



MINUTES
RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING
Monday, December 9, 2024
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Special Workshop Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Richardson called the workshop meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Roll Call

Mayor Richardson welcomed those in the audience and expressed appreciation for their attendance.

Attendance: Mayor Richardson	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Present (via Zoom)
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Absent
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Chief of Police Pilcher, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, and City Clerk Rogers.

Agenda Items

1. Parking

Councilmember Maier commenced with a presentation on parking reform initiatives, specifically the proposal to abolish parking minimums city-wide, or at the very least, eradicate parking minimums in the Central Business District (CBD). The request stems from an analysis of the historical context and current implications of parking requirements.

Referencing a published graph on parking reform issues from ParkingReform.org and recommendations from a Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) Parking Study conducted in 2022, Councilmember Maier cited both sources as support for his request.

Councilmember Maier stated the BFCOG Parking Report produced recommendations divided into four (4) sections: Regulatory, Capital, Programs, and Marketing. His two (2) areas of focus were the amended parking minimums and reduced parking space size,

both listed under Regulatory.

Council offered comments and engaged in discussion throughout the presentation.

Councilmember VanDyke inquired about the allocation of funds for a subsequent parking study slated for 2025. City Manager Amundson confirmed that funds have been set aside in the 2025 Budget for a parking study. He clarified that while the study was not included as a specific strategic plan item for 2024, Council discussions earlier in the year led to budgeting for the study in 2025. He then emphasized the importance of avoiding redundancy with the BFCOG Parking Study and suggested that the future study should focus on providing actionable insights to help the City anticipate and plan for potential parking policy changes if Council decides to move forward with the proposed reforms.

Councilmember Maier reiterated his support for eliminating parking minimums, expressing a strong preference for removing them entirely. He called for immediate action in the CBD to facilitate infill development. He also recommended extending the removal of parking minimums to the Waterfront District, specifically Columbia Point North, adding that the recently approved 100-foot building height overlay would be ineffective if parking minimums remained in place. While supporting a broader city-wide study on parking minimums, Councilmember Maier stressed the urgency of addressing the CBD immediately.

Councilmember Maier suggested placing the item on a future Council agenda item for action. At City Manager Amundson's request, Planning Manager Stevens provided an overview of the process required to amend the parking code should Council choose to move forward with this item.

Mayor Richardson concluded the discussion by acknowledging consensus from Council to continue exploring the matter by initiating the process to amend the Richland Municipal Code (RMC) described by Planning Manager Stevens.

2. North Richland Land Use

Councilmember Maier presented concerns regarding the restrictions outlined in Chapter 23.22 of the Richland Municipal Code regarding the Commercial Zoning District and Chapter 23.28 of the Richland Municipal Code regarding the Business Zoning District.

He outlined the permitted uses, conditional uses, and prohibited activities within the Commercial Limited Business (C-LB) and Business Research Park (B-RP) zones and provided recommendations to transform the C-LB zone to resemble the CBD, and to remove the housing density caps within the C-LB and B-RP zones city-wide to encourage mixed-use development and support housing needs. He also suggested revisiting the zoning map to enhance consistency.

Deputy City Manager Schiessl shared that the City plans to reimagine the entire city as part of the Comprehensive Plan process. A consultant has been selected and Council will

have an opportunity to review the agreement in the near future. Work on the Comprehensive Plan should begin soon afterwards. Community engagement and stakeholder involvement will be integral, focusing on specific property owners and neighborhoods suitable for amendments. The Comprehensive Plan must be adopted by the summer of 2026, followed by an additional six (6) months for adopting development regulations.

Staff is aligning its efforts with the State's established schedule, incorporating the timelines into staff's scope of work. Should Council decide to expedite the process, staff can collaborate with the consultant to adjust the negotiated scope of work as needed.

Planning Manager Stevens recommended Council allow this item to progress through the Comprehensive Plan process to allow for public engagement.

There was consensus among Council to continue this discussion in future meetings.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: December 17, 2024

DATE PUBLISHED: December 18, 2024