

A Special Meeting of the Council of The Village of Marble Cliff

1600 Fernwood Ave.

March 14, 2022

The Council of the Village of Marble Cliff held a Special Meeting on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 6:00 pm. in Our Lady of Victory Church Parish Hall, 1559 Roxbury Rd., in the Village of Marble Cliff. Those in attendance were Mayor, Matthew Cincione; Council President, Dow T. Voelker; Council Members: Charlotte Hickcox, Matthew R. Jolson, Bridget Sarna (arrived at 6:20pm), Joanne Taylor and Kendy A. Troiano; Yaz Ashrawi, Village Solicitor; Joshua Ford, Village Engineer; Fiscal Officer, Stephanie A. Evans; and Peggy Shanahan, Assistant Fiscal Officer. No representatives of the press were present. Visitors were present.

Mayor Cincione called the meeting to order and opened the floor to Mr. Jon Williams of AEP for his team's presentation. Mr. Williams shared that as AEP created their new plan, they took into consideration feedback from Village leadership, the Marble Cliff community, and neighbors of the project. He introduced other members of his team to begin the presentation.

As a way to explain the need for the updated substation, Mr. Nathan Bronder showed a video to demonstrate how electricity flows through wires via substations. He said upgrades to the 5th Avenue substation will improve reliability to residential and commercial areas because the power won't have to travel as far. Mr. Bronder also stated that the existing substation is 70 years old and not built to today's standards. A temporary structure will need to be installed right away to get through the construction of the new substation, the landscaping structures and vegetation.

Mr. Jon Schultis shared results of the site study, which indicated that 9 sites were reviewed for consideration. Multiple factors were taken into consideration, including the need to strike a balance between natural and human impacts. Mr. Schultis also pointed out that the existing station has to stay because it is a junction of lines and is necessary. Mr. Voelker expressed appreciation for receipt of the site reviews. Mr. Jolson asked whether an economic analysis had been done. Ms. Hickcox asked whether alternative sites were further reviewed after the initial demolition permit was denied. AEP representatives stated that a cost analysis is included in the site review, but an independent in-depth cost analysis was not performed. They also shared that they revisited a site in the City of Columbus again last summer, making it three times that they tried to work with that site. The City of Columbus refused to sell.

Mr. Jolson asked about future needs, and whether at some point down the road, a larger substation will be needed. Mr. Williams said AEP is committed to selling the building at 2200 W. Fifth Avenue and to finding other sites, ensuring that they will not come back to Marble Cliff asking for more.

Ms. Taylor asked how the Village can be sure that AEP will follow through with the proposed plan. Mr. Williams responded that the Village has his word, and that follow-through will be required through legal documentation. There will be no claims of budget shortages or other excuses for not completing the project as described in the application.

Ms. Troiano asked about alternatives if the building at 2200 W. Fifth Avenue doesn't sell. Mr. Williams said he expects it to sell.

Ms. Mary Hejna, a landscape architect with EDR and working with AEP, presented an overview of the landscaping plan. Her vision is to soften and screen the wall to make it more park-like, and integrate it into the community. She has suggested native species expected to do well, which includes a mixture of evergreen and deciduous plants and trees. Her goal is to avoid a monolithic wall of evergreens and add interest and variety. There will be shrubbery, stones in the detention pond (not visible from the street), and a cluster of trees on the corner and around and the stone monument. They will keep as many existing trees as possible. Mr. Jolson asked about possibly more winter coverage; Ms. Hejna responded that the evergreens and deciduous trees will be spaced apart, and that shrubs that stay green will also add interest. Mayor Cincione shared that Mr. Bob Meyers' team provided tremendous input regarding aesthetics and expertise, and that he also sought feedback from Ahlum & Arbor, the arborist for the Village.

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Mr. Jolson asked about the commitment on maintenance. Mr. Williams indicated that AEP wants to work with the Village on a maintenance plan. Mr. Ashrawi pointed out that at the next Council meeting, when a decision is to be made about whether to approve the demolition permit, conditions can be placed on that approval (ie: project will look like the proposed plan, maintenance, etc). Mayor Cincione suggested that the Village might be best equipped to handle maintenance, and that perhaps a maintenance agreement can be worked out with AEP. With regard to timing, the wall will go up first and then the detention pond; planting will come after that, either in the fall or spring. Ms. Hickcox asked about the depth of water in the detention pond. It is expected that it would be 4 feet at most, but Council was reminded that it is a detention pond (not a retention pond) and that most of the time there will be no water in it. With regard to the monument sign at the corner, the Village will participate in the design. Mr. Ford asked about possible constraints surrounding the sewer line and wanted to ensure that the Village will still have access to it.

Mr. Jolson mentioned the possibility of the railroad tracks becoming a trail someday and asked if the back view of the substation matters. That will be determined later, however, Mr. Williams stated that AEP has a meeting set up with First Community Village to talk about their view. AEP's feeling is that it will be slightly improved but they are reaching out now to address any concerns they may have.

Ms. Hickcox asked if this is the first time that AEP has done a project with landscaping like this. AEP responded that it is not the first, but it is the tallest and nicest. Ms. Hickcox also asked if the wall meets security measures for AEP; they answered, yes.

AEP made their case for needing the site, and the demolition of one building at 2300 W. Fifth Ave. They plan to address zoning specifics at the hearing next week but feel confident they have met those requirements.

Ms. Hickcox asked about possible interruption of traffic and/or power during construction. Mr. Williams replied that traffic may be slowed as equipment is moved in and that some short outages may occur. Those affected by the outages will be notified in advance.

Ms. Troiano asked about the number of parcels and suggested that AEP will need to ask for a lot split in order to sell the building at 2200 W. Fifth Ave. This will come later as next week's hearing is just for the demolition permit.

Mr. Voelker asked some questions about the demolition application and wondered if some of it is "boilerplate" (specifically for some of the technical specifications for sites, like blasting, fencing, etc) to ensure that some parts of it do not apply to this project. AEP indicated that yes, some parts of the application are boilerplate, and Council was assured that there will be no blasting involved.

Mr. Voelker thanked the AEP team for the presentation and for all the work they've done. Mr. Jolson agreed, and appreciated that AEP stepped up.

Mr. Dan O'Harra of Riverside 10, LLC, spoke on behalf of Mr. Bob Meyers and shared that his team and a group of AEP representatives worked really hard on this project and that they really appreciate the teamwork. He also noted that Mr. Meyers and his team will support Village leadership in their decision.

Ms. Troiano thanked the AEP team for listening to the community and addressing their concerns.

Mr. Williams apologized for the first run at the demolition permit and thanked the Village leadership and Riverside 10 for their work.

ADJOURN

Mr. Voelker moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Troiano seconded. Motion passed. Mr. Cincione adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

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Approved by:



Dow T. Voelker
Council President

Submitted by:



Stephanie Evans
Fiscal Officer