



Ready to Serve

Baba Ly, 8, played the president on a float in a Fourth of July parade in Ridgewood, N.J., with help from his father, Amadou Ly.

Special Interests?

Kelly Among Opposition To Timeline on MAPS III Projects

By CHRISTOPHER V. PORTER
Chronicle Staff

City Councilman Ronald "Skip" Kelly (Ward 7) was among those opposed to the timeline adopted Tuesday for the completion of MAPS III projects.

The councilman said the adoption of a modified MAPS III implementation timeline was done to help special interests.

The modified plan moves up by 30 months the construction on a new convention center.

Mayor Mick Cornett voted in favor of the measure, along with Councilmen Gary Marrs (Ward 1), Larry McAtee Jr. (Ward 3) and Pat Ryan (Ward 8).

Councilmen Pete White (Ward 4), David Greenwell (Ward 5) and Kelly voted against it.

Councilman Ed Shadid (Ward 2) and City Councilwoman Meg Salyer (Ward 6) were absent.

Councilman White made a motion to delay the vote by two weeks, until the next council meeting since Councilman Shadid and Councilwoman Salyer were unable to attend.

Councilman Shadid, who had problems with a connection on an international flight while returning from vacation, had called Councilman White asking for the delay.

But only Councilmen White and Kelly voted in favor of delaying the vote.

The approved timeline calls for construction to begin in 2016, which was one of two timelines presented to the council for consideration, but it was the only one to be voted upon.

The other timeline moved up the convention center construction by only 21 months, allowing other projects to be completed sooner.

The council in a separate vote also approved the location of the convention center recommended by the MAPS III Citizen Advisory Board.

Only Councilman White voted against the location, directly west of Oklahoma City Arena on the grounds of a former Ford dealership.

Councilmen Kelly and White criticized Architectural De-



City Councilman Ronald "Skip" Kelly opposed the adoption of a new timeline for construction of MAPS III projects.

sign Group, which designed the timelines, and the Oklahoma City business community, saying the business-friendly MAPS projects were moved forward in the timeline.

The convention center subcommittee includes Larry Nichols, chairman of the Devon Energy Co., former Mayor Kirk Humphreys and Roy Williams, chairman of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce.

That subcommittee lobbied hard for the convention center to be moved forward.

"You, your company, shoved everything else aside and figured out a way to make that happen," Councilman White told Michael Mize of the design firm.

"I guess you know who's writing your paycheck."

Councilmen White and Kelly each spoke uninterrupted for several minutes, addressing Mr. Mize and the rest of the council.

They accused supporters of the new timeline of pushing aside the wishes of voters to satisfy busi-

ness leaders and ignoring projects outside the downtown area.

City polling before the 2009 MAPS III vote indicated sidewalks, trails and senior wellness centers were among the most popular projects with voters.

The \$280 million convention center was the least popular.

"I know where I live, and I know the citizens that voted for me, and I know what I want out in my community," Councilman Kelly said.

"I feel like the [quality of life projects] deserve a faster track," the Ward 7 city councilman added.

The consultants working on convention center plans have said the facility needs an adjacent \$50 million hotel, funding for which is not included in MAPS or any other city budget.

Councilmen White and Kelly referred to it as the "elephant in the room" and expressed fear that the council will lose the trust of voters if the city has to ask for more

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Judge Unlikely To Lower Sentence

Elliot Implies He Hesitates At Being '13th Juror'

By ROBERT E. BARNES
Special to the Chronicle

The judge handling the high-profile so-called "pharmacist case" indicated he is not likely to lower the sentence recommended by a jury for the convicted man.

Jerome Jay Ersland, 59, was convicted on first-degree murder charges for "going too far" after a 2009 robbery of Reliable Discount Pharmacy.

The pharmacist is scheduled for formal sentencing on July 11.

"Why should a judge put himself in the position of being a 13th juror when we have entrusted 12 citizens of the community to make that decision?" the judge said last month at a sentencing in another murder case.

"Why should a judge usurp the jury's authority by placing him or herself in the position of being the 13th juror?" Oklahoma County District Judge Ray C. Elliot said.

Jurors chose a life term as the punishment for the pharmacist,

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Jerome J. Ersland, the pharmacist convicted of first-degree murder after a robbery, is to be formally sentenced on July 11.

Lawyer's License Suspended

He's Convicted for Letting Witness Lie in Drug Trial

By THOMAS E. SEWARD
Special to the Chronicle

The Oklahoma Supreme Court has suspended a convicted Oklahoma City defense attorney from the practice of law.

Mark Anthony Clayborne, 48, was convicted in April of intentionally letting a witness lie during a 2008 drug trafficking trial.

The Oklahoma County jury found Mr. Clayborne guilty of perjury by subornation and preparing a false exhibit. He continued to represent defendants while awaiting formal sentencing.

The formal sentencing was June 6.

The state high court acted



Mark A. Clayborne

after being officially notified of the conviction.

Justices ordered him to notify his clients with pending cases that they will need to find new representation.

Mr. Clayborne remains free on bail while he appeals. If he loses on appeal, he must serve six years in prison and pay \$2,000 in fines.

The criminal defense lawyer represented Jose Cruz Herrera at a jury trial in Feb. 2008.

Mr. Herrera was convicted

at the trial of drug trafficking, conspiracy and cocaine possession.

Prosecutors allege Mr. Clayborne had a witness lie in a failed effort to give Mr. Herrera an alibi for the day of a 2007 drug deal.

The witness testified at the drug trial that she was with Mr. Herrera in Mexico on that day and had video-taped him there.

Prosecutors said Mr. Clayborne had her testify even though she told him "straight to his face" beforehand that she did not shoot the video and was afraid she would get into trouble if she testified she had done so.

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Free Rides Offered By City Buses

Cleaner Air Is One Reason

By SANDRA R. PAYNE
Special to the Chronicle

With an eye on improving air quality in Oklahoma City, Metro Transit officials announced that free bus rides will be offered.

Officials of the transit system hope, too, that many will gain a better appreciation of the mass transportation system.

The ever-increasing cost of filling our gas tanks might prove

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Free rides will be offered by Metro Transit on certain days through September.

