

The Committee on Legislative Affairs & Elections met on Monday, November 21, 2022 at 6pm in the City Council Chambers.

Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Alfred Lattanzi, Darren Costa and Stephanie Smith.

The Committee considered a Resolution offered by Councilor Darren Costa: A request for a planning initiative for Ward 3 zoning.

Director of Planning Matt Lattanzi and City Clerk Sergio Cornelio were also present.

The Clerk provided the Committee with an overview of what a Work Session entailed as it related to the wishes of the City Council in referring the matter into Committee. Councilor Smith referenced that the Committee should follow the same process as established at the last Committee meeting with regards to the zoning moratorium piece in which Councilor Costa was appointed as a liaison to obtain the information and report back his findings to a Work Session with other members of the Committee. She mentioned that it would be difficult to coordinate these sessions with all the parties especially if the Work Sessions needed to be publicly posted if more than two members were present creating unwanted red tape and acknowledged that some members may need to be excused due to potential developments they may be doing. Councilor Costa stated that he understood that the entire City needed to be included in the Zoning review but wanted to focus his concern right now with this zoning issues related to Ward 3. Councilor Smith suggested that the Committee appoint Councilor Costa as the liaison related to Ward 3 zoning concerns to conduct research on the matter with the Planning Department and other relevant departments and report back his findings to the Work Session group. She stated that this would be the first step but was adamant that the entire City zoning needed to be looked at. Councilor Costa agreed to take the lead as a liaison in this matter and Mr. Lattanzi expressed his approval of this decision which he felt would help expedite the process as well as avoiding the need to publicly post if just one Councilor was involved. Mr. Lattanzi informed the Committee that he usually meets with the various Department Heads on Tuesdays to review proposed zoning developments within the City and Councilor Costa indicated that he could call in to participate in those meetings. Councilor Smith remarked that she wanted to avoid spot zoning occurring and wanted to avoid opening the City to potential lawsuits from any zoning changes to be recommended. Mr. Lattanzi concurred that the City's zoning needed a rewrite however Councilor Smith cautioned that the process to do this could take 6 to 9 months. Mr. Cornelio mentioned that the City Ordinances which included the zoning ordinances needed to be updated pursuant to the City Charter and suggested that the Mayor could appoint an Ad-Hoc group of smart local professional people to help work on this subject matter rather than the Council attempting to do it on its own.

The Committee voted, to establish work sessions on the subject matter with Councilor Costa appointed as the Committee liaison to work with the Planning Department and other relevant city departments related to the Ward 3 zoning and report back his findings to the Work Session group with the Committee reconvening in a public session once action is recommended from the Work Session group.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

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