

**SPECIAL COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 2012**

6:00 P.M. PROMPT

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- **DISCUSSION OF UPDATE OF CITY MASTER PLAN**

Bedford, Ohio

June 5, 2012

Bedford City Council met in a Special Work Session at Bedford City Hall on Monday, June 5, 2012 at 6:08 p.m.

Present: Council Members: Mayor Daniel Pocek, Warner Batten, Stan Koci, Marilyn Zolata, Paula Mizsak, Donald Saunders. Also Present: Clerk of Council Lorree Villers. Administration: City Manager Henry J. Angelo, Finance Director Frank Gambosi, Mike Mallis Economic Development Director, Service Director Clint Bellar, Recreation Director Randy Lewis, Fire Lieutenant Terry Salvi, Police Lieutenant Marty Stemple. Absent: Councilman Greg Pozar, Law Director Ken Schuman, Chief Duber, Chief Nagy.

Mayor Pocek welcomed everyone that was in attendance this evening. He introduced Council Members and the Administration that were present. He noted that Council members collectively had over 140 years of experience in Bedford government but that was going to change in the next 5-10 years. With the turnover of new Council members and with some of the employees being close to retirement, it was very important to address the Master Plan now, to ensure Bedford was going to continue to be a financially stable, safe, quality place to continue to live. Bedford had many assets to offer its current residents and newcomers.

Mayor Pocek explained that Council and the Administration would like all the Board and Commission Members to assist them in "tweaking" the City's 2007 Master Plan, which was the "blueprint" of the City. It had been five years since this blueprint was put in place and it was time to review it. Some of the 18 points in the plan had been addressed, however, there were others that still needed attention or evaluated.

The idea was for all the current Board and Commission members to meet on their own and select one member to act as a liaison between their board and the newly formed Master Plan Review Committee. The Master Plan Review Committee would be the body reporting to Council and the Administration. The City had hoped to have a 15 member Master Plan Review Committee from the nine boards. The City also welcomed any resident or business owner that wished to be involved. The new list of member's names needed to be given to Clerk Villers on or before June 30, 2012 so she knows who to contact. This will enable her to forward the information to these 15 members for them to discuss and share with their original Board and Commission members. In July, the newly formed Master Plan Review Committee would select a Chairman and Vice- Chairman to organize meetings, discussions with their original nine board members, interested residents and business owners of the community. These Chairmen would communicate with Clerk Villers, the Administration and Department Heads for additional information. The City was offering Council Chambers and the Caucus room for the Master Plan Review Committee meetings but the room had to be scheduled ahead of time by calling Michelle Hollo (440-735-6514).

The 18 points in the Master Plan was where they all needed to focus. The other areas would be reviewed by and addressed by City staff. These discussions in July, August and September would not be held as open public recorded City meetings but more like neighborhood type discussions. The Master Plan Review Committee Chairman needed to submit their suggestions to Clerk Villers by September 10, 2012. This would allow Council an opportunity to review the ideas. The plan was to have the first discussions with the Master Plan Review Committee on October 8th and October 22nd. The City also encouraged additional interested residents and business owners to get involved in further shaping Bedford. Everyone agreed that the City needed to be moved forward in a positive direction and it was very important to have input from other people than just City government staff. Everyone that worked or lived in Bedford was "stakeholders".

Vice-Mayor Koci requested everyone turn to Page 5, "Major Initiatives of the Plan":

- 1) Council was very proud of the Historical Automile. They felt the area had undergone a few major improvements and there were more improvements in the planning process. The Automile was in the top two big players in Bedford.
- 2) Council was pleased with the recreation trails but some areas still needed attention. A bike path was one of the areas of focus.
- 3) Council agreed some of the Gateway signage was satisfactory but some of the lettering was too small. Mayor Pocek was not satisfied with some of the colors used on the signs. Vice-Mayor Koci noted some of the signs were going to be replaced on the secondary streets.
- 4) The "Presidential" neighborhood banners were going to be installed in 2012 so this goal would be met.
- 5) Council felt they had accomplished the efforts of "Keeping Bedford Green" but they were not sure if the City was going to post banners stating it.
- 6) Council thought the idea of neighborhood branding was a good concept and the City continued to work on this. He referred to Page 7 and he was not sure where Reville came up with the neighborhood names. He wanted the residents to rename their neighborhoods accordingly.
- 7) Council agreed the Waste Water Treatment Plant always needed work but it had improved. This issue was dictated by the EPA which was forever changing.
- 8) Council had concerns regarding some of the water lines in the City, however, some of the joints and valves had been replaced which showed an increase in water billing.
- 9) Council figured GIS program would help with these types of improvements. The cost was approximately \$1 million per mile.
- 10) The railroad crossing issues were currently being addressed through the Police Department.
- 11) The overlay streetscape enhancements were on the list for the Union Street and Northfield Road area. This item would be a fun topic to work on. Possibly extending Broadway in both directions.
- 12) Council agreed the thought of a roundabout was too expensive even though it might be safer. The center of town had very limited area and the property owners wanted too much money for their properties. Twinsburg and Tallmadge recently installed a roundabout in their communities. There was a difference between a traffic circle (a center of focus) and a roundabout (that just maintained traffic). Referenced on Page 29.
- 13) Council briefly noted there was the need for some zoning changes which would be reviewed by certain boards and commissions.
- 14) Even though the majority of Bedford was developed, Council agreed the redevelopment of under-utilized areas needed to be redeveloped to ensure growth.
- 15) Council agreed the undeveloped Brownfield site was going to be very expensive.
- 16) With Bedford being mostly developed, Council agreed the infill development areas could still provide growth to the City. This topic was very important to retain the current businesses.
- 17) Council was almost positive the idea of Tinkers Creek – Krick Road area was not going to be connected to the I-271 area to promote economic livelihood. This was still an option but funding was probably going to be a problem.
- 18) The City was in ongoing negotiations with the railroad representatives to reduce the noise pollution in certain areas.

Vice-Mayor Koci stressed these 18 points of interest was what the entire group should be focusing on. Since he only briefly touched on the 18 points he suggested everyone review them in greater detail. He thought it would be best if they selected a few points of interest instead of trying to address all of them. The Master Plan has served as a document outlining the City's intentions for the future. All the

Department heads would be available for any questions the Master Plan Review Committee or interested participant had.

Vice-Mayor Koci referred to Page 17, "Economic Revitalization" which should be an area of focus. He urged everyone to read the entire 52 page document and select their own areas of interest. Council and the Administration were not going to dictate what they wanted the committee to do. They wanted the committee to be creative, focus on items of interest and areas of their own personal expertise. Thinking outside the box was also welcomed. The staff appreciated everyone efforts and ideas.

Another area of interest – Page 9, "Introduction":

- 1) Council thought the City made efforts to be the guide for overall redevelopment including providing assistance and direction to potential developers.
- 2) Council agreed the administration of zoning regulations was being followed as a guide for making reasonable decisions on rezoning applications.
- 3) Council felt the community was balanced regarding development with economical provision of community facilities and services, utilities and responsive quality safety forces.
- 4) Council thought the idea to encourage long-range economic development and planning policies were taken into consideration.
- 5) Council knew the City promoted going "Green" in selecting and applying for grant programs that would benefit the City.
- 6) Council felt strongly that the City continued to work on preserving the historic and aesthetic character of the City's unique and historic properties.
- 7) Council agreed everyone was promoting the safety, prosperity, health, morals and general welfare of the residents.

Mr. Angelo stressed the City staff was very excited to work with everyone on this great opportunity in keeping Bedford a quality place to live and marketing Bedford to strive for a better future. He said information, maps, pictures and documents would be available. The idea was to deal with the reality of where Bedford was today but to also work on where they wanted Bedford to be for the future. One idea was to create pedestrian traffic. If you can "dream it" put the idea down. It doesn't mean it would be dismissed, but rather studied further as a future possibility. Ideas were: what can we do to attract young people, empty nesters, professionals, more shops, and more restaurants and so on. Everyone needed to visualize where they wanted Bedford to be in the future and "dreaming" was part of that process. Bedford had very limited empty properties throughout the City but that shouldn't stop the "dreaming" process. The reality was there might be some ideas that the City couldn't do financially but there aren't any bad ideas, questions or answers. He stressed the idea was to turn over a great City to the next generation. The focus was to create a video documentary of what the City was trying to accomplish. He introduced the videographer that would be seen all around town videotaping every event, festival and all the great areas and the assets of Bedford. This videotape and picture album was going to become the "Story of Bedford" in the future. These tapes and pictures would be given to Tom Speaks at the Impact Group which was the business that the City recently hired to market Bedford.

Mayor Pocek mentioned the residents voted officials into office to represent them but it didn't end there. The residents had the ability to take the City to the next generation. He believed when he took the Oath of Office for Mayor 13 years ago, he became, as well as the other Council members, the guardian of this communities' heritage. Their duty was to maintain and improve what was given to them all so when their terms were done that they could walk away and say, "By God we did our job collectively". Council and the Administration was dedicated to this town and he wanted everyone's input. When everyone buys into it, then you could become a disciple of Bedford. Bedford was the best kept secret of Cuyahoga County and visitors were very impressed with Bedford. He said there was going to be a Public Service Announcement broadcast by Larry Morrow and Tim Taylor, well known area celebrities, about

Bedford. The focus was to make Bedford a destination and to continue to maintain the quality of life in Bedford and not just a place to live. He complimented all the City Departments on doing a tremendous job on a daily basis in keeping Bedford a great place. Help us with the "Vision" and help implement the "Vision"!

Mayor Pocek welcomed comments from Council members and the Administration.

Councilwoman Zolata listed many assets of Bedford and a few problems like other communities were dealing with. She stated Council and the Administration had been very proactive on many, many issues. It was time to focus on the next generation. "Be positive" and be a "Champion for Bedford".

Mr. Gambosi said it was important to focus on: having pride in your community, marketing the City, positive perception, and promoting the City. Bedford had so much going for it.

Clerk Villers said in her short time here, she couldn't believe the strength and how well the Council and Administration worked together. The City staff was incredible, so please reach out and give them your ideas and let them try and make it happen because they have the drive and they are proud.

Councilwoman Mizsak suggested a Visitor Center in Bedford and maybe ODOT could display a "Come to Bedford" brochure. Bedford was a historic City and the City had many events all year long. Mayor Pocek thought a brochure was an excellent suggestion. She told a story about how Los Gallos came to be in Bedford because of Mayor Pocek. One of her favor says was, "Bedford was a place for all ages, all times".

Councilman Saunders felt Bedford was at a crossroads. He felt Bedford had a unique opportunity with the current housing stock even though the economy had issues. It was time to sell Bedford and welcome those who could contribute assets and benefits to the community rather than let the poor economy dictate the outcome. He was proud to state Bedford had one of the best financial stabilities in Cuyahoga County and Bedford had one of the highest bond ratings. These two things spoke volumes of Bedford's accomplishments. Bedford was an old community but it was not falling apart. Several surrounding communities have been copying Bedford's ideas for years such as the Parties in the Park and some of the events and festivals. He thought first impressions spoke a lot about any community and the staff had done an excellent job of finding other sources of revenue by applying for grants, low interest loans and re-bonding. Bedford had managed to "out shine" most communities in Cuyahoga County and even Northeast Ohio. With the numerous years of experience and hard work, many goals had been achieved. In the next five years, there was going to be major changes in Council and the Administration. New ideas always work and Bedford could not afford to get stale. Let's move forward.

Mr. Lewis thought the people were going to make the difference in the future and he thought it was a great idea.

Mr. Mallis explained the Master Plan was the staff's blueprint and it was referred to for every project and everything the City was trying to accomplish. It was very important to keep the Master Plan updated.

Mr. Bellar thought the infrastructure was very important because it was one of those things that couldn't be seen easily. The average age of the sewers was 80-90 years old. He thought the joint efforts of everyone being involved was a good thing for Bedford.

Lieutenant Salvi said the Fire Department staff didn't get too involved in the day to day operations but he was very proud of the quality employees in the department. The Fire Department was ready to respond.

Lieutenant Stemple agreed with Lieutenant Salvi's previous comments. The Police Department was working very diligently on their end to keep Bedford safe and to keep the quality of life in Bedford.

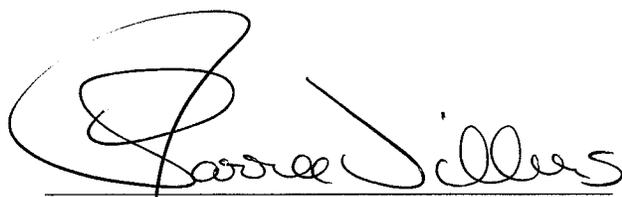
Mayor Pocek appreciated everything the safety forces did for the community.

Mayor Pocek closed Council and the Administration by stating "We control our destiny and now it was up to the Boards and Commissions".

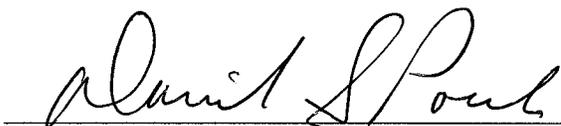
There were several questions, ideas and comments from the audience. Council and the Administration were not interested this evening in hearing everyone's ideas. The focus was for the Boards and Commission members to form the new Master Plan Review Committee, start their discussions over the summer months and follow the schedule as previously outlined by Council. Vice-Mayor Koci said he could feel the energy in the Council Chambers as people shared some quick ideas, so now it was time to form a committee. It was a good feeling that people knew what Bedford was all about and it was time to repaint the vision. He thought this effort was going to be very gratifying. The City wanted to hear from everyone.

Discussion of the Special Work Session agenda was concluded.

The Special Work Session adjourned at 7:22 p.m.



Sarah Miller
Clerk of Council



Daniel S. Poek
Mayor – President of Council