

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DIXON, ILLINOIS
LOVELAND COMMUNITY BUILDING
SPECIAL-TOWN HALL COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2022
5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Mayor Arellano at 5:35pm.

ROLL CALL

Councilman Bishop, Oros, Venier, Considine, and Mayor Arellano answered roll call.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATION

The Pledge of Allegiance was cited.

LISTENING SESSION

Mayor Arellano explained how the meeting will work and how public comments will be taken with a reminder that public comment is limited to three minutes. He then turned the meeting over to City Manager Langloss.

City Manager Langloss welcomed everyone and thanked the Loveland Center. He described the purpose and structure of the meeting.

Natalie Andrews – showed a video and presented on the education of Substance Use Disorder (SUD), prevalence of SUD in the Sauk Valley Region and best practices for successful treatment. Discussion ensued.

Aquil Kahn – Director of Project Open, presented on the current regional partnerships that address SUD, Project Open, strategic plans, grants, gaps in the treatments, major accomplishments, Lee Ogle Whiteside partnerships. Discussion ensued.

Police Chief Steve Howell – presented on the Safe Passage Program; explained the program and accomplishments, Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery, Medical Assistance programs. Discussion ensued.

Patrick Phelan – Director of Sinnissippi Centers. Presented on recovery homes vs. sober homes, the current experience of the Sinnissippi Recovery Home, the need for recovery homes and sober homes, and how they complement each other. Discussion ensued.

Gerald Lott – Executive Director of Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery. Presented on his background and of his board and staff, including their involvement with Safe Passage program, the services that they provide, the application process and background checks on residents, the requirements and rules for residents. Discussion ensued.

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Greg Jones – Special City Attorney with Ancel & Glink reviewed the laws on group home and the Fair Housing Act in relation to people with disabilities and housing discrimination. Discussion ensued.

Juge Payne (retired) – shared his perspectives as a former States Attorney and Judge, his experience, advocated for community resources, ordinance concerns and impacts, non-licensing, examples that have occurred in other homes, rules at other communities, restrictions on distances between homes, parking, and suggestions to consider. Discussion ensued

Questions were submitted during the meeting from the public. City Manager Langloss read questions and answers were given throughout the listening session.

VISITOR/PUBLIC COMMENT

Ryan Latvaitis – a lot of my items have been addressed, lived in Dixon since 2018, firefighter in Elgin. We are not talking about this but type of home, a 30day detox, there are several in Elgin that I get called out to a lot, it has a lot of problems within that home with combative patients. Heartened to learn that that type of place wouldn't be in a R-1 or R-2 based on its institutional use. This is not what Mr. Lott is trying to do, sounds like he is going the right way, he would welcome this type of place like that with 12 guys run by him and his organization, can put it right next to my house. They have done a great job with the house. I don't feel like there is a lot of evidence going from 6 to 12 people. The recovery home on Washington, I FOIA'd the police reports from 2009 to 2021 there were about 5 a year and a lot were fire alarm activation with now fire, or a fall, people aren't OD'ing on the front lawn, they are not getting in fights, not drunk and disorderly that type of stuff doesn't happen, and I am looking for someone to mow my lawn, maybe you could get someone to mow my lawn for me. Encourage Council to deliberate and be careful clustering and things that could happen with a poorly run home, and asked how would they shut down a poorly run home.

Tim Bratt – resident since 1980. Commented regarding tax payers, any consideration that would be given to a referendum to determine this? Seems that is the ultimate save, if that is an option I think that should be considered. Addressed by the City Attorney.

Sara Kent – grew up at 403 Fellows and has been able to go through before each time it was up for sale to see what has been changed, the last time I walked through before Gerald's person bought it, I was sickened in the horrible declined, deck had holes in it, the upstairs room smelled like weed, it was horrible. When I first heard it was going to be a sober living home, all I could think about was he was sent by God to help take care of this house and the people who will be living there. All of us have somebody somewhere who is affected by whether it is alcohol, drugs, gambling. My family is not alone either, family member got caught up with meth, if it wasn't for recoveries and sober living homes I wouldn't be the person who I am today. Its

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amazing what places like this can do. Love to see this, hope that everyone can take into their hearts to welcome this opportunity.

Wylie Fox – Asked when someone is determined disabled – addressed by the City Attorney and discussion. He also asked: an individual cannot be discriminated against, does a group of people have extra ordinary rights? – addressed by City Attorney & discussion. Mayor paused the discussion, he could ask questions after the meeting. Mr. Fox stated that he didn't think anyone would be here if they wouldn't have put the cart before the horse, and determined where they could be, if they could be in residential 3 or 4 there wouldn't be an issue.

Carolyn Sweeny – three points and all three are in support of the recovery and sober homes in the neighborhoods. Support and show love to families, friends, and neighbors who need us. We were very impactful in 2015 when the community came out in this sort of support and we see the success and I think this continues in that success. Practical considerations - if they don't break the cycle for these folks that we love, the cycle will continue and the community continues to degrade with the people that we love. Third is for anybody who want to be selfish about it - if you want to keep drug houses out the neighborhood, put recovery and sober homes in the neighborhood.

Grace Bratt – I'm sorry that when Gerald said because there are people in the room, that this shows that there is a stigma attached, I feel like that is saying to people that are concerned that you don't want to the help other people, that is not at all true and I have not found that true with any of the people that are here. Would like Dixon residents that we could be neighborly to and help rather than someone from out of town. I think it causes division by saying that people here don't want, I don't think that is true.

Seth Wetter –I was on the receiving end of recovery home, Sinnissippi. Gave his background combat vet with PTSD, he has been sober for 2 years. Journey I've been on most people who are successful. Starts with PD Safe Passage, without Sinnissippi and the sober living home I wouldn't be able to operate. Now I have a job in the community. Community people have heard of my success and I have reached out to Gerald, and him and his crew have taken many people to rehab and detox and have saved some lives. There is no underlying evil scheme here, its saving lives and it's happening in our town, people are dying, legitimate care and lives are being saved. The house is amazing, beautiful. I know some of the guys that are there, I have gone through this myself, MRT Moral Recognition Truth Therapy – intensive re-training of your brain, harm revisit re-adjust and correct. So much more I could add, it's a go. It would be a crime to not let this happen. Discussion ensued.

COMMENT

Councilman Venier thanked everyone who presented and thanked the citizens for their concerns.

There is a packet of the application process if people want to take one and see them.

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ADJOURMENT

Councilman Bishop moved that the Special Town Hall Council Meeting of Tuesday, August 9, 2022 be adjourned to meet in Regular Session on Monday, August 15, 2022, at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Seconded by Councilman Considine. Voting Yea: Councilman Bishop, Oros, Venier, Considine, and Mayor Arellano. Voting Nay: None.
Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:31pm.

CITY CLERK