

Belize City Council

Minutes of public consultation regarding the proposed King's Park (suburban Area 1) Zoning Bylaws held on Tuesday November 17, 2009 at 7PM at Adolfo Lopez Mateos Park in King's Park, Belize City.

Present from the Belize City Council:

Councillor Roger Espejo, Mr. Howard Ramclam, Legal Rep.- B.C.C., Mr. Troy Smith, Valuations Manager-B.C.C., Ms Natalie Waight, PR Officer-B.C.C.

Present from the public: As per attached log sheet.

The meeting was called to order at 7:20PM

The meeting was started with a Prayer by Mr. Howard Ramclam

Councillor Espejo welcomed the audience and introduced the members of the head table: Mr. Ramclam, Mr. Smith and Ms. Waight.

Councillor Espejo proceeded to inform the audience that he would do a reading of the proposed bylaws and ask the audience whether it wanted to hear the entire reading and then ask questions OR if it wanted to have a discussion-like interaction and ask questions as soon as they arose. The audience chose the latter.

Councillor Espejo started reading the bylaws and several discussions ensued. The following are the salient issues that were discussed:

Residents complained about construction at Mr. Arnaldo 'Papi' Pena's property on Baymen Avenue. They complained about possible violation of the legal set back from the fence and of Mr. Pena possibly opening a bar at this location. Councillor Espejo pledged to look into the matter and have the BCC address Mr. Pena and correct the matter if necessary. Councillor Espejo stated that he was not in support of a bar opening at this site.

A resident submitted that law firms and similar businesses need to provide adequate parking for their clients. Councillor Espejo noted that he knows of one law firm on A Street and identified with the resident submitting the complaint. Ms Christy Mastry noted that the law firm on A Street had contacted her to design parking for clients. Councillor Espejo noted that this would alleviate vehicular congestion and that the bylaws did have parking requirements of new businesses entering the area.

After much discussion on whether new professional businesses should be allowed in Suburban Area 1 a vote was table: whether to allow new professional businesses or not. The audience voted overwhelmingly to not allow any new commercial or professional businesses in the proposed zoned area. Councillor Espejo noted that bylaw 6 which pertains to professional businesses would be deleted.

A resident submitted that building size should be controlled. Councillor Espejo noted that this was addressed by the proposed bylaws.

A resident submitted that businesses should provide public bathrooms as he experienced clients of a particular business urinating in public. Councillor Espejo noted that he would look into the legality of mandating that businesses install a public bathroom.

A resident submitted that bylaw 8 needed adjustment as to personal maintenance on private vehicles and the disposal of used oil. Councillor Espejo pledged to amend the law to reflect the intended expected behavior from the public: to properly dispose of used oil and not make it a violation to dispose it in public drains.

Residents complained of cars parking in front of their private gates especially on 6th street. Councillor Espejo pledged to implement a provision in the bylaws that would address the nuisance.

Residents noted that bylaw 9 warranted for '50 persons as an official number of residents' that can petition against private activity deemed as a nuisance and for BCC to take action. Residents voted overwhelmingly in favor for this number to be reduced to 25.

Residents submitted that Utility companies must be required to repair streets and public spaces where they have excavated for their own purposes. Councillor Espejo noted that this is already in law and that normally they do repair streets albeit sometimes not that quickly.

After serious discussion on the parameters of Suburban Area 1 residents voted overwhelmingly to extend the parameters to: St Joseph Street from Baymen Avenue on to St Thomas and north to St. Mathew Street right up to the sea.

Other matters

A resident asked who was responsible for clearing beneath driveways. Councillor Espejo noted that it was the council but that it challenging to do so in a number of vast cases as residents don't properly build driveways when they don't install the adequate number of manholes which are necessary to properly clean the gutters.

Residents offered concern about the traffic hazard at the corner of 6th Street and St Thomas Street. Councillor Espejo submitted that the curbs in the area have been painted red but that motorists don't respect the 30ft parking rule. Councillor Espejo pledged to look into the matter and enforce the law.

Residents submitted concern about buses passing through the neighborhood, especially in A Street, as a way to shortcut. Councillor Espejo noted that this, although unpleasant, was legal but pledged to look into the matter.

A resident of Princess Margaret Drive complained about public buses parking on Princess Margaret Drive and littering the area when the buses are being cleaned. The resident also complained about the buses being a noise nuisance. Councillor Espejo pledged to look into the matter noting that parking was legal and the littering was what could be addressed.

A resident of B Street complained of a possible pool hall opening on his street. Councillor Espejo pledged to look into the builder's application form at the planning department to decipher whether the suspicion was in deed so. Councillor Espejo stated that he did not support a pool hall in this area.

A resident of Baymen Avenue complained about a next door shop selling alcohol to the public where the alcohol is consumed on the premises. She complained of noise pollution as well as disorderly behavior at this business including public urinating at the site. Councillor Espejo pledged to address the matter.

The meeting ended at 8:55 PM

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[Signatures]

