

Torrance, California  
January 18, 1967

MINUTES OF A REGULARLY ADJOURNED  
MEETING OF THE TORRANCE CITY  
COUNCIL

A regularly adjourned session of the Torrance City Council was held at 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, January 18, 1967, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

ROLL CALL:

Those responding to roll call by City Clerk Coil were: Councilmen Beasley, Miller, Olson, Sciarrotta, and Mayor Isen. Absent: Councilmen Lyman and Vico. City Manager Ferraro and City Attorney Remelmeyer were present.

Mayor Isen announced the opening ceremonies would be dispensed with and, this being a regularly adjourned meeting, the agenda would be open to any items, including oral communications. This session is a continuation of the January 17th meeting.

27. PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR PURCHASE OF PARCEL OF MEADOW PARK LAND.

This is the resolution distributed at the end of the January 18th session by City Attorney Remelmeyer and at the request of Mayor Isen, Mr. Remelmeyer explained its purpose. Two lots are located in the Meadow Park urban renewal area: Lot 7, vacant land and Lot six land with a house. The Title Insurance and Trust Company as trustee for the holders of the second trust deed have filed notice of foreclose and the property is to be sold next Tuesday morning. Pursuant to the policy established by the Council, Mr. Remelmeyer said the city would bid in at these sales and buy the property and keep the owner from losing his equity in the property if some arrangements can be made with the owner prior to the foreclosure sale.

Mayor Isen asked why the City would be concerned with the equity of the owner and Mr. Remelmeyer said because of the moratorium which has been effect for over two years, it might otherwise appear that the City has caused some property owner to suffer. Mayor Isen did not agree with this premise: the man lives and has been living in the house all this time and evidently has not made his payments. Councilman Miller agreed there is a moral obligation in that the City helped create a situation whereby the man could not sell his property. Even though there was no actual moratorium, Mr. Miller said no one would buy under the circumstances. Councilman Sciarrotta agreed.

Mr. Remelmeyer said he would not enter into any escrow to purchase the property at anything like market value without coming back to Council for approval. This sale gives the City the opportunity to purchase it and prevent anyone else doing so.

Mr. Wheeler of the Redevelopment Agency staff had called on Mr. Pierson, the property owner, and it appears the owner had thought he had a deal whereby the foreclosure would not be made. Mr. Remelmeyer did not know for sure but was under the impression the trust deeds were placed on the property in about 1961.

Mr. Remelmeyer said it would be to the advantage of the City to bid at the sale because it could obtain the property title cheaper than the appraised value. The next question is whether the City should make it possible for the man to come out with something for his equity.

Councilman Olson said in his opinion the City should not spend any more than it has to, but everyone should be treated equally.

Mayor Isen said in the present state of the whole project, he does not believe there is any obligation; the man is living there and has not made his payments. It is not even known at this time if the City will want this property. It developed that the owner had had bad luck on a couple of scores and that there was some possibility of condemnation by the Health Department because of a sewerage problem at his property, but he had never contacted the Redevelopment Agency with respect to early, or any, acquisition of the land. Mr. Wheeler said he was not sure whether or not the owner understood his prerogatives.

Mayor Isen believed the better plan would be for the man to take advantage of the bankruptcy law under which the sale would be automatically postponed.

Councilman Beasley moved to adopt the resolution - however, it had not yet been numbered nor read and Mayor Isen had not finished his part in the discussion. He continued to the effect that the City is now "in the hole" to the tune of \$400,000 and there is no reason to increase that amount by \$25,000 or to make any further acquisitions until the money shows up. He would prefer to pay fair market value at the time the money is in the City's hands, than to increase the City's liability now. The project as it stands now is a complete dilemma - everyone's dilemma.

In answer to a question by Councilman Sciarrotta, Mr. Wheeler said he would consider this to be a hardship case but Mayor Isen said apparently the owner did not think so or he would have gone through the routine through Citizens' Advisory Committee, the Council, etc. He has not even attempted to make application.

The problem at the airport must be solved, Councilman Olson said, whether by Federal funds or by some addition to the tax rate. The City cannot walk away from the problem.

Mayor Isen reminded him that after the problem has been resolved the City can still go in and buy the property at the appraised amount. Councilman Olson thought the price might be more at such hypothetical time; land values are doing nothing but go up. Mayor Isen said if the project is abandoned, land values will do nothing but go down and way down. The houses are in a disreputable state and the City would lose plenty. This is a blighted area, the homes have not been cared for in the past couple of years and there is nothing to look forward to but decrease in value. He said he does not think the City should acquire any more property in this area until the problem now before the Council is resolved.

If the City finds it must pay for the project, taxes will go up by about \$560 on a \$20,000 home, Councilman Olson figured.

Councilman Sciarrotta moved that the resolution be given a number.

Mr. Remelmeyer repeated that the City's self-interest would dictate a "Yes" vote. The resolution authorizes a bid up to the appraised value, but it is not likely that much would be bid.

Mayor Isen reminded the Council of the crowded Council Chambers last night when the Council agreed, five to two, for a complete moratorium on the inspection problem for sixty days. This freezes the urban renewal project and it is an insult to the public at large to purchase a piece of property in the project area, despite what was done last night.

Mr. Remelmeyer pointed out the possibility of liability and Mayor Isen said to purchase it as now discussed, would establish a tremendous liability. He prefers the latter possibility. Mr. Miller agreed with Mayor Isen, in that the man did not even apply for relief from his hardship.

Councilman Olson said he would vote for the resolution in reliance on the advice of the City Attorney. Four votes will be necessary to adopt the resolution, in any event. It is too late to table it.

Postponing the inspection sixty days is tantamount to holding up everything having to do with the project, Mayor Isen said. Councilman Olson mentioned the other factors: the instruction to the City Attorney for a study of the legal ramifications of not having the inspection, etc.

Councilman Miller concluded that it would be inconsistent to vote other than "Yes" and at the request of Mayor Isen, City Clerk Coil assigned a number and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 67-6

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS LOTS 6 AND 7 IN BLOCK 3 OF THE SUBDIVISION OF LOT 30 OF THE MEADOW PARK TRACT IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Sciarrotta moved to adopt Resolution No. 67-6; Councilman Beasley seconded and roll call vote was:

AYES: COUNCILMEN: Beasley, Miller, Olson, Sciarrotta.

NOES: COUNCILMEN: Mayor Isen.

ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Lyman and Vico.

Mayor Isen suggested that the neighborhood committee should meet and discuss last night's action with the Codes and Ordinances Subcommittee of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. Councilman Sciarrotta so moved; and Mayor Isen seconded. There was no objection.

Secondly, to avoid confusion, Mayor Isen moved to adopt a policy that if anyone in the entire city voluntarily telephones City Hall and requests inspection of his premises, that the proper authorities have the right to go out and inspect - if the request falls within the provisions of either act. Councilman Sciarrotta seconded and there was no objection.

28. City Manager Ferraro said he had been notified by the Director of Public Works that the County people at the new Courthouse building have found a technicality on the legal description whereby the face of the curb is not within County ownership, but is partly owned by the City. He asked for an appropriation of \$1300 from the General Fund existing moneys to put in a gutter on the back end of the access of the County Courthouse. The actual facts can be determined later. Councilman Sciarrotta moved to so appropriate and his motion was seconded by Councilman Beasley. Roll call vote was:

AYES: COUNCILMEN: Beasley, Miller, Olson, Sciarrotta, Mayor Isen.

NOES: COUNCILMEN: None

ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Lyman and Vico.

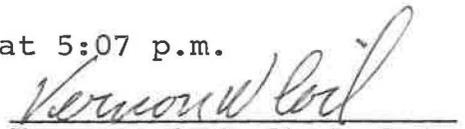
The meeting was regularly adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor of the City of Torrance

Edith Shaffer  
Minute Secretary

  
Vernon W. Coil, Clerk of the  
City of Torrance, California