



**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS**

**JANUARY 23, 2015**

On January 23, 2015, a special meeting of the Odessa City Council was held at 1:02 p.m. in the Zant Community Room, Second Floor, Odessa College Saulsbury Building, 201 W. University, Odessa, Texas.

Members present: Mayor David R. Turner; Council members: Roger T. McNeil, District One; Dewey Bryant, District Two; Barbara Graff, District Three; Michael Gardner, District Four; and Filiberto Gonzales, District Five.

Others present: Richard Morton, City Manager; Larry Long, City Attorney; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; Michael Marrero, Deputy City Manager; Konrad Hildebrandt, Assistant City Manager; Marty Collins, Gatehouse; Patrick Moccasin, PKF; Conan Chantz, UEB; Lynn Roberts, Ambridge; Diego Rodriguez; Colin McDonald; other members of City staff; and members of the news media.

A quorum being present, Mayor Turner called the meeting to order and the following proceedings were held:

**Discuss Hotel Conference Center Project (Gatehouse).** Mr. Collins stated that Gatehouse was the master developer and has partnered with others to proceed with the project. He introduced the team that would be working on the conference center project. Three brands were proposed: Marriott, Hilton and Starwood.

Ms. Roberts discussed the hospitality and provided some background of Ambridge. She understands the brands and has partnered with Hilton and Marriott. Colin McDonald would be responsible for the economic analysis and business model. Mr. Collins stated that the project should fit with the neighborhood and it could be adapted and shifted to the needs of the community. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the proposal was to keep the Ector Theater and leave signage and architecture in place. The theater would integrate with the downtown design. He discussed the parking and the plaza. The plaza would be on the area where there were easements and no buildings could be constructed. A bridge would be connected to the hotel and the conference center. He reviewed the amenities, parking and retail. The structures would be built around the theater. Mr. Collins stated that there were a range of options with the theater. It could be torn down, kept for the heritage or have a combination of keeping part of the theater and tearing some down.

Council member Gardner asked how the theater would be incorporated into the project. He would like to make it a useable property, aside from showing movies. He wanted to know how to expand the center and its feasibility. Council member McNeil wanted to have the capability of expansion with relation to the future. He would like to see the options of keeping and the value of removing the theater. He stated that this project was a great opportunity for the community.

Council member Graff expressed the vision of the project being a stepping stone to building downtown. She stated that the theater should be integrated with the hotel and a possible museum. She stated that the theater was unique and it would add to the hotel. She would like to have a 4,000 square foot veranda where people could eat. She wanted the ballroom to break down to smaller rooms. With the conference rooms, there should be rooms for

private dining. She would like for all space to be utilized. The hotel should be utilized by the local citizens and visitors for other events. She suggested a possible baseball field on one of the blighted areas that would be near the hotel to improve downtown. She wanted to find additional purposes for the theater. She liked the outdoor plaza and asked Gatehouse to check the wind directions. Mayor Turner liked the feel of the theater but was concerned with the cost to meet compliance standards. He wanted to see the concept of keeping the theater but it would depend on the cost. Council member Bryant stated that the cost was the important decision in the deciding factor. He liked the idea of the convention center space added on, if needed in the future. Council member Gonzales stated that the theater was nostalgic and would like to keep if possible but it would depend on the cost. He wanted the theater to be incorporated to serve a purpose and not sit idle. Council member Graff pointed out that the County has parking problems. Her idea was to join with the County to pay for the parking garage but it would need to be closer to the courthouse. Council member Gardner asked Don Stice to come up with ideas for the theater with his vision. He stated that citizens' feedback was to keep the Ector Theater.

Mr. Rodriguez discussed the ballroom area. It would have service and serve on three sides. There would be five areas of breakout spaces. Mr. Collins stated that there would be three parties of management. The meeting space would have board and dining rooms. The conference center was a big space. He stated that the theater was interesting to include in the meeting space and it will preserve the theater for community space. He stated it was not practical to tear it down.

Ms. Roberts stated that people wanted to walk from the parking garage to the hotel in the shortest amount of distance. The hotels consider the parking garage's distance.

Mr. Collins stated that the theater would facilitate the design and not impair it. Constructing the conference center to a certain amount of space and expand in the future would not compromise any of the project. He stated that most cities do not have a historic project with its convention center. He has seen the cities remove the historic structure in most cases. He stated it was important to know where the city was in the master plan. He stated it was important to have residential and baseball fields in the area.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that the parking structure defined the plaza. It would include landscape, fountains, and trees that adapt and fit the structure. Removing a level of parking would save on cost. Proposed Ideas were to connect the garage with the hotel or to allow for future expansion to the hotel for more rooms. The proposed parking garage has 540 parking spaces. Mr. Morton stated that previous comments made were that the plaza should be larger. Council member Bryant would like a larger plaza, if possible. Mr. Collins stated that the parking garage was expensive to build but it could be made at a reduced cost with changes to the structure. The parking garage placement was limited. The project would be a sustainable asset for the future.

Council member Graff asked to have space at the convention center for the Convention & Visitor's Bureau to be housed at the center. Mr. Long asked how close the substitute surface parking needed to be located. Mr. Collins stated that surface parking needed to be adjacent. The commercial users want closer parking. The parking garage's parking spaces would fit large vehicles and were not the compact-size parking spaces.

Ms. Roberts stated that the hotels have standards but with flexibility. She was familiar with the standards and would make sure the project would fit the standards for the hotels. Mr. Collins stated that most cities have the Marriott which has more products. The interior finish

design would be the standard room design which was more affordable. The lobby and restaurant would be more customized. There was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC  
City Secretary

David R. Turner  
Mayor