

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO,
HELD AT THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

February 6, 2024

The Mayor and Council of the City of Coeur d'Alene met in a regular session of said Council at the Coeur d'Alene City Library Community Room on February 6, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., there being present the following members:

James Hammond, Mayor

Woody McEvers) Members of Council Present
Christie Wood)
Dan Gookin)
Kiki Miller)
Dan English)
Amy Evans)

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Hammond called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilmember Evans led the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Cyndie Donado, Coeur d'Alene, noted she works for Kootenai Health and serves on local boards and committees, and has bought property in the downtown area. She expressed disappointment in the comment period and the posting of information regarding the new hotel proposed downtown. She stated that the Comprehensive Plan notes that there should be community involvement for actions affecting business and residents and that the hotel project was a significant project approved without engagement with the community. She requested that the City look at modernizing city standards set out 20 years ago.

Joan Woodard, Coeur d'Alene, noted that she moved here six years ago and bought a condo on Sherman Avenue right across from the proposed hotel. She stated that there are constant loud cars and motorcycles during the summer causing excessive noise and pollution that push them indoors. She witnessed violations of bikers and skateboarders using the sidewalks in the downtown area and vehicles that don't stop for pedestrians. The residents are unable to enjoy their patios and decks during summer. She also pointed out that there aren't enough police officers to do enforcement and maintain the downtown as a safe and enjoyable space. She believes that the addition of another hotel will exacerbate these problems. She requested the Council to review and revise the development regulation for downtown as well as the policies and guidelines controlling what can and what can't be built.

Aileen Koler, Coeur d'Alene, expressed concern that the addition of the hotel will increase the impact of noise pollution, infringement of view corridors, shortage of parking, and increase traffic.

She requested the City study these impacts and create new codes, guidelines and principles to address these concerns. She noted that the downtown core overlay was last addressed in 2006 and believes the City has already violated some of the stated purposes within the development regulations. Additionally, input should be sought from existing residents before approval.

Duncan Koler, Coeur d'Alene, noted that he is a resident who lives across the street from the Marriott Hotel site. He expressed concern with the way the project was approved. He learned at the Design Review Committee hearing on January 25 that the hotel project was already approved as of right except for certain specific design considerations regarding the appearance of the hotel from the outside. He noted that the project planning started on August 1 with a project review meeting but was not open to the public. He added that a second meeting was held on October 21 and again nobody was informed. He said that on December 1, the application by the builder of the hotel was formally submitted which was after the two big meetings were held. He believes that the design review code requires to take public comments into consideration, however, if the project is already approved and substantially designed, it does not allow for much input which is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Mayor Hammond asked City Attorney Randy Adams, to provide the City Council with responses to the concerns raised and also the process relative to the specific site. Councilmember Miller asked for the information on the required timeframe for the review of the downtown overlay district and more information regarding the floor area bonuses to be included in Mr. Adam's review.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Gookin asked where the funds that were dedicated to Connect Kootenai will go since they have closed. Mr. Tymesen noted that the City has paid ¼ of the \$25,000 that was allocated and that the Finance department will stop sending money. Councilmember Miller noted that she has been in support of Connect Kootenai, and she continues to work with regional housing groups and would like to support another organization that will provide fiscal oversight and contract management to a group that may or may not decide to become a nonprofit organization. She would like to make a formal presentation to the Council in the next few months. Councilmember Gookin noted that he asked for information during the workshop with ignite cda regarding Mt. Hink on how much has been spent and on the remediation, and hopes to receive that information soon. Councilmember Gookin agrees that the community should have a voice in large downtown projects and with preserving the historic character of Sherman Avenue. Additionally, the City needs to look again at the downtown overlay, height restrictions, and parking requirements. He added that the Marriott Hotel is allowed by right and that the design review is required. He noted that bike patrols will come back downtown in the spring, which should help with some of the enforcement issues. He would like to have a discussion item regarding the downtown overlay on a future agenda.

Councilmember Miller noted that the Historic Preservation Committee has discussed the downtown area and would like the Commission to be included in future discussions about preserving the charm of downtown. She noted that the Coeur d'Alene Library has seen an uptick in use due to the Post Falls Library temporary shut down due to flooding.