

**CITY OF WEST RICHLAND
CITY COUNCIL Workshop
TUESDAY, January 31, 2012**

1. **Call to Order** – Mayor Noski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Mayor Noski and Mayor Pro Tem Rich Buel were present. Council Members Tony Benegas, Richard Bloom, Gail Brown, Brent Gerry, and Ron Hayden were also present. Staff members present were Community Development Director Bob Leedy, Police Chief Brian McElroy, Finance Director Jessica Platt, Public Works Director Roscoe Slade, Economic Development Director Ruth Swain, and City Clerk Julie Richardson.

Upon motion by Councilmember Gerry, seconded by Councilmember Benegas, Council unanimously excused Councilmember Robert Perkes from the meeting.

3. **Yakima Gateway/Van Giesen Redevelopment** – Economic Development Director Ruth Swain gave a presentation on the successes of the economic development program, and infrastructure and improvements that have been done on Van Giesen Street. She also talked about Healdsburg, California, a nice town that she and Mayor Noski visited recently. It is similar in population to West Richland, and years ago, they went through the same redevelopment process that West Richland is starting now. It has been very successful for them.

Consultant Jason Robertson discussed what the next steps should be. He feels a great place to start would be the Yakima gateway because improving that area of Van Giesen Street as you come into the city along the river appeals to a lot of people. Citizens have said they want to make the entrance into town look better. He suggested improving the pie-shaped area that stretches from the Yakima River Bridge to 39th Avenue, north to the golf course, and along the Yakima River. He also suggested using the area as a test to develop design guidelines for the rest of the Van Giesen corridor.

There will be a stakeholder's meeting tomorrow evening in Council Chambers. Property owners were invited to attend to provide their input. The goal is to inform property owners of the plans and find out where they want to participate and how.

Mr. Robertson asked Council what their major concerns are and received the following comments:

- Only half of the bridge is West Richland. Can the City Partner with Richland? *Mayor Noski will ask Richland about contributing money for bridge improvement.*
- Wants to make sure that facade requirements will be reasonable and not a burden on property owners.
- What will the City do when there isn't cooperation from a business or businesses? *During the master planning process, Mr. Robertson will come to Council with answers to that question.*
- Wants to make sure there is support from the Chamber. *Chamber's full board has made a commitment to support the City with sweat equity. They don't have a lot of financial resources, but have a lot of members. The Chamber told Mr. Robertson they want to be involved. They just need direction.*

Mayor Noski commented that the City doesn't have a contract with the Chamber for deliverables. The City provides \$5,000 annually to the Chamber, plus considerably more in services for their events. She would like to have a contract for deliverables for the \$5,000.

Mr. Robertson talked about money the City currently has for Yakima Gateway improvement. He said there may be matching grant money available in the fall and if the City waits until then and uses the current funds for match, there could be a lot more money for the project.

Economic Development Director Swain added that she would like more time to work concurrently on design standards and on obtaining grants, using the funds the City currently has for bridge lighting and signage for matching funds.

Council discussion ensued regarding starting the bridge lighting and sign project now, or waiting until matching grant money is available. Consensus was to wait for matching grant money. In the meantime, the City can get citizens involved and start on painting projects.

Public Works Director Slade added that the City will keep the project going by working with Department of Transportation, City of Richland, and Benton Rural Electric.

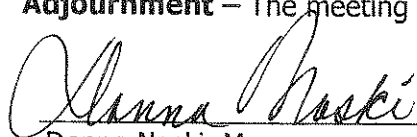
Community Development Director Leedy stated that following the Van Giesen stakeholders meeting on February 1st, there will be significant movement with code enforcement activities. The meeting will provide the opportunity to give information and received feedback and buy-in from the stakeholders.

4. **Executive Session** – Economic Development Director Swain announced an executive session per RCW 42.30.110(c) to consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of decreased price. The time of the executive session will be 10 minutes with no action to follow.

Council adjourned to executive session at 7:15 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:25.

6. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 7:25.



Donna Noski, Mayor



Julie Richardson, City Clerk