

**ANN ARBOR CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
SPECIAL SESSION - NOVEMBER 27, 2006**

Mayor John Hieftje called the special session of the Ann Arbor City Council to order at 7:10 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 100 N. Fifth Ave, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL**

PRESENT : Councilmembers Ronald Suarez, Robert M. Johnson, Joan Lowenstein, Leigh Greden, Stephen Kunselman, Margie Teall, Marcia Higgins, Christopher Easthope, Wendy A. Woods, Mayor John Hieftje, 10.

ABSENT : Councilmember Stephen Rapundalo, 1.

**NOTICE OF CALL OF SPECIAL SESSION**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

AGENDA APPROVED AS PRESENTED

Councilmember Higgins moved, seconded by Councilmember Woods, that the agenda be approved as presented

On a voice vote, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR THE PROPOSED LIBRARY AND GUY C. LARCOM SITES FOR A NEW 15<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT AND POLICE SERVICES BUILDING

A public hearing was conducted on the Funding Options for the Proposed Library and Guy C. Larcom Sites for a new 15<sup>th</sup> District Court and Police Services Building. Notice of public hearing was published November 26, 2006.

Michael Moran, Ann Arbor Township Supervisor, stated he was not objecting to the City of Ann Arbor's plans to build a new police and court facility, but he has concerns about some of the funding options. Mr. Moran stated Ann Arbor Township is a City water customer and the Township is opposed to a water and sewer rate increase to fund this project. Mr. Moran stated he has notified the major water users in his township regarding this proposal.

Glen Thompson, 100 Longman Lane, stated the City has presented residents with two bad proposals. Mr. Thompson urged the City Council to reconsider its finances and propose a project it can actually afford. Mr. Thompson also stated that an increase in water rates constitutes a huge municipal service charge.

Andrea David, 2585 Gladstone, stated she is a downtown business owner and she does not want to see the Library lot used for a new City government building. She stated this would create a “dead zone” at night in the Liberty Street area. Ms. David also questioned why the decision would be based upon the DDA’s input.

John Rasmussen, 887 Greenhills Drive, said that there are other alternatives to a new police and court facility than the three being presented to City Council. Mr. Rasmussen stated it is his opinion that the courts should be located near the Washtenaw County courts. He stated the barriers to other alternatives are political, not physical.

Karen Sidney, 100 Longman Lane, stated the funding estimates are flawed due to the lack of good data. She also suggested the estimates do not reflect all of the true costs, including the cost to operate a new 100,000 square foot building. Ms. Sidney also urged the City Council to ask the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners why it is necessary for the City courts to relocate.

Herb David, 2585 Gladstone, stated he believes the DDA and the City Council have the best intentions to improve the downtown; however, he has concerns that reducing street-level parking, including the Library lot, will have a negative impact on downtown businesses.

Lawrence Foti, 3444 Ashburnam, stated that if a new building is needed for the police department, he believes the Library lot would be a good location. Mr. Foti stated an increased police presence in the Liberty Street area would be good.

Peter Eckstein, 2551 Londonderry, stated he is a frequent user of the library and a grandfather. Mr. Eckstein stated the downtown library is a key asset to the City. Mr. Eckstein stated he is concerned about a police station being located near the library and the underground parking that would generate increased traffic and automobile fumes.

Sgt. Richard Kinsey of the Ann Arbor Police Department explained the current conditions that he and the other members of the AAPD must work within. Sgt. Kinsey stated his partner had to vacate an office due to the excessive rainwater leaks. Sgt. Kinsey also stated that he believes a combined police and court facility would create efficiencies for the department.

Rese Fox, 921 Oakland Apt. 6, stated she is a UM student and a 5-year resident of Ann Arbor. Ms. Fox, who is studying urban design, stated she thinks a new municipal complex, including a public plaza, would make great use of the current Library lot. She urged the Council to make its decision based upon quality of life issues and not parking.

Ilene Tyler, 126 N. Division, stated she believes that the courts and police should occupy space on a prominent street such as Huron. Ms. Tyler stated she strongly supports the police and courts expansion on the Larcom site. She stated City Hall is currently a good neighbor to the Old Fourth Ward and she would like to see government remain in this area.

Jim Mogensen, 3780 Green Brier, expressed concerns about the City's financial planning for long-term capital investments. Mr. Mogensen stated a project should not be planned around available funding.

Paul Lambert, 201 W. William Apt. 2, spoke in favor of Scenario #1 on the Larcom site. Mr. Lambert stated he believes emergency services work better if they are all co-located.

Chris Crockett, 506 E. Kingsley Lane, stated she was a member of a citizens committee to study issues confronting City Hall nearly 20 years ago. Ms. Crockett stated the Library lot is not the correct option for the police. She urged Council to consider using the Larcom site to create a prominent and important civic center for the City.

Jesse Bernstein, President of Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce, stated he understands that the City needs better facilities and more space for police. He stated the Chamber is willing to work with the City on this issue.

Brand Coultas, 425 S. Main, presented to Council some of the questions and concerns that other members of the Chamber of Commerce had expressed. Mr. Coultas thanked the City for providing the police department tour. He stated it is clear the police need new space. Mr. Coultas stated he would like a tour of the courts as well, as he is not as convinced that the courts couldn't reconsider collaboration with Washtenaw County.

Mike Anglim, 549 S. First, stated government buildings should be separate from business areas. He stated the Library area could become a vital nighttime area.

Kathy Clark, 549 S. First, expressed concern about any increases to City residents' tax burden. She stated that part of affordable housing is affordable taxes.

David DeVarti, 1321 Baldwin, stated he is a downtown business owner and a lifetime patron of the Library. Mr. DeVarti stated the City does need new facilities for the police, but must face financial constraints. He stated the 15<sup>th</sup> District Court should be located with the Circuit Court, allowing for only one secured site rather than two.

David Esau, Chamber of Commerce member, stated he believes the police do need a new facility, but he is not convinced that the courts must move. Mr. Esau stated more information is needed regarding the relocation of the courts. Mr. Esau said this type of project is appropriately funded through an approved millage.

Ray Detter, member of Downtown Citizens Advisory Commission, stated the commission opposes a police and courts facility on the Library lot and supports the expansion of the Larcom site. He stated whatever is built on the Library lot should compliment the Library.

Henry Amick, 343 Mulholland, stated the current City Hall is iconic and should be preserved.

Peter Pollack, 515 Detroit Street, stated he agrees that there is a need for new facilities and that the discussion is related to financing and the nature of uses of buildings. Mr. Pollack stated he prefers the Larcom site for a police and court expansion. He stated City Hall should be downtown, but it does not need to be the center of the City.

An unidentified member of the audience stated he spoke to Mayor Hieftje regarding the City Hall design. The audience member stated he believes City Hall should remain on the Larcom site. He questioned if the University of Michigan could provided funding assistance for the City's public buildings.

Susan Weinberg, 3415 Vintage Valley, stated the Library lot is a poor choice for a new municipal building. Ms. Weinberg urged the Council to consider reusing the current building, not demolishing it.

Ray Forton stated he is a neighbor to the current City Hall building. He stated he believes the Larcom site is the site for a new building or expansion. He urged Council to plan for 100 years and consider a green building.

There being no further comment, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, it was moved by Councilmember Higgins, seconded by Councilmember Teall, that the meeting be adjourned.

On a voice vote, the Mayor declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Jacqueline Beaudry  
City Clerk

Anissa R. Bowden  
Recording Secretary