFESSIONAL OFFICE” FOR A NUMBER OF PROPERTIES PER A REQUEST SUBMITTED BY THE CORTLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

Item No. 2 - Presentation from a representative of COPC regarding their request for funding in order to complete a consolidated plan for the Cortland area.

Mr. Calvin Barrett briefly explains his program. SUNY Cortland was awarded \$400,000. in funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to establish a Community Outreach Partnership Center. COPC is asking that the City support Mr. Thoma of Thoma Development to assist COPC in their Comprehensive Housing Plan. The Plan looks into what the primary housing needs are and provide a general overview. COPC has asked for \$7,500.00 from the City which the County will be matching not monetarily but by the use of their staff.

Bernie Thoma was reluctant to attend the Council meeting because he has a conflict.

The study would be complete by April and it would be good for 5 years. The Council agrees to put this on the next Common Council agenda and if the Council wishes to allocate these funds they can be taken from miscellaneous revenue.

Item No. 3 – Consideration of the confirmation of the Mayor’s appointment of Richard Bushnell to the Board of Assessment Review.

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On the motion of Council Member Strangeway, seconded by Council Member Hennessy, voted and carried,

RESOLUTION APPROVED CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF RICHARD BUSHNELL TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW.

Item No. 4 – Brief presentation by a representative of the Cortland Free Library.

Mr. Warren Eddy speaks on the behalf of the Cortland Free Library, the repairs, which have been done, and the gifts that the library has received. They charge \$10.00 for non-residents members. The library also has Internet service on 5 computers.

Item No. 5 – Consideration of a request made by the VFW for a partial closing of Main Street; from Court Street to Clayton Avenue, from 10:45 AM to 11:45 AM on Memorial Day (May 28th).

On the motion of Council Member Smith, seconded by Council Member Hennessy, voted and carried,

Council Member Smith states that the Fire Chief wanted one lane left open for emergency vehicles. A brief discussion ensues.

RESOLUTION APPROVED FOR THE VFW TO CLOSE BOTH LANES OF MAIN STREET; FROM COURT STREET TO CLAYTON AVENUE, FROM 10:45 AM TO 11:45 AM ON MEMORIAL DAY (MAY 28TH).

Item No. 6 – Discussion regarding a proposal to create an “Adopt a Park, Street or Parking Lot” program for the City.

Council Member Hyde will bring this item back at a later date.

On the motion of Council Member Smith, seconded by Council Member Abdulla, voted and carried,

RESOLVED THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 8:50 PM.

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MAYOR

CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolutions were presented to the Mayor in the time required and were approved by him.