



CITY OF NEWARK
**CITY COUNCIL and
PLANNING COMMISSION**

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City Administration Building
6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers

Minutes

Tuesday, May 30, 2017

Special Joint Work Session

A. ROLL CALL

Mayor Nagy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Council Members Hannon, Freitas, Collazo and Vice Mayor Bucci.

Planning Commissioners Fitts, Aguilar, Nillo, and Otterstetter were present. Planning Commissioner Bridges was noted absent.

B. The City Council and the Planning Commission will hold a joint work session to receive an oral report on the status of the Greater NewPark Specific Plan.

Assistant City Manager Grindall stated that the specific plan will provide detailed guidance on how the Greater NewPark area could be revitalized.

Ron Sisseem, EMC Planning Group, provided a brief synopsis of the planning steps and stakeholder meetings that were taken in advance of this meeting. He stated that the specific plan will say what we want to have happen at NewPark Mall.

Ryan Call, ELS Architecture and Urban Design stated that the retail strategy was to make NewPark the first choice for customers. They want to create public spaces for community events, include housing in the right location, and increase the hours that the mall is used.

David Masenten stated that retail has changed, people are the attraction. He proposed a mixed use district, that is walkable with restaurants, shops and convenient parking.

In response to Council Member and Planning Commissioner questions, Assistant City Manager Grindall stated that staff understood the need for appropriate parking, they envision the housing to be rental properties, and increased employment at this location.

Ron Sisseem stated that the next steps would be to complete the specific plan, prepare environmental documentation, and hold hearings before planning commission and city council. After the plan is adopted, individual projects may be considered.

Clark Morrison, Seritage Growth Properties land use attorney, stated that his client supports the plan. Seritage owns many Sears Properties and sees that single purpose malls do not work anymore.

In response to Council Member Collazo, Mr. Morrison stated that some Sears locations are reducing in size and limiting products. He stated that he could not speak on the future of the local Sears.

Joe Serra, SB Architects, stated that he is working with Seritage on their plan for the Sears parcel. They are testing out concepts in anticipation of specific plan approval.

Eric Dinenberg, Executive Vice President of Development for Rouse Properties, stated that they need to reinvent the mall. They have made improvements to the mall, engaged the services of Genslar Architects, and participated in stakeholder meetings.

Brian Harper, CEO of Rouse Properties, stated that retail is changing. He stated that this could be a top mixed-use development and this is a project they would like to do.

Vaki Mawema, Genslar Architects, design partner for Rouse Properties stated that they want to create a community at this location where people like to spend time. He presented their site plan with court yards, open spaces, housing, and walkable streets.

David Wang, Newpark Plaza, stated that they are preparing their property for the next phase of development. He suggested more residential on his property which he thought would be better for the entire project.

Allison Bogasich stated that she was concerned with the reduced parking spaces. She suggested using shuttles and buses on the ring road to decrease traffic congestion.

Assistant City Manager Grindall stated that the specific plan will include transportation.

Council Member Bucci requested that Mr. Wang continue participating in the specific plan process.

Council Member Hannon requested that staff focus on transportation and make it convenient for residents to go to the mall. He also requested that staff reach out to millennials for their input.

Council Member Collazo stated that she would like the residents at the new homes on Cedar Boulevard to be able to walk over to the mall. She also noted that if the AC Transit flex pilot program was successful, then it might be a permanent service.

C. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:45 p.m., Mayor Nagy adjourned the meeting.

SHEILA HARRINGTON
City Clerk