

MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. David Stanczak, Mr. Kevin Suess, Ms. Megan Headean, Mr. John Protzman, Mr. Mark Muehleck, Mr. Thomas Kreiger, Ms. Megan McCann, Mr. Tyson Mohr, Chairman Justin Boyd

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Eric Penn

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. George Boyle, City Attorney; Ms. Katie Simpson, City Planner; Ms. Izzy Rivera, Assistant City Planner. John Houseal, Houseal Lavigne Associates, Jackie Wells, Houseal Lavigne Associates.

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Boyd called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Ms. Simpson called roll, and with nine members present, the commission had a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mark Mocilan of Patriot Signs & Electric, 1503 Circle Ave., Bloomington, IL 61704, voiced concerns over the process of code changes, implementations and cost. Mr. Mocilan stated that he would like to be involved in the sign code revisions for the City of Bloomington. Chairman Boyd informed him that City staff will follow-up with him after the meeting.

MINUTES: The Commission reviewed the minutes from the May 9, 2018 regular meeting. Mr. Krieger motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Mr. Stanczak, and approved by voice vote, 8-0.

REGULAR AGENDA: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **City of Bloomington Zoning Ordinance Update:** Continued discussion on the Zoning Ordinance update; Presentation by Houseal Lavigne Associates.

Chairman Boyd asked if the new commissioners have been brought up-to-speed on the Zoning Ordinance review process.

Ms. Simpson stated that minutes from past meetings are available for commissioners to review. She indicated that the process began in 2016. Houseal Lavigne Associates has been hired as consultants by the City. Ms. Simpson indicated that Mr. John Houseal is in attendance to provide an update to the commission.

Chairman Boyd welcomed Mr. Houseal and Ms. Wells to the meeting. He asked Mr. Houseal to proceed with his presentation.

Mr. Houseal introduce himself and Ms. Jackie Wells to the Commission.

Mr. Houseal presented background information to the commission. He explained that the city went through the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan, “Bring It On Bloomington” and that this plan creates a new vision/character for the city moving forward with development. He stated one of the first things when adopting a plan is to review and amend the zoning ordinance. He explained that the zoning drives and regulates what comes out of the ground and assists in the development of character for the city. The city engaged Houseal Lavigne Associates (HLA) to assist with aligning the ordinance with the priorities and directions spelled out in the Comprehensive Plan and updating the ordinance in general. Mr. Houseal stated that one goal of revising the ordinance is to streamline the development process and to eliminate unnecessary reviews for developers.

Mr. Houseal stated that a diagnostic review of each district has been completed, looking for issues and how the ordinance aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and what governs the Planning Commission. Mr. Houseal met with the Planning Commission and staff to review all chapters. Research with staff on each chapter and recognizance out in the field has been conducted over the past year and a half. He stated that rewriting sections of the code began after complete evaluation of the current standards created in the Comprehensive Plan. These sections were discussed with the commission and staff and a “red line” version was then created with proposed recommendations by HLA.

Mr. Houseal stated that over the last few months, Houseal Lavigne Associates has been meeting internally with staff to finalize a draft version and that Mr. Boyle has been reviewing the legal procedures and interpretations. Mr. Houseal stated that the goal is to have a competed working draft distributed next month and he shared his anticipated timeline, which is as follows:

June (16 of 17 chapters) Clean Working Draft
July Clean Draft posted on website for Public Review
August/September – Public Hearing – Adoption Process

Mr. Houseal explained that the city amended the contract with HLA a month ago to look amending the Sign Code. He stated that the process will begin soon on the Sign Code, but has not started yet. Mr. Houseal stated that HLA has over 15 years of experience drafting sign ordinances and that the scope of work in the contract provides that the review process should follow the same diagnostic process completed during the zoning ordinance revision.

Mr. Houseal explained that sign codes were typically classified by structure of sign and functional types of signs, but this practice treads into the question of regulating content. He confirmed Mr. Mocilan’s earlier claim that the driving force for the Sign Codes amendment is to establish content neutral regulations and eliminate content specific regulations. Mr. Houseal described the recent Supreme Court ruling in the Reed v Gilbert case. Mr. Houseal acknowledged all the hard work by the Commission and staff over the last year and a half. He

stated the goal is to streamline the review procedures and he feels that is the direction the ordinance is moving.

Ms. Headan asked if Mr. Houseal will walk the Commissioners through the Ordinance the next time they meet? Mr. Houseal indicated he would like to get the draft to the Commissioners beforehand so that there is plenty of time to review and ask questions when he is at the meeting. He explained that some chapters have not changed, while others are completely new. Mr. Houseal explained the process of establishing the D1, D2 and D3 districts intended to reflect best practices in downtown planning and to achieve goals in the Comprehensive Plan. He described that similar districts were collapsed and combined such as the B1 and C3 districts or the B2 and C2 districts. He explained he would like to get the clean version to the Commission before highlighting the major changes.

Chairman Boyd asked if there would be time to voice concerns or questions after receiving the draft version. Mr. Houseal indicated that the Commission is charged with making changes and the next time they meet is a good time to discuss concerns or questions.

Mr. Mohr stated that it would be helpful to have an executive summary with the draft. He asked if there will be a written summary attached. Mr. Houseal indicated he has provided powerpoints presentations in the past and stated he summarized the chapters verbally. Mr. Houseal stated he will walk through the draft and have the power point available as he walks the through the chapters.

Ms. Simpson reiterated what John has conveyed to the Commission; she explained the goal was to reduce nonconforming lots and structures, to simplify the code, to reduce barriers for entrepreneurs, and to align the code with new technologies and the comprehensive plan.

Chairman Boyd asked if it is possible to receive the packet sooner than the Friday before the meeting. Mr. Houseal indicated the draft will be sent as soon as possible when completed and will be sure the Commission has enough time to review.

Chairman Boyd thanked John for the presentation.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:27 by unanimous voice vote; motioned by Mr. Stanczak and seconded by Ms. Headean.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Simpson,
City Planner