

City Council Ride-Around Minutes and Comments 13 September 2012

PRESENT

Council Members James C. Kearney, Sr., Sara M. Coffey, Michael C. Inscoe, D. Michael Rainey, Brenda G. Peace—Jenkins, Garry Daeke, Vernon Brown and George M. Daye.

ABSENT

Mayor O'Geary

STAFF PRESENT

City Manager Ray Griffin, City Clerk Esther McCrackin, Code Compliance Director Corey Williams and Youth Services Program Supervisor Linwood Martin.

The Ride-Around began from City Hall, 134 Rose Avenue at approximately 2:10 p.m. with Mr. Linwood Martin serving as chauffeur. Code Compliance Director Corey Williams prepared a route that exposed Council Members to blighted areas of the City they might otherwise never see. Areas were also toured that were in need of service by City crews. Mr. Williams distributed a form that the PIT Team has been working on where concerns can be noted for investigation. He said the team is still working on the form and input would be welcome.

Ward 4

The first concern pointed out the broken window at the Tip Top Restaurant in the area of Norlina Road and Old Norlina Road. It was pointed out that you can see clearly into the building where the interior looks like it is open for customers. City Attorney Zollicoffer and County Attorney Care are preparing this property, along with several others for purchase, as approved by Council.

Graffiti was pointed out in this area along with numerous other locations.

Next Mr. Williams took the group toward the Bobbitt Street/Birch Street area (ETJ) as there will be a public hearing tomorrow on installing sewer/water on those streets. Council Member Inscoe pointed out an area in the *David Street area that needed to be investigated for a possible water leak.*

While traveling Bobbitt St., Mr. Williams pointed out a horse in a backyard. He said enforcing animal control code is difficult in this area because the owners just move the animal to another location.

Concern was express about *dead trees at North Henderson Park* at the end of Bobbitt Street and a *brush pile in the Wood Street/Robinson Street* area. Council Member Brown asked if the

tree(s) on the city owned lot on Robinson Street could be removed, saying he often sees kids playing in the lot.

While traveling Lamb Street, City Manager Griffin said he has talked with the Tax Collector and it is anticipated that the inter-local agreement on jointly held properties can be brought before Council in October.

Mr. Williams pointed out properties owned by the City or City/County throughout the tour. He mentioned problems with asbestos with many of the structures and was asked frequently how long the structures had been in the demolition list. Mr. Williams said some of the structures have been on the list for well over three years. Council Member Coffey asked how the City came to own all the houses. Mr. Williams responded through foreclosure. Mr. Griffin said the Tax Collector is working with Mr. Williams. Ms. Brooks has said she will not foreclose if there is a house that is in the process of condemnation. Council Member Rainey wondered if some of the vacant lots in the area could be developed with duplexes.

On Boddie Street, Council Member Brown asked that the *debris on the side of the road* be removed. He also expressed concern about the narrowness of streets in the neighborhood.

There was also *debris on 618 Adams Street, including household items*, which need to be removed. There was also debris left by the power company that needs to be cleaned up.

Council Member Coffey asked about the policy for deposing of carpet. She had heard if it was over a certain poundage the City would not remove it.

Mr. Williams was able to answer many of Council's questions regarding the plans property owners have for structures.

East Avenue has several structures that needed to be brought up to code and *626 East Avenue has too many junk vehicles* and specifically, someone needs to check on *604 East Avenue* to see if they are in the process of renovating because of the *mess between the houses*.

While traveling between Andrews and Rock Spring Street, on Clark Street, Mr. Williams pointed out a City owned property that the neighbor expressed interest in buying. He said that problem for many potential buyers is the frustration of having to work with both the City and County (as they both own the property) and expressed the importance of finalizing the agreement to allow the County to sell the properties with the City receiving it's portion. Mr. Griffin asked Mr. Williams to speak with the City Attorney to see if this property could be added to the agreement currently being worked on with the County Attorney. Council Member Kearney made the comment that the monies received should remain in Code Compliance for more structural removals.

Council Member Daeke suggested making Hatch Street a one-way street because of the narrowness of the street.

On *Vance Street* Council Member Coffey asked if the *fence* could be repaired. Mr. Griffin said Code Compliance could probably cite them for a *public safety violation*. Mr. Williams said he

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thought there would be graffiti on the buildings on Vance Street but the owner had once again painted over the graffiti.

Council Member Inscoe requested the City to *mow on Cherry Street*.

Mr. Williams pointed out the properties owned by the Medina family. These parcels recently came before Council and have been put on hold for demolition until December. Another property (not part of the parcels before Council) owned by the Medina's had an open front door and appeared vacant --- Mr. Williams said he would look into.

Ward Three

On Hillside, there was a question regarding the status of the street work that has already been approved but has not begun.

Mr. Williams mentioned a structure that he was told prior to 2009 that he could not tear down. Mr. Griffin advised him to "bring it back" for reconsideration by Council.

There is *debris on Lucy/Arch Street* that needs to be removed.

It was noted the *picnic table at the Owen Davis City Park* needs repair. Council Member Brown commented on the good job the Recreation Department has done in keeping the parks neat.

Street work has been done on S. William and Council questioned when the repairs will be completed.

Debris needs to be removed in an area off Nicholas Street.

Ward One

Concern was expressed about a *tree on Cross Street*.

Remains of signage at Kings Daughter Park needs to be removed.

Ms. Coffey asked if why the City owned properties are not better maintained. Mr. Griffin said mainly because of costs.

The tour concluded at this time and Mr. Martin returned Council to City Hall safely at 4:10 p.m.

D. Michael Rainey, Mayor Pro-Tem

ATTEST:

Esther J. McCrackin, City Clerk