

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING

June 19, 2018

MONTGOMERY CITY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sara Countryman called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m. and advised that Council Member Jon Bickford was on his way.

Present:	Sara Countryman	Mayor
	T.J. Wilkerson	City Council Place # 3
	Rebecca Huss	City Council Place # 4

Absent:	Jon Bickford	City Council Place # 1
	John Champagne, Jr.	City Council Place # 2
	Dave McCorquodale	City Council Place # 5

Also Present:	Jack Yates	City Administrator
	Susan Hensley	City Secretary
	Chris Roznovsky	City Engineer

WORKSHOP:

- ❖ Discuss and hear public comments regarding the proposed FM 149 Rehabilitation and Construction Project.

Mr. Chris Roznovsky, City Engineer, advised that TxDOT's initial plans for the FM 149 Improvements Project did not include driveways for a lot of the businesses. Mr. Roznovsky advised that City Council had asked TxDOT to reconsider the plans. Mr. Roznovsky stated that TxDOT had taken a walking tour and met with the merchants in Montgomery and changes have been made to the plans, which included the following:

- Added driveways;

- Added left turn lane to SH 105 and FM 149;
- Revised the storm sewer at the Community Center to SH 105; and
- Sidewalks and pavers on each side of the street, to be done in phases.

Mr. Roznovsky advised that TxDOT has identified three potential alternatives for the project for consideration:

1. Full Downtown Improvements Project including SH 105 and FM 149 Intersection Improvements;
2. Mill & Overlay including SH 105 and FM 149 Intersection Improvements; or
3. Mill & Overlay including SH 105 and FM 149 Intersection Improvements (Left Turn Only).

Mr. Roznovsky advised that the mill and overlay would take off the top three inches of the road that would be milled and put back onto the roadway with asphalt on top.

Rebecca Huss advised that she and the Mayor had met with Senator Nichols staff at his office and noted the Senator has been very supportive of the City and continues to communicate with them. Mr. Roznovsky advised that if the City wanted to proceed they would have to notify the State by the end of July or the project would be delayed until 2021. Mr. Roznovsky advised that TxDOT would not need additional Right of Way along FM 149, but said that the sidewalks, curb and gutter would eliminate the street parallel parking.

Jon Bickford arrived at 6:25 p.m.

Rebecca Huss advised that TxDOT would have sidewalks in their Right of Way, but there are also sidewalks in the City area. Mr. Roznovsky said that TxDOT had advised that there would be no crosswalks across FM 149 unless the signalization was no more than ½ mile from the signal intersection. Rebecca Huss asked if that was a law or just a rule by TxDOT. Mr. Yates advised that TxDOT had stated that if the City put in a crosswalk they would not remove it. Mr. Yates added that TxDOT would not allow a signal at the crosswalk. T.J. Wilkerson asked if there would be an exception since that area was in the Historic District. Mayor Countryman stated that Historic Districts usually has a lot of pedestrians.

Mayor Countryman said that she had asked Senator Nichols if the money from the FM 149 Project would be lost if the project was delayed and the Senator had advised that the funds would be set aside and not lost.

Rebecca Huss said that she would like to find out the life of the roadway. Mr. Roznovsky said that due to the increase in traffic and changes in the City, it is unknown at this time.

Mr. Roznovsky advised TxDOT will not use City streets as a detour during the project because they do not have the authority to use someone else's streets.

Mr. James Langley – asked if the street lights were included in the project, because they do have decorative street lights on that road. Mr. Roznovsky advised the street lights have not been included, but TxDOT will provide the conduit and the City will provide the boxes and wiring. Mr. Langley asked whether the project would be a City Council decision or a public referendum.

Rebecca Huss said that their goal was to have a Downtown Comprehensive Master Plan discussion with the residents and business owners and that would include this project. Mayor Countryman said she would prefer that they not just improve this one area to where it will look like a patchwork, but have a Comprehensive Master Plan for the entire City.

Mr. Yates advised that when the City was denied by Texas A&M for the Master Plan Project they were referred to the Community Resilience Group. Mr. Yates stated that the Community Resilience Group will be at the City Council Meeting next Tuesday and advised the cost will be very low for them to produce a Master Plan for the City. Rebecca Huss stated that she felt the Planning and Zoning Commission would take the lead with this group. Mr. Yates advised it would take about six to nine months to complete.

Mrs. Adele Hanson - tenant of the Garrett House, commented that the drainage from SH 105 to Caroline can't take much more and she was concerned. Mr. Roznovsky advised that the underground storm sewer would go under Caroline Street and would be picking up the water and going under SH 105 and then tee into an existing pipe on the south side of SH 105.

Mrs. Hanson said that in certain places there will be two sidewalks and asked why they can't keep the existing sidewalks and only put the sidewalks where they are needed. Mr. Roznovsky said that

the existing sidewalks are on private property and some are located on the line of the State Right of Way. Mr. Roznovsky said on the east side of the street it would be one foot outside the Right of Way and would be up to the property owner or the City to install the sidewalk. Mr. Roznovsky said he did not think that the City had Right of Way there.

Jon Bickford asked if there was any time when TxDOT put in sidewalks with no parking. Mr. Roznovsky said that parking along a TxDOT Right of Way is not allowed. Mr. Roznovsky advised that if the property owner or the City installs the sidewalks it will have to be outside the TxDOT Right of Way.

Rebecca Huss asked if it would be desirable for a third turn lane, in certain locations on FM 149. Mr. Roznovsky said that there would really not be enough room for a turn lane at that location.

Mrs. Hanson said there is a provision in the information that she received which said that the City would keep about \$4,000 for advertising during the process of about six months. Mrs. Hanson said that was not enough money to promote the City and ask people to come to their shops.

Mr. Tom Cronin – owner of Cozy Grape Restaurant stated that nobody is listening to the business owners. Mr. Cronin said that he did not want to be adversarial, but he just found out that he might be losing his balcony for his business due to this project, so he will be contacting his attorney. Mr. Cronin commented that there is not a quorum present for the meeting. Rebecca Huss said that the information regarding his balcony was not correct and she did not want him to contact his attorney.

Jon Bickford said that they needed some alternatives from the public.

Mayor Countryman said that City Council was not required to have a quorum present for a Workshop Meeting and advised that she had checked on that information prior to the meeting. Mayor Countryman said that they had met with Senator Nichols in his office and he is on our side, and expressed that she hoped that they could see that.

Mr. Cronin said that he was concerned that MEDC had spent money to pave a parking lot that has 30 spaces and now they will be losing 20 spaces, which will net 11 spaces. Mayor Countryman said that she understood that issue. Mr. Cronin said that he owns his sidewalk and said that TxDOT will be placing brick pavers where there was parallel parking.

Rebecca Huss said that when TxDOT had their original meeting, they only found out about the meeting the day of the meeting.

Jon Bickford asked if TxDOT would be fully closing FM 149 or whether they would close one side of the street at a time. Mr. Roznovsky said they would be fully closing the road in phases.

Mr. Cronin said that he has been blindsided and that he hopes the project is put off until 2021. Mr. Cronin said that he hopes the City makes it known for all their customers. Mr. Cronin said that he would like to get a Committee of business owners and the City so that they can plan their destiny.

Ms. Susan Fauss – owner of the bank building stated that she likes our town and feels like she is being pushed and shoved with a plan that they did not know about. Jon Bickford said that any ideas from the public will be helpful to the City. Rebecca Huss said that they need a goal and timeline for the project. Ms. Fauss asked whether TxDOT could do their work at night.

Mr. Roznovsky said that the closure of downtown was due to the storm sewer work. Mayor Countryman asked if they needed drainage work at that location. Mr. Roznovsky said that there were mixed reactions for the drainage work and advised that the storm sewer work is included in the plans.

Rebecca Huss said that the intersection of SH 105 and FM 149 is a disaster and asked what impact fixing the intersection with right and left turn lanes would have on downtown and could they do the work in phases. Mr. Roznovsky said there would still be closures on Caroline to SH 105, but they might be able to close one lane at a time. Mr. Roznovsky said that the work would be similar to the school intersection that was completed on SH 105. Mr. Roznovsky said that the Exxon Station would also be closed.

Mrs. Kelly Cook said that she has been here the longest, since 1990, and has seen a lot of changes during that time. Mrs. Cook said that for progress they have to take into consideration the Historic District. Mrs. Cook said that Pond Street can't take a lot of traffic. Mrs. Cook stated that not having a crosswalk was a concern because she knows of three people who have been hit by cars crossing the street. Mrs. Cook said she sends people to the Cozy Grape Restaurant across the street, so if there is no crosswalk they are in danger crossing the street. Mrs. Cook said that she was in

favor of postponing the project until 2021 and letting some of the business owners to serve on the Committee. Mrs. Cook said she did not want to be sold down the drain.

Ms. Rendy Kerr stated that she will lose parking and that she did not need curb and gutters. Ms. Kerr said there are no large trucks going down College Street. Ms. Kerr said that she was also in favor of postponing the project until 2021.

Mrs. Cook said that in 21 years she has never had a problem with flooding and she has been high and dry.

Brenda Reiland, tenant of the Petz Store, stated that she had moved to historic Montgomery and they needed their parallel parking. Ms. Reiland said they could ask MEDC to extend their sidewalks. Ms. Reiland asked if anyone has seen what was done in the City of Willis and commented that it was a hideous debacle. Ms. Reiland said that she was in favor of tabling this project and just doing the intersection work at night. Ms. Reiland said that they could ask MEDC to do the sidewalks. Ms. Reiland said that 18-wheelers are a problem going through the City at 40 miles per hour and said that they need to build up Lone Star Parkway for the trucks.

Mr. James Ward, owner of Jim's Hardware said that he has experience with road widening. Mr. Ward said that he would suggest that this would be the time to build a nest egg because they will lose revenue during the project and it is going to hurt. Mr. Ward said that he would ask TxDOT to work on one side of the road at a time and said that it would be crazy not to have a crosswalk, because a lot of people park at the Community Center and then cross the street and they will get run over. Mr. Ward said that he did not want people to say Montgomery is dangerous and that parking is a problem. Mr. Ward said that he did not want the reputation of being unsafe.

Jon Bickford asked if the City could put in a crosswalk with flashing lights. Mr. Lonnie Clover advised that they tried to get a crosswalk but TxDOT would not do it. Jon Bickford said that he could paint the sidewalk. Jon Bickford said that in Boulder, Colorado they have a crosswalk with flashing lights and asked if that was something that the City could do. Mr. Yates said that TxDOT had stated that they would not stop the City from painting and the installation of signage. Mayor Countryman asked if the City could find out what type of signs TxDOT would allow them to install. Rebecca Huss asked about temporary signage for the crosswalk. Mr. Yates said that TxDOT will

not let them stop traffic at the crosswalk on the highway. Mr. Yates said they could draw lines showing the crosswalk. Jon Bickford said they could get the solar powered lights for \$1,500 each.

Mrs. Cook asked if the City approves what TxDOT puts before them. Rebecca Huss said that they have gone through an extensive process to get the project delayed.

Jon Bickford said that if they are going to resurface the road, they might have to close the street while they are working, the short segments will take 4 weeks and the longer segments will take eight weeks to complete.

Mayor Countryman requested that the City ask TxDOT for information regarding the longevity of the roadway and whether they can do their paving work during the night.

Mr. Roznovsky advised that TxDOT is on full pause until they hear from the City of Montgomery. Rebecca Huss said that the City will need more information in order to make a decision on the project, along with feedback from City Council. Mr. Yates said the best option would be to ask TxDOT if they can pave at night and time the closing of the north side for the overlay. Mr. Yates said that the best option would be to go ahead with the intersection portion of the project and do the mill overlay. Mayor Countryman said that the intersection could be Phase One of the project and would be less time for the road to be closed. Rebecca Huss said that the biggest part of the project was the right turn lane in the intersection. Mayor Countryman asked to get clarification on the street closure information.

Mr. Lonnie Clover said that FM 149 had an overlay just a few years ago, so he would like to know why they need to go down one foot. Mr. Roznovsky said that the south street would be lower. Mr. Clover said that they have the survey and three feet west of the concrete sidewalks there are building supports on private property, so what would happen to that sidewalk. Mr. Roznovsky said that they will fill in those areas and so when you come out of the building you will walk down an incline. Mr. Clover advised that he would like brick sidewalks but not at the expense of the businesses.

Mayor Countryman thanked everyone for their input. Mayor Countryman adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

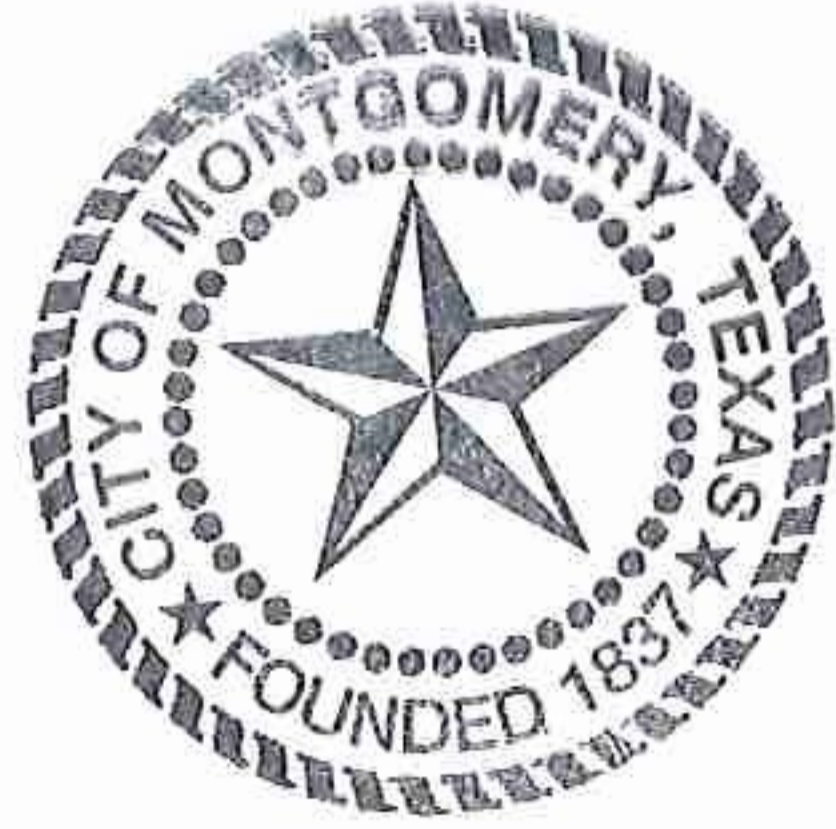
ADJOURNMENT

Submitted by:

Susan Hensley
Susan Hensley, City Secretary

Date Approved: _____

06/26/18



Mayor Sara Countryman

Sara Countryman