

Planning and Zoning Commission Special Work Session Minutes
September 7, 2016
Conference Room 1-B - 1st Floor City Hall

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Burns, Loe, MacMann, Rushing, Russell, Strodtman, Toohy

Members Absent: Harder, Stanton

Staff: Moehlman, Teddy, Zenner

Guests: Farnen

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: None.

TOPICS DISCUSSED – New Business:

- UDO Comment and Issue Spreadsheet

Mr. Zenner opened the meeting and began discussion of the second round of Commissioner selected “N” answered questions/issues that were chosen for discussion. Mr. Zenner began with item #82 and indicated that staff would remove all references to a “relator” or “real estate” agent from having to disclose anything regarding historic properties from the code since it was considered illegal. Mr. Moehlman concurred that such action was appropriate.

Discussion moved to item #93 and it was concluded that the reference to “known other sensitive areas” should be changed to “known sensitive areas or areas that should have been reasonably known” to clarify the concern about identifying sensitive land features that may not be shown on maps referenced within the UDO or within the Comprehensive Plan. There was lengthy discussion on items #94 and #95 relating to what the purpose of the “land analysis map” will be used for. It was concluded that the map was really to be used to assist in determining the impact that such proposed developments would have on the property and to facilitate environmental protection goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. There were several examples of concerns about not being specific with what was intended and how that uncertainty may affect development potential. One example given was related to a development’s impact to a “view corridor” which was currently not mapped anywhere. Mr. Teddy noted that this could be accomplished by an “impact statement” submitted at the time of application.

Discussion continued with item #98 regarding stormwater requirements for R-2 and R-3 developments. Mr. Zenner indicated that the current regulations exempted lots less than 1 acre in size and that no changes were being proposed citywide. He indicated that in the UC-O areas an alternative could be proposed to require stormwater measures on lots less than 1 acre. Mr. Zenner stated this was what was proposed within Benton-Stephens Overlay and may be proposed in East Campus to address their concerns.

Commissioner MacMann indicated that the issue was becoming a problem in West Columbia where dense redevelopment was occurring. Commissioner Rushing concurred and noted that if the purpose of the new regulations was to promote infill development the issue may be further exacerbated. Mr. Zenner indicated that the 2012 changes to the stormwater regulations eliminated the impervious area threshold that required stormwater to be provided on sites less than 1 acre. This change was made, in part, to bring the regulations into conformance with the state and federal laws that exempt property less than 1 acre. Mr. Zenner indicated that given the recent revisions and the concerns that have been expressed over additional revisions the best way, at this time, to address the issue of added stormwater regulations would be to limit it to a small area such as the UC-O’s since they already require additional review. Commissioners discussed this suggestion and agreed that the proposed course of action was appropriate.

Item #99 was discussed next and it was determined that the signage for a “family daycare center” in the R-1 and R-2 zones should be consistent with that allowed for any other “home occupation”. Mr. Zenner was unaware as to why this revision had never occurred before; however, did not see harm in “non-commercial” facilities have signage. If a daycare were to be operated in an R-3 zone it would follow a different set of signage standards since such uses in that district were normally more commercial in nature.

Items #103 and #104 relating to tree preservation were discussed next. In relationship to item #103 (climax forest distribution) it was agreed that the City Arborist and staff would develop a minimum square footage of area that must exist in order to divide a climax forest into multiple areas. Mr. Zenner explained that the whole idea of requiring the preservation of such areas in a single contiguous stand was to increase the likelihood of survival. Given that such areas will need to be platted on their own lot and that the forest would be protected from future clearing by a Tree Preservation Easement distributing the forest on properly sized parcels would be acceptable.

Discussion of item #104 resulted in staff and the Commission agreeing that standards would be created to determine a “look-back” period for tree clearing on property proposed for annexation. Mr. Zenner noted that creation of these standards would essentially address the issue of “Temporary Abeyance” that the Commission has had on its work program for several years.

There was significant Commission discussion relating items #105 and #106 dealing with loading and unloading areas as well as loading docks. It was concluded that the requirement for accommodation of loading and unloading spaces (#105) needs to be incorporated into newly developed sites as part of the site plan process and that such activities should not be occurring on the public right of way. However, it was acknowledged that the actual use of these areas would be more of an enforcement issue. It was also acknowledged that sites developed with loading docks would require that the property owners direct their tenants to use those locations instead of loading/unloading on a public street.

Item #106 (loading dock location) was discussed and the Commission agreed that the staff response relating to allowing options for side-dock locations should be created. Approval of such alternative would be approvable by the Director.

Items #111 and #115 (sufficiency of resources) were discussed and Mr. Zenner explained that much of the evaluation regarding sufficiency would be address before the Commission saw the project as part of the “concept review” process of development applications. Mr. Teddy noted that the level of evaluation would be different depending on the type of application. In instances where a known development outcome was given the evaluation would be based on the specific impacts that such use would create. Whereas, if it was not clear what the end development would be staff would base the sufficiency on a “worst case” scenario. Mr. Zenner further noted that the “scorecard” that is being worked on and the process for evaluation would be included in the Administrative Manual once it was completed. No change to the text of the UDO would be made regarding these items.

Staff indicated that it had not been able to obtain local pictorial examples of the neighborhood protection standard setbacks (item #114), but would endeavor to do so before the final draft was released. In response to item #116 (property owner notification) Mr. Zenner indicated that the only property owners that would receive direct notice were those individuals whose property was within the MD-T area or zoned C-2. The reason for this was due to the nature of the district requirement changes that were being proposed.

The meeting concluded with a lengthy discussion regarding the maximum parking cap of 125% (item #174). There was discussion about possible options for allowing the cap to be increased which included ideas such as

building a parking structure, seeking a variance from the BOA, increasing the base parking requirements, or potentially eliminating the cap altogether and letting the market determine what was needed. Commissioners indicated that they felt no business owner would construct more parking than they needed because of the costs. Mr. Zenner noted that the standard landscaping requirements mandated that no less than 15% of a site be in greenspace following its development.

Given Mr. Zenner's comment it was concluded that there were two issues at play. The first dealt with already developed properties needing to expand parking to remain competitive and the second dealing with greenfield development. Commission Toohey suggested that staff come back with a suggestion on how to address the issue at the next work session. The Commission felt that was an appropriate request and Mr. Zenner indicated that he would attempt to come up with a solution before the next meeting which was Thursday night.

Mr. Zenner noted that while there were only four remaining questions/issue he proposed carrying them over to tomorrow's work session. Commissioner's agreed and the meeting was adjourned.

ACTION(S) TAKEN: The August 24 and August 31, 2016 minutes were approved. No votes or motions were made during the meeting. Meeting adjourned approximately 8:30 p.m.