A move by Abbeville City Councilman Herbert Myles to designate Elray Schexnaider as the engineer for Audrey Hotel renovations died for lack of a second Tuesday night and led to a 15-minute executive session on the matter.

The same motion was withdrawn by Myles once council reconvened and the city assumed a hands-off stance regarding current renovation engineering.

Though no official action was taken following Myles withdrawal of the motion, council did suggest a review of Audrey Hotel contracts and agreements, primarily those signed during the Noel administration for hotel work.

The matter of hotel renovations and who is to perform engineering duties for them cropped up last week in the form of protests filed with the Meridional by some council members.

On the heels of the city’s reception of a $400,000 Coastal Zone Management allocation for renovation of the old hotel building, it was reported that a lack of communication existed between Abbeville Mayor J. C. Vorhoff and members of his administration.

No communications gap showed itself last night, however, as city fathers, through a lack of definitive action, concurred with Vorhoff’s explanation of the turn of events leading up to the CZM funding allocation.

The mayor, following Myles’ motion to appoint Schexnaider for the job, told council members that the Audrey Hotel project was not a new one and that the job was basically an architectural one.

He said after the previous administration purchased the building for $180,000, he approached the federal government for grant money to rework it.

Vorhoff said the project “goes back to a resolution on Audrey whereby the city asked the government for approval of the funding allocation.”

“This has been a struggle and a long-term project,” Vorhoff advised. “And the present engineers and architects, I think, deserve some consideration.”

“They (engineer Gene Sellers and architect Wayne Corne) have put in a lot of time and effort on this project,” Vorhoff said, and they were retained by the previous administration to do the work.”

Replying to the mayor’s statement about the Noel administration’s hiring him, Sellers told council members that they did, indeed, retain his services for the hotel project.

“Although the project has been amended and has been altered; it is,” Sellers stated Tuesday night, “the same project.”

Following mention by District C Councilman Larry Campisi of a February hearing on the project — a hearing notifying the council that the city was eligible for CZM funding — Sellers, again, said the project was the same one he had been retained for during the Noel administration.

At this time, Campisi moved for executive session.

Following this session, Myles withdrawal of the motion appointing Schexnaider as project engineer and Campisi called for a review of the contract signed by Sellers and the Noel administration for the Audrey Hotel work.

No action was taken on Campisi’s motion for a contract review.

Reportedly, the CZM funding pre-application was filed by Sellers after the city purchase the building. And all that’s lacking now, Vorhoff stated, is the filing of final applications for the CZM money.

“This is not a new project and is basically an architectural — not an engineering — job,” he concluded.