

City of West Columbia, SC

Council Work Session

August 15, 2011 following the Special Council Meeting at 6: p.m.

Members Present:

Bobby E. Horton, Mayor
Eric L. Fowler
L. Dale Harley
Boyd Jones
Marsha Moore
Tommy Parler
B.J. Unthank

Members Absent:

Jack L. Harmon, ill
Cathy Shannon, ill

Others Present:

Jenny Cunningham, City Administrator
Myron Corley, Deputy City Administrator
Members of the Public and Press

Brian Carter, Director of Planning and Zoning
Sid Varn, Director of Planning and Engineering

Mayor Horton called the work session to order at 6:06 p.m. and noted a quorum was present. *The State, Free Times, Lexington County Chronicle, Cayce-West Columbia News, and The Columbia Star* were notified of the meeting by e-mail on August 12, 2011.

Mayor Horton recognized Brian Carter, Director of Planning and Zoning, who gave a brief overview of revisions to the Emergency Operation Plan (EOP). Mr. Carter stated that the EOP has been a collaborative effort with every department and is designed for timely and appropriate allocations of all city resources during man-made or natural disasters. He said the EOP is part of the city's compliance with the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) under FEMA. He said the plan determines what are the city's resources, its strengths and weaknesses, and how the city can coordinate with other agencies to effectively provide for the safety of West Columbia citizens.

Mr. Carter said the EOP is broken down into five main components:

1. Basic disaster plan which provides the big picture on how the city would respond to emergencies.
2. Guidelines for establishing an emergency operations center, which would be the command center for operations during an emergency.
3. Outline for specific responses to various incidents such as tornados, mass casualty, earthquake, fire, train derailment, airport crash, etc.
4. Damage assessment established for standard operations procedures with a damage assessment team comprised of members of the West Columbia staff who would go out after an incident and assess an area to determine the scope of the disaster and then coordinate with Lexington County to adopt their standard operating procedures for requesting reimbursement through state and federal funds.
5. Database listing of all city resources available during an emergency such as number of chainsaws for tree removal.

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Mr. Carter stated the EOP will be distributed to every department head. Printed and digital formats of the plan will be available to all employees. Council will be asked to formally adopt the revisions to the EOP at the council meeting in September.

Mr. Carter also discussed parking regulations that specifically deal with boats and traveling or camping vehicles. Mr. Carter said the current zoning ordinance allows one boat and one traveling or camping vehicle per residence per lot. He explained the current ordinance also prohibits any traveling or camping vehicle from being occupied permanently or temporarily on residential property. He said the proposed amendments would not change the prohibition of occupancy, but would provide for more than one vehicle per lot. He said a resident can have a additional boats or traveling or camping vehicles, but only one boat or vehicle could be in public view and any additional boats or traveling or camping vehicles would be stored in an enclosed building or not readily visible from a public street if stored in a screened or enclosed area on the property. The proposed amendments would specify that boats or RVs could not be stored in public rights-of-way or block the front view of a residence, such as parking it lengthwise across the front of the property, which would block the view of a residence and thereby create a public safety hazard.

Mr. Carter said additional components of the proposed amendments relate to the improvement of parking areas and where vehicles may be displayed for sale or lease. He said some other issues are car dealerships that display cars for sale in grassy areas next to the roadway or on highway right-of-way and repair facilities that store inoperable vehicles in undeveloped space around their buildings thereby creating a cluttered appearance at a commercial business. He said the ordinance would define what are unimproved and improved areas and establish setbacks from the roadway for the display or parking of vehicles. He said the Planning Commission will discuss the amendments at its meeting on Monday, August 29, 2011 and make a recommendation to Council for adoption. He said the proposed amendments would include an appeals process and an opportunity for a business owner to apply for a special exception before the Zoning Board of Appeals due to a unique situation. Mr. Carter noted that the proposed parking amendments would apply to commercial property not residential.

Mayor Horton asked if there was any further items to discuss and received no response. Mayor Horton declared the council work session adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marta M. Valentino, CMC
City Clerk