

In the Council Chambers of the Showers City Hall held on Wednesday, May 21, 1997 at 7:30 PM with Council President Pizzo presiding over a Regular Session of the Common Council.

COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION
MAY 21, 1997

Roll Call: Banach, Mayer, Young, Cole, Pizzo, Service, Sabbagh, Sherman, Pierce.

ROLL CALL

Council President Pizzo gave the Agenda Summation.

AGENDA SUMMATION
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 7, 1997 were approved by a voice vote.

Pierce commented on Eric Miller's, Director of the Citizens Concerned for the Constitution, recent visit to Bloomington urging people to get involved in the political process, looking toward the 1999 city elections. And while involvement is fine, this group has misled the public and provided misinformation on many issues, distorted facts, and essentially anyone that does not agree with him is anti-family. He also commented on his groups non profit IRS status when only about 2% is spent of CCC programs, the rest being used for administrative and salary expenses.

MESSAGES FROM
COUNCILMEMBERS

Sherman discussed various "disappointments" and issues he is concerned about, namely: the obsession on all levels of government for stopping spending, particularly state government's funding of higher education, which is abysmal. IU is at risk of becoming a private institution rather than a public system of education and a major research institution. He also talked about the recent American Hearth Association dinner as a format for informing people about the need for funds in order to continue with cardiovascular disease research, again because of reduced funding for medical research. Finally, he commented on the recent court decision involving Ellettsville and local control, over-turning the county's No Smoking ordinance.

Sabbagh congratulated BHS South Olympiad team for their recent success at the national level and he commended the city administration for getting councilmembers annual budgets well in advance of hearings and votes.

Service agreed with Sherman and Pierces earlier comments. She attended the Eric Miller luncheon and she attempted to correct the misconception being commented on via the letters to the editor that the taxpayers of Bloomington are funding the expansion of the health insurance coverage for domestic partners. This is not the case; while the employees are part of a general group plan, spouses/ partners pay their own premium at the full rate. She congratulated the Monroe County Library for their grand re-opening and finally she congratulated all the teams on the MCCSC Bookquest reading program.

Young said that he attended the DARE program graduation for 6th graders and, in particular, thanked city police officer Jim Graft for his long standing involvement with the program. A lot of money is spent on adult rehabilitation programs and this program has an impact on kids and their parents at a time when it might be of long term benefits.

Mayer thanked the HAND department and staff for the well coordinated Green Acres Neighborhood Association Clean Up that took place last Saturday. It was a job well done and the neighborhood looks good.

It was moved, seconded and approved by a voice vote that the following persons be appointed to the Housing Quality Appeals Board:

APPOINTMENTS TO
BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Darryl Marshall	1 year
Ron Foley	2 year

It was moved and seconded that Resolution 97-4 be introduced and read by title only. Clerk Williams read the resolution by title only.

It was moved and seconded that Resolution 97-4 be adopted. The synopsis was given.

LEGISLATION FOR
SECOND READING/VOTE
RESOLUTION 97-4

Catherine Olmer, President of the Wonderlab Board, urged the council to support this resolution. She discussed the goals and purposes of the project and said that over 18,000 visitors have attended Wonderlab events in the last year and a half. The outreach program has been very successful. She discussed the current plans for a 15,000 sqft building on approximately half of the Maplefoot site for \$1.5 million. (Phase I). Eventually a later addition to the plan (Phase II) will expand, using the entire site for a total of 30,000 sqft. Olmer outlined the various programs the museum will provide that will be both educational and enjoyable. She noted the proximity to the bus station, the Waldron Art Center, and the Boys and Girls Club.

Mayor Fernandez expressed his strong support for this program and it's significant importance for our young people, their future, our downtown and overall economy. This is a low risk opportunity for the city, utilizing a rather under used parking lot appraised at \$215,000. We are not giving anything away, we are leveraging private investment and a \$1.5 million dollar return for a \$215,000 parking lot is a pretty good return. The Waldron Art Center is a good example of this type of public/private partnership that has worked. This is a unique cultural amenity that can influence economic development, tourism, our downtown vitality and in the end, it is a statement about our values of what is important for our children and the opportunities it provides. Education and investing in our young people is something we all should share and is our highest value.

The following persons participated in the Wonderlab discussion and the conveying of the Maplefoot Parking Lot as the site for the project:

Steve Howard, President of the Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of the resolution and the Wonderlab Museum and the local as well as regional impact this museum will provide.

Karen Stuckey, a University Elementary School 6th Grade teacher and science coordinator, said this facility would provide learning outside the usual school walls, provide closer proximity for more frequent visits rather than a once a year school trip to Indianapolis, and the opportunity for student volunteers or docents in ongoing programs, and as valuable resource opportunities for teachers.

Debra Kent, Wonderlab Founder, talked of how other earlier projects cleared their own "hurdles" and are now part of Bloomington's Crown Jewels. She thanked everyone for the opportunity to make this dream a reality.

Jean Patton spoke against the idea of another museum, and the city giving away valuable parking spaces to a hobby level club. There is already much available with Parks & Recreation and the use of half our city taxes going for the elaborate schools that are being built that should have room for science instruction.

Talisha Coppock, Commission for Bloomington Downtown, spoke in support of the project and thanked the mayor and everyone involved with the proposed plan.

Jeff Issacs spoke in support of the project and said that people from all over the community have supported this proposal.

Kerry Chisholm, HYPER graduate student and Wonderlab volunteer, read various commentaries by very early educational authorities on the value of hands on experiences.

Jo Gilbert, a Richland Bean Blossom Science teacher, said Wonderlab is not a hobby, or science in a cardboard box. Teachers want students to be challenged in school and this museum will help address that need.

Rick vanGucht, a Physics professor also spoke in support of the project and talked about the museums that other cities offer and how important early exposure is toward an interest in science.

Phil Taylor, spoke in support of the project and talked about how wonderful the community exhibits have been and what an asset it will be.

Betsy Mills, Childs School 6th grader spoke in support and said there are hundreds of parking lots in Bloomington, but there is only one Wonderlab.

Peg Farrell, Child Care Provider, spoke in strong support as a way of increasing interest in science and math. She said this would be an important resource for her as a care provider.

Adam Kent Issacs, Childs School 5th grader said that Wonderlab science is fun and would provide something for kids to do in Bloomington.

Marvant Duhan also spoke in support of Wonderlab

Victoria Berdon, IU Philosophy graduate student said that Wonderlab will be a place for kids that might not have the science and computer accessibility in their own homes and schools.

Megan Buhls, Wonderlab assistant, really liked science and this is learning that is fun.

Joshua Pentzler (sp), U School 6th grader, supporter of Wonderlab and the hands on exhibits that excite children.

Greta Crow, IU Biology graduate student and Wonderlab volunteer talked about the interaction that occurs with the exhibits as the children participate in the projects.

Barbara Wolf, early Wonderlab volunteer, supporter and museum researcher. Wonderlab has had much success in putting together exhibits that excite and interest children as well as adults.

Sherman thought that while points have been raised about economics, quality of life, etc., he wondered why we, again, are so willing to spend money on various celebrities and yet so little on education for our children. In some small or big way Wonderlab will make a difference. Other countries don't seem to have a problem spending money on wonderful museums (daVinci Museum in Milano as an example).

Banach questioned the data on an overhead map and Kent said that the map indicated the different locations Wonderlab has been and where people have come from to visit the Lab. Banach also asked about the reverter clauses in the resolution. Fernandez said the city's goal is not just to get a building, but to get a childrens museum. If Wonderlab did not continue for 10 years, it would revert back to the city even though that would not be what we want.

Mayer supported the resolution and particularly liked the location, the possibility of the railroad track being abandoned and the site eventually being used as a green space. As a Waldron Art Center boardmember he discussed the processes involved in sustaining the center and reminded people that no one dollar of taxpayer money goes to the center today. Wonderlab is a wonderful amenity to the community and it is up to the entire community to make it work, just as the Waldron has worked.

Young spoke in support of the museum and in fact was the councilmember who sponsored this resolution. He said it was important to note that this tract would be "conveyed as is".

Cole was enthusiastic and asked about admission fees, the opportunity for family memberships, scholarships and that perhaps one day a week would have free admission to the museum.

Service also spoke in support of the proposal and said that the "Pam Principle" of not vacating public property does not apply in this case. Her concern about vacating property is always predicated on the public good that will come of it.

Sabbagh enthusiastically supported the proposal as well as Wonderlab and he urged the improvement of science education in general for teachers at all levels.

Pierce thought this evening was an example of the spirit of Bloomington and the enthusiasm that is infectious. The good ideas don't necessarily come from councils like this, but from ordinary citizens. Our role is to encourage and facilitate projects like this.

Pizzo said that as a council we are often limited in our ability to do things for our community and this will be something we can do for our children. He thanked everyone for coming out this evening.

The resolution received a roll call vote of Ayes:9, Nays:0.

It was moved and seconded that the following ordinance be introduced and read by the clerk for First Reading before the Bloomington Common Council. Clerk Williams read the legislation by title only.

Ordinance 97-17 To Amend Title 15 of the BMC Entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" (Amending Provisions Regarding Stop Intersections, Restricted Turns on Red Lights, Limited, No Parking and Loading Zones, and Riding Bicycles on Sidewalks; and also Amending *Ordinance 96-50*).

It was moved, seconded and approved by a voice vote that the council not meet next week. Sabbagh voted against the motion.

Jim Stinson addressed the council about a recent meeting of Common Cause and campaign finance law changes that are being discussed in congress. He thought many of these reform changes are unconstitutional and he urged people to educate themselves about what these organizations are really about.

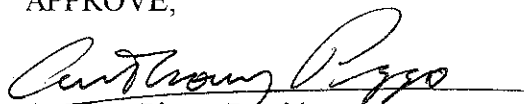
The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM

LEGISLATION FOR FIRST
READING
ORDINANCE 97-17

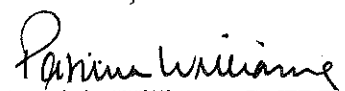
PUBLIC INPUT

ADJOURNMENT

APPROVE;


Anthony Pizzo, President
Bloomington Common Council

ATTEST;


Patricia Williams, CLERK
City of Bloomington