Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 21, 2016 ~ 7:30 P.M.

Louis J. R. Goorey Worthington Municipal Building
John P. Coleman Council Chamber
6550 North High Street
Worthington, Ohio  43085

City Council

Bonnie D. Michael, President
Scott Myers, President Pro-Tempore
Rachael Dorothy
Douglas C. Foust
David M. Norstrom
Douglas Smith
Michael C. Troper

D. Kay Thress, Clerk of Council
CALL TO ORDER – Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Worthington City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, March 21, 2016, in the John P. Coleman Council Chambers of the Louis J.R. Goorey Worthington Municipal Building, 6550 North High Street, Worthington, Ohio. President Michael called the meeting to order at or about 7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Rachael R. Dorothy, Douglas Foust, Scott Myers, David Norstrom, Douglas K. Smith, Michael C. Troper and Bonnie D. Michael

Member(s) Absent:

Also present: Clerk of Council D. Kay Thress, City Manager Matthew Greeson, Director of Law Pamela Fox, Director of Finance Molly Roberts, Director of Building and Planning Lee Brown, Director of Public Service and Engineering Dan Whited, Director of Parks and Recreation Darren Hurley, Chief of Fire Scott Highley and Chief of Police James Mosic

There were twenty visitors present.

President Michael invited all those in attendance to stand and join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITOR COMMENTS – There were no visitor comments

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update and Presentation

Mr. Greeson shared that Worthington is a member of the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) who serves as a Council of Governments as well as our Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In their MPO role, MORPC is required to do long range transportation planning for the entire central Ohio region. They are currently in the process of updating that long range plan (MTP). As part of their outreach to their members and to the community at-large they are presenting before various bodies. This evening Maria Schaper and Nick Gill with MORPC’s staff are going to overview the MTP. He added that as part of this transportation oriented night, we will also have the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) speak to Council about Worthington’s participation in a SR 161 corridor study. He invited Ms. Schaper forward to talk about the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Ms. Schaper shared that she is a Transportation Planner with MORPC and as mentioned, she is here to talk a little bit about the 2016 – 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
WHO IS MORPC?

Regional Data & Mapping
Policy
• State
• Federal
• Local
• Advocacy

Planning
* Land Use
* Econ Dev
* Environment

Energy
• Sustainability
• Air Quality
• Home Weatherization

Transportation
* Multi-modal Options
* Forecasting
* Project Capitalization

WHAT ARE WE ASKING OF YOU?

• Review and comment
  o Draft MTP
  o Active Transportation Plan content and tools
  o Comment period ends April 15, 2016

• Contact:
  o mtp@morpc.org
  o Bernice Cage for hard copies or translated materials (614-233-4157)

• Information:
  o Morpc.org/mtp
  o Morpc.org/atp

WHAT IS THE 2016-2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN?

• Plan that sets the regional transportation priorities
• Long-range (20+ years), fiscally constrained, prioritizes strategies and projects, examines impacts to air quality
• Formal document submitted to ODOT and Federal Highway on a 4-year cycle
The 2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan only includes communities within the official MPO boundary.
COORDINATION

• Your plans and documents along with

• COTA

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

• Goal: People can safely and easily walk, bike, and use transit.
• Focuses on 12 corridors
• Collaborative and cross-jurisdictional
• Tools:
  • Story Map - morpc.org/atp
  • Cost Estimator

Ms. Schaper shared that this is an interactive map. It is one that MORPC is interested in received feedback on.
Ms. Dorothy asked what kind of data do you have on the plan that residents would be digging deeper into. Ms. Schaper replied that there is crash data, a sidewalk inventory, location of recent projects, etc.

**CANDIDATE & DRAFT PROJECTS**

Visit the [interactive webmap](http://morpc.org/mtp2040) to provide comments on draft projects!

Mrs. Schraper shared that last summer MORPC reviewed local plans to identify candidate projects. Through the process they collected over 1,000 candidate projects. Because the plan is fiscally constrained, not all of those projects could be included in the plan. They developed a set of evaluation criteria that helped them determine which projects will best help the region to advance the established goals. Through that evaluation process they narrowed the projects down to a set of draft projects that will be included in the plan. These projects are financially feasible and will help advance the regional goals. She invited members to visit the interactive webmap. The roadway map for Worthington is below.
Ms. Schraper shared that the bright colors (reds, oranges, yellows and greens) highlight the projects that are currently included in the draft plan. The candidate projects that did not move forward into the draft are shown in the grayer/duller colors.

Ms. Schraper added that there is a project map and listing for the entire MPO region in the handout that she left for members. Again, these projects have been identified as a need in the region and are financially feasible looking out to the year 2040. Because they are future projects, the descriptions are kept general in nature. The projects will be implemented sometime down the road once the project sponsor receives a funding source. At that time they will go through a more detail design process. She shared that one example of a candidate project that does not yet have funding is the SR 161 corridor. That corridor has been identified as a regional priority through this MPT process but many more steps still need to be taken before the specifics of that project could be identified and eventually implemented.

Ms. Schraper shared that one mode that was missing from the previous map is transit (map below). She noted that the MPT does not specifically identify locally and express bus service changes into the future since COTA does services changes three times a year. But during the MPT process we were able to identify high capacity transit corridors that have been identified for further study. The specific modes for these corridors will not be identified but high capacity transit could include bus rapid transit like the CMAX line on Cleveland Ave., it could be light rail, streetcar, commuter rail, etc. There were seventeen corridors identified in the draft plan as needing further study. These are also viewable on the interactive webmap.
NEXT STEPS

- Comment period ends April 15, 2016
- Incorporate comments received
- Plan adoption May 2016

Ms. Dorothy asked what will be done with the comments that are received. Ms. Schraper replied that they will work to incorporate them. We will look to determine if what is being viewed on the map is in line with the transportation priorities. If something is missing or if something is on there that shouldn’t be the public can let them know and they will take a look at how they can make changes to best reflect local needs based on financial feasibility and their planning process.

Ms. Dorothy asked how responses would be handled. Ms. Schraper replied that if she is contacted she will respond as to whether it can be included.

Ms. Dorothy thinks they have done a good job of publicizing the transportation map. She wondered at the number of comments and how they were being addressed. Ms. Schraper replied that they have actually received hundreds of comments on the webmap. Some are just of support and they don’t necessarily respond to the commenter. If there is a specific issue or concern they try to respond. If someone were to e-mail her directly or call then she would definitely respond as soon as possible.

Mr. Greeson directed the conversation to the Worthington specific maps. In viewing the High Capacity Transit Corridors Identified For Further Study slide, the primary corridor here that is in the long range plan in Worthington for some kind of enhancement although it has probably not been identified yet is the High St. corridor. The COTA NEXTGEN initiative may better identify what will be done there. He thinks it is advantageous for council to see that as a potential transit enhancement area between now and twenty years from now.

Ms. Schraper shared that because high capacity trains are fiscally constrained, at this point we can’t say that any of those corridors are more likely to be built than the others. So instead of closing the door to all of them, we wanted to leave the door open for further planning purposes. Mr. Greeson added that being on the lists makes the projects eligible for federal funding.

Mr. Norstrom shared that thirty years ago that map identified the same corridor and talked about high capacity transit. Mr. Greeson noted that it is a long range plan.

Mr. Greeson directed members to the Draft Roadway, Bike & Pedestrian Projects slide and commented that they may want to consider changing the “grayed” out area of High St, Wilson Bridge, Huntley to Schrock, which connects up with Schrock Road bike lane system to a brighter green. The reason for the change is because the red area to the right is our already funded federal project that we are in the middle of. We are going to have to put bike and pedestrian improvements in that intersection redo which will happen in
2019. We will be in a better position at that time than we are today to make connections west to High St. and south to Schrock Road. From a process standpoint he doesn’t know whether that would be appropriate to change that to a brighter green.

Ms. Michael asked the location of Mr. Greeson’s request. Mr. Greeson replied that it is coming from High St. east to the new intersection and eventually connecting on down to Schrock Rd. on Huntley where there is a bike lane system. It essentially gives you a bicycle facility from Olentangy Trail to Westerville.

When Mr. Greeson asked if that would be one example of a comment, Ms. Schraper replied yes.

Mr. Greeson further explained that the two yellow triangles located along SR-161 are conceptual intersection improvements and the red line is some kind of widening at Linworth on SR-161, which will be talked about in a little bit. But it shows up here because it makes the project eligible for federal funding. Ms. Schraper agreed.

Mr. Foust asked for distinction between what is meant by the bright green versus the grayish green color. Ms. Schraper explained that the grayish green are the projects that did not move forward into the draft plan as currently identified. The focus for bicycle and pedestrian projects is on the twelve active transportation corridors as well as the Central Ohio proposed Greenways. So when they are doing the financial forecasts, there will be some money in the plan identified for other bicycle/pedestrian improvements not necessarily as regional in nature. So we can talk about how to best incorporate that specific project to see how it fits in with the financial balance and to see how we can best incorporate it. We can use either one of those mechanisms.

Ms. Dorothy asked if the Worthington Bike and Pedestrian Committee has commented on any of these projects or is it something we can do before April 15th. Mr. Hurley replied that they are aware of the processes. We have participated in the central Ohio Greenways groups and given them our feedback but we will make sure they also have seen the larger MORPC effort.

When asked by Ms. Michael if there is anything in Worthington that is located in the twelve corridors, Ms. Schraper replied yes at SR-161 and High St.

WHAT ARE WE ASKING OF YOU?

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Ms. Michael and Mr. Greeson thanked Ms. Schraper for the presentation.

Presentation Regarding Proposal to Study the State Route 161 Corridor

Mr. Greeson shared that the SR-161 corridor has been an area of concern for a long time primarily from the standpoint of traffic congestion but also community character, safety and bicycle/pedestrian limitations. There has been a couple of times in the last few years where City Council has taken action to express this as a priority. He believes the last time was in 2012 when we adopted a Resolution that requested ODOT to look carefully at the congested Linworth intersection, with particularly interest in turn lanes. In 2013 we adopted a resolution and in 2014 we participated in a base line traffic analysis with a number of partner entities that included the City of Columbus, ODOT, MORPC, Perry Township, Franklin County and the City of Worthington. The funding partners in that initial study were Perry Township, Columbus and the City of Worthington. We contracted with MORPC at that point to study and collect current traffic counts as well as project out based on how the area was going to grow, what congestion was going to look like in the future. That study was completed. It essentially showed we are congested now and congestion will increase in the future. There are some primary culprits that cause that congestion and a potential for improving the corridor. The next phase is how to move forward with our partners. Staff is proposing that the city participate in a more comprehensive study to the tune of about $150,000, which we budgeted for in our Capital Improvements Plan that council adopted in late 2015 for 2016. There are a number of folks here tonight that are going to help overview what this study would entail. It would be administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation District 6 and Thom Slack is here tonight to share the presentation. Also present is the assistant transportation director of MORPC, Nick Gill, who may also weigh in. Our other partners, Columbus and Perry Township couldn’t be with us tonight as they also have meetings this evening but they are aware of our discussion. He invited Mr. Slack to comment.
Mr. Slack thanked Council for that opportunity to speak with them this evening on another traffic issue concerning Worthington. This is a corridor that many jurisdictions share some responsibility for. They are eager to get moving on finding a fix here. He introduced Faye Taylor, who will be the ODOT project manager for the study.

Corridor History

Previous Studies:

- 1995 Study, FRA-161-5.77: Woolpert studied the corridor for ODOT and generated much of the studies and documentation required to complete an environmental document for corridor improvements.
- 2015 ODOT In-house Preliminary Engineering: Includes typical sections for various roadway configurations and schematic level plan views.
- 2014 MORPC SR 161 Traffic Study: Includes detailed traffic analysis and forecasts for the corridor.
- 2012-2014 City of Columbus Multi-use path study. Relevant information is environmental document.
- Connect Columbus: Conceptual ideas for Linworth area.
- Various site-specific traffic studies performed by businesses or developers.

Study Goals

- Developed in conversation with stakeholders
- Congestion Relief
• Reduce travel time along corridor
• Improve travel time reliability (make it predictable)

• Safety
• Reduce crashes overall

Mr. Slack shared that in the last three years there were 178 crashes between Sawmill and Olentangy River Road with 56% being rear-end crashes and attributed to congestion.

• Provide safe accommodations for bikes and pedestrians

Mr. Slack noted there being an absence of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in this corridor. He added that there is definitely the need and definitely a pent-up demand.

Study Approach

• **The corridor will be studied as a complete unit**, as opposed to piecemeal studies that looked at small areas or specific issues.
• **The study will recommend solutions that will improve performance across the whole corridor**. This will allow for phased projects to be eligible for federal funding.
• Phased construction and context sensitive solutions will be recommended.
  • The right solutions implemented for locations along this corridor of varying attributes.
  • Smaller, more easily funded projects will be built and sponsored by stakeholder agencies.

Example Solutions

Context sensitive – the right fix for the right location
• Signal timing improvements
  • Add SB left turn lane and eliminate split phase signal at Linworth
• Additional/Fewer signals
• Intersection turn lane additions
- Add EB Lane from Sawmill to Sawmill Place Blvd.
- Left turn lanes at McVey, Maplebrook, Nicholas
- Bike lanes/shared use paths
- Center two way left turn lanes
- Additional lanes

- Grade separation with the railroad (overpass/underpass)
- Bypass

Mr. Slack commented that another issue with the railroad is determining the appropriate time for those changes to be made.

Next Steps

- Legislation to be presented to Council in April
- Study scheduled to begin this Summer
- Study findings in 2017

Ms. Michael thanked Mr. Slack for having a context sensitive approach and be looking at the entire area from Sawmill Road to Olentangy River Road.

Ms. Dorothy wanted to get a better understanding on what the study will do for Worthington. This is still just a study and not a detail design. We are still trying to determine all the variables involved and make sure we have a level of service for all modes of transportation and not just for cars. Mr. Slack agreed. He shared that they will be looking for recommendations for the full corridor that will have recommended alternatives included. They want a decent level of detail that includes the environmental footprint to know how much space those would take up, in order to get environmental clearance for the entire corridor and be able to move forward with a federally funded project for the different phases along the way. We actually want to get to the formal approval of a recommendation for the alternative. Ms. Dorothy agreed with Ms. Michael in that we definitely want something that is optimized for all modes of transportation and context substantive for this environmental.

Mr. Norstrom asked about public participation during this study. Mr. Slack replied that they will be working both directly and indirectly so they will have stakeholder groups that
will reach out to elected and staff officials for all of the partners as well as the city of Dublin because of their involvement at the Sawmill Rd. signal. They will also have at least one but maybe two public workshops. They are working through the details at this time and are certainly open for any informal forms as well. They may also meet with resident groups, business associations, etc.

When asked by Mr. Foust if those proposals or recommendations would also include a good estimate of level of funding for each, Mr. Slack replied absolutely.

When asked by Ms. Michael the cost of the study, Mr. Slack replied that the study is budgeted at $600,000. ODOT will be administering the study and bear the overhead associated with the study’s administration but all of the partners involved will have an equal voice at the table.

Mr. Greeson shared that the projected study budget is $600,000. The breakdown is as follows:

- Worthington $150,000 (also includes consent legislation)
- Columbus $270,000
- ODOT $120,000 plus administration of the project
- MORPC $ 30,000
- Perry Twp. $ 30,000

Mr. Troper asked how the shares were determined and if the project goes forward how will the cost share be determined. Mr. Slack thinks construction costs will depend on where construction takes place. If construction will need to be done in Worthington, he thinks most of those projects will go through the MORPC attributable funding requests and follow those application guidelines. The financial part would be a local 20% match, whether entirely born by that applicant or shared in some way with the other stakeholders. We first need to get some costs associated with the individual improvements and then have some serious discussion about how and when that funding can become available. Mr. Greeson added that he expects it to be a long term implementation strategy.

Ms. Michael noted that Dublin was mentioned regarding the Sawmill interchange. She asked if there is any chance in bringing them along as a funding partner. Mr. Slack replied that they didn’t bring them in on the study because their corporate boundary begins at Sawmill Rd. and they don’t necessarily see any improvements at that intersection. If improvements were needed in that intersection then that would be something they would certainly take up. We would certainly look for their support in any MORPC applications as those move forward. There is a lot of discussion with regional impacts and the more people we can get to endorse the project the better.

Mr. Myers commented that the purpose of this study is to arrive at alternatives. Mr. Slack clarified that it’s for recommendations. It is to narrow alternatives and concepts down to a plan. Mr. Myers stated that sometime in 2017 the city can expect that there
will be presented to council ODOT’s recommendation. At that time you will ask us to
give it a thumbs up or a thumbs down. Mr. Slack agreed.

Mr. Greeson commented that procedurally, tonight this is essentially a little bit of a
workshop effort in that no action is being requested of council this evening. We wanted
to have these folks come in and answer questions. Legislation will be introduced at the
first meeting in April with a public hearing at the third meeting (April 18th). This gives
members an opportunity to not only hear Mr. Slack and Mr. Gill but also take any
testimony that members would want from the public. That opportunity would be provided
again on the 18th.

Gail Caldwell, 6476 Strathaven Ct. W.
Ms. Caldwell commented that she just wanted to verify what she heard tonight about
what ODOT is considering. MORPC completed the comprehensive study. The next step
is to consider all of the options in the executive summary and come up with something
that council can consider as a real action plan for going forward. Since she writes the
newsletter, she wants to make sure that she has the information correct. Mr. Greeson
agreed that the information she relayed is correct. The process will be to come up with
alternatives that the public would have an opportunity to review and select an
alternative. It will likely be a series of projects that help address the goals outlined.

Ms. Caldwell commented that the first opportunity for that would be in 2017 when they
complete their study. Mr. Slack replied that they will be working through a more detailed
schedule for public outreach as they initiate the study this summer. So that may come at
the end of 2016 or at the beginning of 2017 but as they get six months into the study he
thinks they will be reaching out to the public with something a little more finite to get
some comments on.

Mr. Myers asked what the best way is for someone who wants to be included in the
process to make sure they are included (get on an e-mail list, or mailing list or whatever).
Mr. Slack thinks they can make use of any of their contacts with the city or with him. As
they get their study team on board they will have an information public lead who will be
coordinating all of those outreach activities. They hope to work with city staff to get that
publicized as well.

Mr. Greeson added that staff will try to be a force multiplier for that person and get
information out and point people where they can sign up. Certainly anybody that
contacts us, we will make sure that the public outreach folks receive that information.

Danny Straab, 6336 Westbrook Place
Mr. Straab shared that for the last 27 years he has lived just off of the corner of Linworth
and SR-161. Mr. Slack had mentioned earlier that he is very interested in incorporating
public input and he would just like to mention that he is Mr. Public here tonight. For the
last twenty five years he has lived as close to that intersection as almost anybody. He
really wanted to thank a few people tonight. He thanked Mr. Greeson because he called
him this past week. They have had several conversations about the SR-161 corridor and
he wanted to be sure that he was aware of this evenings meeting. He thanked Mr. Norstrom who asked no fewer than three questions during the presentation tonight about public input. He also wanted to thank City Council and the other shareholders for taking on quite a task. But to invest $150,000, he feels like he has waited awhile for this. He knows that Ms. Michael has been through the neighborhood as have a few others and he grabs them and bend their ear furiously about SR-161. He does that for a few reasons.

1) Most importantly safety – It is not a safe situation on that corridor. There are children that cross SR-161 at Linworth Rd. from their subdivision all the way down to Indian Hills to the park. He mentioned that since they have lived in Worthington, the positive improvements over there far outweigh anything negative. They have a park and a dog park. They have the schools and the services of Worthington, they couldn’t be more thankful. The one negative is the infrastructure. It is a mess. First and foremost, it is not safe.

2) It was mentioned about the character of the area. People are concerned about the gateways to Worthington. They are the western gateway to Worthington. He asked if anybody has mentioned that at a meeting before. If you are coming from Dublin or points west and enter Worthington, you are driving into Worthington through Linworth and SR-161. He asked council what they want the character of that area to look like and feel like. He thinks that is really important.

3) Traffic – Anybody that comes through that area doesn’t have to be told about the traffic situation there.

Mr. Straab shared that he is at tonight’s meeting first and foremost to applaud Council. He is their number cheerleader and he wants to be on the public input group because he’s only shared a little tonight and he has a lot more to say. He thanked Council for their time.

Council thanked Mr. Slack for the presentation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 8, 2016 – Committee of the Whole Meeting
- February 16, 2016 – Regular Meeting

MOTION

Mr. Troper made a motion to approve the aforementioned minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dorothy.

Ms. Dorothy shared that she identified a small clerical error that she already mentioned by e-mail that needs to be incorporated.

The motion to approve the minutes as presented carried unanimously.
NEW LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED

Resolution No. 14-2016

Approving an Agreement and Permit for and between Citynet, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, to Operate and Maintain a Telecommunications System Within the City of Worthington Pursuant to and Subject to the Provisions of Chapter 949 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Worthington.

Introduced by Mr. Myers.

MOTION

Mr. Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 14-2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Norstrom.

Mr. Greeson shared that this is a renewal of a telecommunications and utility permit. It is a standard process and permit and staff recommends approval.

There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 14-2016 carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Resolution No. 15-2016

Authorizing the Award of Re-emergent Corridor Assistance Program Funds to Help Improve Facility Exterior Facade and Streetscape Along Certain of the City’s Commercial Corridors (6320 Huntley Road).

Introduced by Mr. Foust.

MOTION

Mr. Troper made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 15-2016. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dorothy.

Mr. Greeson invited Mr. McCorkle to present this application and the CIC’s recommendation.

Mr. McCorkle thanked Council for their time and shared that he is the new Economic Development Manager for the city of Worthington. He shared the following presentation.

A Recap of ReCAP

Re-Emergent Corridor Assistance Program (ReCAP)

- Funding to building owners or commercial tenants to improve their facades & surrounding streetscapes
- Focus on commercial corridor: Huntley, Proprietors & Schrock Roads
  - Commercial properties must be located within ReCAP Program Area
- Commercial building exterior enhancements, prospective in nature
– Exterior front façade
– Side building elevations if on corner lot
• Paid on a match basis, $1:$1 with private funds

Eligibility
• Building owners and tenants (w/property owner’s approval)
• Building in ReCAP Program Area
• Applicant in full compliance with all income and real estate tax obligations
• All project work must abide by MPC approvals & building permit processes
• NO Interior Improvements
• 50 – 50 Grant-Loan Financing
  • Partially fund well-designed exteriors
  • Maximum award = lesser of 50% of the lowest contractor’s bid for work under the project or $25,000
  • Cash paid up-front, 50-50 loan-grant
    • Up to $12,500 one-time grant
    • Up to $12,500 loaned at 0%, 3-year term
• Applications reviewed by City staff and recommended by CIC
• Approved by City Council

Mr. McCorkle shared that for 2016 there is a $75,000 appropriation for this program. This is for three funding rounds if needed so it is first come, first serve. This first funding round was due February 26th, the second round is due April 29th and a third and final round if necessary is due August 26th.

ReCAP Application 10

6320 Huntley Road – Columbus Service Supply Corp. (Melinda Frye)
Ms. Frye is a tenant in this building and the building owner is Margaret Buehler. The proposed application is for improvements to 6320 Huntley Rd. Ms. Frye has been a small business owner in the city of Worthington for nearly 55 years. She is a member of the Worthington Chamber of Commerce and makes monthly ongoing charitable contributions to the Worthington Resource Pantry. He shared that Ms. Frye’s son Jason and daughter-in-law Jessica who have been running point on this project are in attendance and he thanked them for attending tonight’s meeting.

Mr. McCorkle shared that this application was originally submitted in 2015 but there were not sufficient funds to fund the entire request so it is coming before members again. It has been to the CIC twice for recommendation for approval.
Proposed Improvements

Scope of Work

• Neighborhood Design Center-recommended updates:
  - Demolish existing entry awning & install flower boxes
  - Install new wood entry pergola & cut-out sign
  - Tree planting & new exterior lighting
  - New monument sign
• Timeline: One year completion
• Total estimated costs: $49,286
• Request ReCAP assistance: $24,643

Mr. McCorkle reported that the CIC met on March 11th and reviewed the proposed improvements to 6320 Huntley Rd. The CIC Board recommended approval and funding. The application was scored by both City Staff and the CIC and recommended for funding. Staff recommends that the City Council approve $24,643 in ReCAP assistance to Melinda Frye pursuant to the program guidelines and procedures.

Mr. Troper commented that they are the tenant and they plan to pay the loan back over three years. He asked if they have a lease for these three years. Mr. McCorkle reported that they did.

Ms. Dorothy asked Mr. McCorkle if he has been tracking the vacancy rates along this corridor and the rent rates. Mr. McCorkle replied that he is aware of the current vacancy rates but will need to do a refresher on them. He added that one of the suggestions that came out of the CIC meeting was actually taking property values of the existing properties and taking a look at whether the property values within this program have increased so we will be looking at whether there is a return on investment of the dollars themselves. Vacancy rates will also be included in that endeavor.

Mr. Norstrom added that one of the other topics that was discussed was rental rates because it appears to still be very cheap property along that corridor. Mr. McCorkle agreed. The plan is to monitor the rental rates and the vacancy rates. Mr. Myers noted that the purpose of the program was to increase both of those.

Mr. Myers asked Mr. Frye what kind of business they have. Mr. Frye replied that they are a light industrial company. They distribute supplies around the Columbus area. They are family owned and operated. He is third generation. This is where they want to be and appreciate everything the city has done for them to date. For over 50 years they have tried to take good care of the building but it could use a sprucing up.

Ms. Dorothy thinks in general this program is something that we want to invest some time and money in and hopefully it does pay dividends with lower vacancy rates and higher rents but just the fact that we can help local business stay and grow in Worthington is phenomenal and definitely something that she wants to see prioritized. She thinks council members would be open to hearing about other programs that staff thinks would be worth trying out. On the face of this program it seems to be doing well and she hopes it does pan out over the long term of keeping and growing businesses here in Worthington.

Ms. Michael recalls seeing this application previously and she is glad they came back and were persistent enough to come through so council could help them.

There being no additional comments, the motion to adopt Resolution No. 15-2016 carried unanimously by a voice vote.
REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS

Information Item(s)

- Door to Door Solicitation

Mr. Greeson shared that he will turn this important topic over to Mrs. Fox and possibly Mrs. Thress to talk about, as we head into the season where our request for solicitation permits increases quite a bit.

Mrs. Fox shared that it has been about ten years since the door to door solicitation ordinance has been reviewed but this season Mrs. Thress has been working very hard to develop two different permit applications that we have for solicitation, one for the door to door and one for the roadway solicitation. She has the ability in chapter 713 to prepare that application with information that she deems necessary. The ordinance also allows her to set the fee for those people who come in to apply. We wanted to let council know that at least for this season the door to door solicitation application has been changed to increase the fee. Typically applicants come in to solicit for a business or a group so it is currently $20.00 for the first person and a dollar for each applicant after that. That permit is good for a year but all expire on December 31st. We have looked at many of the other ordinances around central Ohio and have developed a sliding scale of fees. The new rates are $10.00 for a week, $25.00 for a month and $50.00 for the year. Those rates are pretty much in line with most of the other central Ohio communities that have these ordinances. We also spend a great deal of time in having her paralegal look through public records for background information on all of these applicants. This application requires the applicants to bring in their own background check that would be good for the prior 90 days. While we feel that this will save us administrative time the reality of it is that most of these businesses are not just going door to door in Worthington. They are doing this in multiple communities that require background checks. We are asking for a background check that looks at not only Ohio background but national background. Applicants can get those background checks in a variety of places in Franklin County.

Mr. Troper asked if these are BCI and FBI background checks. Mrs. Fox replied yes. It is called a BFBI check. There is a company down on High St. that does that kind of check as well as the Sheriff’s Department and several other different businesses. Those are the two primary changes that this application is making other than just formatting.

Mrs. Fox shared that the Roadway Solicitation doesn’t have any major changes as the previously requested information is still required. But we know that there has been some comments about making changes to the Solicitation code section and we intend to look at our ordinance as there are a few things that need to be clarified. She mentioned that the Police Chief has asked for a couple of clarifications particularly as they relate to the No Solicitation Signs that people are able to put on their front doors and how that translates into an enforcement measure if people continually disregard those signs. So we will be looking at that. She would be interested in hearing if any council members have any
particular parts of this ordinance that they would like to address. This concept of door to door solicitation has received a great deal of case law attention, not only locally but nationally with the U.S. Supreme Court so the law is constantly evolving and she just wanted to take another look at it to make sure we are in sync with all of that.

Mr. Troper asked about the background checks and how the new language differs from what is currently required. Mrs. Fox replied that staff was just doing public records checks and they were somewhat thorough but this is a little bit different and probably a little more comprehensive.

When asked by Mr. Foust the cost of a background check, Mrs. Fox replied that they run around $60 to $66. If they are soliciting in other communities many may already have one and often times the business will pay for those.

Mr. Myers asked if we have the authority to deny a permit based on a background check. Mr. Fox replied that our code allows the Safety Director to deny a permit for violations of what is called “crimes of moral turpitude”. Mr. Myers commented that she will want to take a look at that. Both the courts and the general assembly have pretty recently taken shots at that term. It has been called into question over the last couple of years. Mrs. Fox added that it is sometimes difficult with some of the instances that we have encountered. There has been a few occurrences and actually for the first time we have had a couple of appeals and applicants have come in and asked that it be reconsidered so we have sat down with them and had that discussion. So we will take a new look at that.

Mrs. Michael concluded that staff is looking at revising that code section. Mrs. Fox agreed but we wanted to make sure that we got the updated application and the new fee process in place before the new season kicked in.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Norstrom commented that he would like to know when the last time various fees were reviewed and then consider doing it at the appropriate time going into the budget process for next year. Mr. Greeson replied that is actually one of the goals that came out of the retreat session and he will share that report once he gets his hands on it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION

Ms. Dorothy made a motion to meet in Executive Session to discuss Board and Commission appointments (appointment of personnel) and sale of real property. The motion was seconded by Mr. Myers.

The motion carried by the following voice vote:

Yes  7  Troper, Smith, Norstrom, Foust, Dorothy, Myers, Michael

No  0
Council recessed at 8:50 p.m. from the Regular meeting session.

MOTION Mr. Troper made a motion to return to open session at 9:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dorothy.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION Mr. Norstrom made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

The motion carried unanimously by a voice vote.

President Michael declared the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

/s/ D. Kay Thress
Clerk of Council

APPROVED by the City Council, this 2nd day of May, 2016.

/s/ Bonnie D. Michael
Council President