Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2022

1. **Call to Order at 6:02pm**
2. **Roll Call –**  Chairperson DeBoer, Commissioners Lyon-Jenness, Dean, Tecca, Deputy Clerk Smith, and ZA Harvey - All present
   * Motion to excuse Bliesener by Lyon-Jenness, support by Dean – All ayes, motion carried
3. **Approval of Minutes – July 27, 2022**

* Motion by Lyon-Jenness to accept the minutes as written, support by Tecca - All ayes

1. **Citizen Comments**

* No comments

1. **Envirologic Presentation on Mill Site EPA Grant Application – David Stegink and Hailey Cantrell**
   * David Stegink noted Envirologic is doing preplanning work funded by the County Brownfield for an EPA assessment grant by holding community engagement meetings. There is more Brownfield money available now than ever before: up to $800,000 for a multipurpose grant and later up to $2 million for a clean up portion. A large portion of the grant application is to tell the community’s story through public comment. A second event will be held at the library on September 20. The grant process will take at least 2-3 years before any work will begin.
   * DeBoer asked how the master plan would impact Envirologic’s work.
     + Stegink stated they have taken cues from the master plan for the planning of potential development so they can determine the level of clean up that should take place in each area.
   * Lyon-Jenness asked if the tentative goal was complete demolition or restoring some buildings.
     + Stegink replied the buildings would be evaluated on a case by case basis and that it is always better to reuse than tear down when appropriate depending on the toxicity of the site.
   * Dean noted the importance of involving young families in the discussion of the future of the mill site and suggested Envirologic reach out to schools to engage families.
   * DeBoer asked how Envirologic plans to communicate with the PC in the future. Stegink said they can come to PC meetings a few times a year for updates and are always available for questions or concerns.
2. **Old Business**
3. Priority #1 – WP Item #3: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Riverfront

* Review Revised Riverfront Property map (parcel layout/land use/zoning)
* ZA Harvey has been in contact with county GIS and noted the map should be updated within the next 1-2 weeks.

1. Priority #3 – WP Item #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Supplemental Standards

* Review Section 12.7 (12) – Off Street Parking Space Standards
* ZA Harvey noted the master plan suggested reviewing parking space standards to see if reductions can be made to reduce excess paving. Historically, municipalities selected parking standards based on peak needs and a desire to have an overabundance of parking available. ZA Harvey reviewed standards set by the American Planning Association and surveyed similar local municipalities to suggest new standards listed in red on the chart.
* Tecca questioned the need to have parking standards at all noting that if a business doesn’t have adequate parking, patrons will simply not visit.
  + ZA Harvey noted if a business doesn’t have enough parking, patrons will park on the street, on grass, or in driveways which could create a negative impact on neighbors and potential environmental problems. She did advise that a maximum number of parking spots could be listed in the ordinance.
* ZA Harvey suggested the PC could add a clause that a business could offer less than the minimum standard of parking by showing demonstrable need for less, possibly by indicating a location for parking to be added later if needed. This would eliminate the need for a business to approach the ZBA for variance. Parking standards are more nuanced than other standards, and it is for community and environmental good that a business have less.
* Tecca noted in city downtown areas, there is typically not a parking lot for every business. What is the standard in that situation?
  + ZA Harvey stated where there is on street parking or large public parking lots, municipalities often waive traditional parking standards. This is done in walkable, close together areas where it’s probable that people will walk. City downtown area, zoned C-1, could have this standard if it doesn’t already. She will check.
* Dean is concerned about typical lack of parking spots in natural areas such as trailheads where patrons tend to randomly on grass or streets. There is no natural area parking designation on the chart.
  + ZA Harvey stated that would be unusual in an ordinance because municipalities tend to be the ones to establish natural areas and choose parking as they see fit.
  + Dean believes the PC should review standards in natural areas including the park because it could be an issue as these items are developed per the parks and rec plan.
  + ZA Harvey noted the city could provide public lots which would help with this issue as well as reducing number of spots needed by other businesses.
* Tecca asked about overnight street parking and allowing parking on both sides of the street as a way to reduce amount of parking required by businesses.
* Lyon-Jenness wanted the PC to think about the environmental impact of reducing paved parking places on a site.
* Deputy Clerk Smith read a message sent from Bliesener in her absence:
  + “I think all of the parking reductions look good with the exception of cutting back to 1.5/unit in the multi-family dwelling. Unless Becky knows this is working in other communities and is the current standard, I worry about the fact that we don’t allow on-street parking in the city and if three or four adults live in a unit (often the case with today’s high cost of rent/mortgages) we’ll have a lot of excess vehicles.”
  + DeBoer noted the PC will discuss Bliesener’s comments at the next meeting.
* PC will review the chart of specific parking recommendations and review whether to give businesses some leeway in number of spots required. ZA Harvey will determine if C-1 already has a different parking designation.

1. **New Business**

* None

1. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 6pm.
2. **Adjournment** – Motion by Tecca, supported by Dean. All ayes. Meeting ended at 7:30pm.