Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2022

1. **Call to Order at 6:03pm**
2. **Roll Call –**  Chairperson DeBoer, Commissioners Lyon-Jenness, Tecca, and Bliesener, City Manager Stoddard, and ZA Harvey - All present at 6:12pm when Dean arrived
   * Motion to excuse the late arrival of Dean by Bliesener, support by Tecca – All ayes, motion carried.
3. **Approval of Minutes – August 24, 2022**

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

1. **Citizen Comments**

* No comments

1. **Old Business – None**
2. **New Business**
3. WP Item #3: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Riverfront

* Review Revised Riverfront Property map (parcel layout/land use/zoning)
* ZA Harvey explained that she had been working with Alex at Kalamazoo County regarding the existing land use column and the addition of the Mixed Use with color coding. COVID has held up the process, but Alex did make an effort to revise the map, but it still needed the existing land use data added. The future land use coloring was included but the Mixed Land use was needed. ZA Harvey went on to explain that the map needs to match the City of Parchment’s legend on their zoning map. She will speak with Alex on the phone to get the details correctly on the map. The County has few people to work on zoning maps, so it may take a little more time but the communication has been fine. The PUD District is correct on the map.
* DeBoer asked if the City would get a large map for the wall.
* ZA Harvey said that would be possible once the additions/corrections have been made. Any time a city asks for a land use data survey, the County only has tax classifications to make the map, so they need to manipulate the data to correct it for us. Most local communities do not have a GIS system. There are 21 parcels on this section of the map and she is hoping that the aerial views will help them to discern the data.

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

* Review Draft Amendments to 12.7 (12) – Off Street Parking Space Standards
* ZA Harvey explained that the PC wanted to put their decisions in this area on hold until Bliesener could be present. Two specific amendments were investigated:

1. Have a provision that gives the PC the ability to accept a maximum created parking standards for flexibility. The PC’s ability to accept more or less parking on site instead of the applicant having to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals. They need to develop the present parking that is needed. (15)
2. They need to work on a mechanism for on-street parking to be used for required parking spaces.

* ZA Harvey stated that in 1) 12.10 – The PC could use nearby parking facilities, such as a parking ramp, public parking lot, etc for the site. 2) 12.11 – The PC could acknowledge in the central business district that the Public parking may be used to meet standards. If the PC had a central business district, no parking space requirements would be needed. Currently, the City’s zoning map does not show a parking district that allows Sec.12.11.
* Per ZA Harvey, based on 12.10 and 12.11 and if the PC accepts the new 15, with those three options in standards, it would allow for the inclusion of public parking. The PC would be able to say that it is acceptable. Having 12.10 and 12.11 is good for “wiggle room”.
* DeBoer asked if it would be in the downtown area.
* ZA Harvey stated that she could not see it on the map. When 12.11 was adopted, it was established for public parking. The PC should find the official zoning map (when adopted). The City should make sure that the zoning map is on the City’s website.
* Bliesener talked about the need for the PC to determine a set of standards for applicants regarding off street parking.
* ZA Harvey noted that the Master Plan’s charge was to reduce parking. Use of industry standards and area standards, anything in red is common and a reduction from the City of Parchment standards. The PC may look at those; some communities have strong opinions about parking standards. The PC may want to adjust.
* DeBoer noted that the red inked comments are more up-to-date thinking.
* Bliesener stated that the APA standards are in red.
* DeBoer said that he is not sure how old the standards are. How do we make the adjustments appropriately?
* Bliesener noted that the APA standards are current and up to speed. Do we want to reduce the parking spaces in multi family dwelling parking? With the PUD, we could have various businesses such as roller rinks, dance halls, etc
* Tecca said that when the PC thinks about the number of parking spaces available, it should take into consideration the on-street parking on both sides of Parchmount.
* Bliesener stated that the ¼ mile where the speed bumps have been placed have been helpful.
* Tecca expressed the desire to add more speed bumps as he is worried about the speeding.
* Lyon-Jenness reiterated that there is no overnight parking on the streets.
* Bliesener was concerned that the lot parking is only good during the day. Multi-family units should have 2 places per unit.
* DeBoer asked if they should go through the chart.
* Dean asked if this is retroactive or if it is going forward.
* DeBoer talked about the language – Housing for elderly. He asked if the revision had to be made.
* ZA Harvey stated that it can be left as red writing. Senior living – Some communities are changing their ordinances to interpret what assisted living and senior living are. May called a multi-unit dwelling or convalescent homes with a parking space limit in some cities.
* Bliesener asked if the language could be combined, senior living and assisted living.
* Tecca said that the language appeared to be the same.
* Dean asked why if convalescent homes is separate from nursing homes.
* ZA Harvey stated that home for the aged, supervised care, personal care could be combined. City of Parchment doesn’t use the term “housing”. The PC may want to use Home for the Aged (HFA’s)
* Bliesener asked if this was the current language used, if so, the PC should use it.
* ZA Harvey stated that convalescent homes and nursing homes are special uses. Multiple dwelling, housing for the elderly, 24 hour care, and Home for the Aged (HFA) are mixed uses and all are used in ordinances. The term nursing home is not used. These facilities make parking spaces an interesting situation as they are dealt with differently because the parking spaces are used by visitors.
* Bliesener agrees with the changes in red except for reducing multi-family parking spaces. The ZA will sort it out on the chart so that it matches the zoning map. Do we all agree that we want to increase parking spaces in our nursing homes, etc. to 1 parking spot per employee for all staffing needs? Page 6 – we would increase 1 space for a certain amount of square feet.
* DeBoer asked if a business was like Twisters, where would that business fall.
* Dean said that usable floor/patio space applies to parking spaces.
* DeBoer requested that the senior housing wording would be cleared up.
* Lyon-Jenness asked if the warehouse parking on page 8 could be reduced.
* Bliesener stated that the Dollar General was busy, but never full.
* Lyon-Jenness asked that 1 parking space would be removed for every 2000 square feet. Leave 1 parking space for every 2 employees.
* ZA Harvey stated that it would be a common standard to use what Lyon-Jenness suggested.
* Bliesener asked what is a wholesale establishment.
* ZA Harvey said that no individual retail customers come in to this facility which is likely to be a storage and distribution business.
* Lyon-Jenness would hope that there would be reduced parking spaces in the ordinance.
* Bliesener agreed that there should be less parking spaces.
* DeBoer stated that one parking space per 2000 square feet is good.
* ZA Harvey wants to make sure the senior housing element is clear and there is consistent term usage.

1. Identify next 3 Work Plan Items

* ZA Harvey asked if the PC picked #4 and 1st three bullet points and #5 and all its bullet points.
* DeBoer mentioned solar power usage on rooftops.
* ZA Harvey said that the City’s stance is that solar panels are accessory structures which is allowed in the current ordinances. The PC could set standards such as aesthetic appeal and screening if wanted. And/or free standing solar panels. She also noted that solar farms take a lot of space.
* Bliesener spoke to putting solar panels on the roofs on buildings as an environmentally friendly addition.
* Tecca asked if solar panels would be used within the mill site.
* Bliesener stated that solar panels are clean, quiet, and green.
* DeBoer said that the solar farm would generate tax monies.
* Lyon-Jenness mentioned that WMU has a modest solar farm as part of a cooperative effort.
* DeBoer stated that the Solar Panels would be the next Work Plan Item #1

He stated that Residential Housing could be Work Plan Item #2.

* Bliesener asked if they would be doing the Residential Districts and the Design standards afterward.
* ZA Harvey suggested that the PC not work on the entire section at once. They could work on the multi-family district (last bullet point). Two districts could be created: 1) low density housing and 2) high density housing (examining this possibility).
* DeBoer stated that there could be development with multiple kinds of housing but he does not want to see high density housing in Parchment.

1. Parks and Recreation Committee Report, Lyon-Jenness – receive

* Lyon-Jenness stated that the group tried to articulate the structure of the committee and the charge of the committee. Copies have been sent to the City Manager and the Mayor with frequency of meetings, adding oversight of the City Commission, and that the Committee will implement the Parks & Rec Master Plan. The group met for the first time in July. The August meeting was cancelled but they were able to meet in September. They have planned to meet on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 6pm in City Hall.

Members of the Parks and Recreation Committee are Sandy Bliesener, Cheryl Lyon-Jenness, Holly Evans, Denny Collison, and Andy Sanford.

At the first meeting, the group worked on the framework and charge of the Committee. They will be looking at the low hanging fruit – forestry grant and a non-motorized transportation trail.

At the second meeting, the Committee received a presentation about a proposal for a dog park in Parchment. Ideas were shared, questions were taken and the group will eventually move the proposal to the City Commission when ready.

This Committee is a mechanism to get things done: funding projects (Forestry Grant), planning for tree planting and assessment. They are clarifying what they want to plan for, going forward. Evans is the liaison to the City Commission.

* Bliesener said that they are reviewing Master Plans from other cities. They found that our City Master Plan needs to have a future land use map added.

1. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6pm.
2. **Adjournment** – Motion by Lyon-Jenness, supported by Tecca. All ayes. Meeting ended at 7:24pm.