

**MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2015, 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET, BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Barnett, Mr. Cornell, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Protzman, Ms. Schubert, Mr. Scritchlow, Mr. Stanczak, Mr. Suess

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Balmer

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Tom Dabareiner, Community Development Director
Mr. Jeff Jurgens, City Attorney
Mr. George Boyle, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner
Ms. Vasu Pinnamaraju, Executive Director of McLean County Regional Planning Commission
Mr. Mark Woolard, City Planner

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Stanczak called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Woolard called the roll. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MINUTES: The Commission reviewed the May 27, 2015, minutes and had no changes. Mr. Scritchlow moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Pearson seconded the motion which passed by a vote of 9 to 0. They also reviewed the June 24, 2015, minutes and had no changes. Mr. Protzman moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Suess seconded the motion which passed by a vote of 8 to 0 with Mr. Barnett abstaining.

REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Public Comment, Consideration and Review of City of Bloomington Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Jurgens explained this meeting is intended to start the process of receiving public comment on the Comprehensive Plan. There will be a public hearing on the plan on July 22. We have a court recorder here that will take down all of the comments and will be entered into the official record for the public hearing. He explained after hearing the comments the commission may want to make changes to the plan. People will also have time to make comments on July 22, but this is the first step for those who want to speak on the plan. At the July 22, public hearing it can be continued for additional comments. The final draft will be sent to the City Council.

Ms. Pinnamaraju and Ms. Sicks presented an overview of the Comprehensive Plan. The planning process involved an outreach phase where 2,000 people responded. The vision statement is the foundation of the plan. There are seven core values for people's wishes and desires. There is a strong public desire for repairing and maintaining existing public infrastructure before spending funds to expand infrastructure that has not happened yet. Revitalizing the downtown continues to

be a priority. The strategic planning phase had many people volunteering and engaging in the work. The fiscal impact study showed that outlining subdivisions are costly for even if they are among the newest. The plan has a focus on neighborhoods. The four types of neighborhoods in the plan are regeneration, preservation, stable and emerging. The regeneration areas has seen disinvestment, decline and much of the infrastructure is aging. The preservation area has historic neighborhoods and share characteristics of the regeneration areas with needs for infrastructure repairs. It has advantages in terms of overall housing values but it needs to preserve the historic resources and make it viable. There are common goals for both of these areas. The codes need to be reviewed to determine what will help preserve and regenerate these areas.

The stable neighborhoods are areas built over the last 50 years and has newer infrastructure. These will not require a lot of public investment over the next 20 years. The emerging neighborhoods will be discussed with the land use plan.

The proposed land uses are generalized areas. They are for the end of the plan horizon. The downtown and nearby areas include a mixed use approach. The emerging areas have commercial and other land uses. A tier system is used to assign development priorities. The first tier are the infill and redevelopment areas. They have city services. The second tier is adjacent land with access to all city services. Tier three is adjacent to the city but with limited services and often adequate fire coverage is missing. The prediction is that over the next 20 years there will be about the same level of land expansion that took place over the previous 20 years.

Mr. Pearson asked what the fiscal impact per acre is based on. Ms. Sicks stated the city's contribution or investment to a development proposal is considered against whatever potential benefits might have occurred in terms of tax revenue. It is what planners often refer to as the cost of sprawl. The likelihood that it will be a net zero proposition for the city is very low. Chairman Stanczak questioned if the properties get further developed without any additional public investment would the numbers change. Ms. Pinnamaraju explained that along with capital investments the city also provides services that are considered.

Mr. Scritchlow asked why the maps are centered on downtown. Mr. Pinnamaraju stated from a land base the downtown is where the city started. In the inner core, even though the population may have shifted, the city has an obligation to maintain such and the plan is a way to address those issues.

Chairman Stanczak opened it up for comments from the public. Greg Shaw, 1104 N. Roosevelt, was sworn in. He stated he was on the Community Well Being group and because of the synthetic nature of the work it touched on the work of other groups. He also was on the Planning Commission for the previous work on the Comprehensive Plan and this time it was refreshing because for the first time it addressed the human needs of the city. In addition to the land use aspects this plan addresses what kind of community we are building for the human side. A major theme that came up over and over again from the public was that people were affirming what the community is socially. At its heart is how people relate to each other and looking for ways to help each other. Key hopes from his group was that zoning should foster physical locations that the community organizations will need. Another hope is that city and county government will be ongoingly mindful of and look for opportunities to facilitate the gifts that the organizations bring

to the table. The plan should not be simply just about the physical geography but about the social fabric of the community.

Jeremy Hayes, 1901 Withers, was sworn in. He stated he supports the Comprehensive Plan and he was on the Housing group. He stated his professional background is in urban planning and he has worked with dozens of Midwest communities. The public engagement process used in developing this plan has been extensive and above average for a comprehensive planning process. This insures that this is a stakeholder driven plan. The objectives and action items have been thoroughly vetted and debated by residents and those with a vested interest in the community. It should give the council and commission a sound guide for making policy decisions. The plan emphasizes that neighborhoods are the foundation of the community. It does a good job of balancing economic objectives with neighborhood and housing objectives. Affordable housing is a vital part of a growing local economy and sound policies are in the plan. The Regional Planning staff have put a tremendous amount of time and effort into the plan so that all can be co-owners of the plan. He recommends approval of the plan to the City Council.

Kyle Boehm, 351 Wylie and Connect Transit, was sworn in. He stated Connect Transit offers support of the plan. To continue their goal of continued growth and access throughout the community, many items in the plan will assist Connect Transit in achieving such and they support the specific transit items in the plan. Transit is only one part of the equation. Transit does not operate in a bubble. Equally important in the plan are items that encourage walkability, connectivity, transit orientated development, mixed uses, vibrant urban centers and no reliance on automobiles. Focus on multi-modal facilities is crucial to solving first and last mile problems. The plan supports sufficient growth and reinvestment in the urban core which will help improve and provide a more connected city where residents and transit users will have increased freedom, mobility and can thrive. We are very excited about the future of the city and take serious their role in it and the plan provides the right framework.

Charlie Moore, 20100 Sugar Lake Road, was sworn in. He stated he is the President and CEO of McLean County Chamber of Commerce. He expressed the Chamber's gratitude and thanked the Regional Planning Commission staff for their intense work on the plan. He stated there are several components of the plan that correlate directly with their mission including promoting local commerce, advocating business perspectives, creating relevant programs, and establishing relationships. An initiative for local consumer spending will aid in infrastructure improvements. A business perspective insures infrastructure investments is a continued focus. The focus needs to not just focus on areas of return but on areas of loss which are identified in the plan. The plan identifies how the city plays a role in regional economic development. He appreciates the coordination and collaboration in the plan, reviewing the highest and best use of land, the infrastructure needs and regulations. The city will do this to protect the goals and outcomes of the plan and not disturbing future business growth. The Chamber appreciates and values the tremendous amount of work on the plan. We look forward to supporting the implementation for the benefit of their members, the visitors, and the citizens of Bloomington.

Tina Salamone, 200 W. Monroe, was sworn in. She thanked Vasu for all of the work. The Arts and Culture group has the position that there is nothing so important as our own home, hearth and neighborhood. She said we need an appreciation of aesthetic and the creative process. Future generations will know us by the stories we tell. The inclusion of the arts and culture speaks to

our spirit. Through the arts we are all uplifted. It needs to be in the fore front of the plan because we need more than a tacit acceptance by the leadership and is vital to the health of the community we are trying to craft. When we know what to create we will be less likely to destroy. We will have a string of beautiful neighborhoods.

Paul Krueger, 18001 US Highway 150, was sworn in. He stated he has not had the opportunity to read the document. He said it is prudent to plan but wants to make sure it is realistic. Based on the Pantagraph article he believes the growth seems a little high with 48,000 jobs and 3,000 housing units to be added. He is concerned we are planning to hope that people will come as opposed to what is actually going to happen. The city actions do affect him. He hopes the plan is accurate and is in the best interest of all the community. It talks about the reclassification of farmland which is very prevalent in the area and is a big part of McLean County business.

Chairman Stanczak suggested to Mr. Krueger that if he has any concerns to the total accuracy of the paper to get a copy of the draft plan, form your own conclusions as to the accuracy or predictability, come back in two weeks and let us know what you have come up with as a result of inspecting the plan. One of the points Vasu has made is to place a premium on development on close in areas to the city and discourage urban sprawl which is moving out in all directions.

Erin Kennedy, representing the McLean County Wellness Coalition was sworn in. She stated they support the plan and chapter 8 summarizes the coalition's effort to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. They look forward to partnering to help implement the plan.

Surena Fish, 909 W. Wood, was sworn in. She stated it was a privilege and pleasure to give input to her community. She was chairperson on the Public Safety group. The fourth of July is what she would like to see the community stay with, continue to be and that everyone has the opportunity to have the all American dream.

Debra Helprin, 1213 E. Washington, was sworn in. She stated she has works for Illinois Wesleyan University in the Action Research Center. They work with the West Bloomington Revitalization Project and the West Bloomington Housing Collaborative to develop projects. They focus on housing, youth, education, wellness, public safety, greening and economic development. There are terrific residents and neighbors on the west side. They are glad to see that area is identified as a priority in the plan. It will take a lot of partnerships to do the needed work and the plan has great ideas. We love that people's voices were heard. The action items are very doable. This will help the overall quality of life for Bloomington.

Nancy Warner, 67 Oak Park, was sworn in. She stated she was really picky about choosing her home. She chose Bloomington and it was perfect. She said Bloomington continues to be on the right path. She had concerns about public transportation and we need to make sure the routes and boundaries keep up with each other. Five years ago she had a health battle and could not drive. Connect Transit was her way to get around. They do not run on Sundays, they are going through a lot of changes. If she had to use them now it would not serve her needs. She is hoping that the city will work with Connect Transit to make sure the needs are well served. Budget cuts can jeopardize people with disabilities. She is asking for a continued pursuit of what is good for everyone in the community.

Chairman Stanczak asked for anyone else who wished to comment and no one spoke. He closed the public comment period. He advised everyone that we will be back considering the same plan in two weeks and if anyone has any further thoughts to feel free to come back to speak.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Consideration of Review and Approval of Planning Commission By-Laws.

Chairman Stanczak asked for any suggestions for changes. Commissioners discussed changes including the name for the official plan, the voting of the officers, the wording on membership, the definition of a quorum, required votes to by-law amendments, order of business, commissioner terms, and the he and she wording. Chairman Stanczak will take these changes and provide a draft to the Commission.

The quadrant representation of commissioners will not be included in the by-laws.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Barnett stated in the mindset of openness and transparency he would like to the Commission to consider moving the meeting time to sometime after 5:00 p.m. He said a friend asked why he should take vacation time to come and comment on the Comprehensive Plan. Chairman Stanczak stated it will be on the next agenda but it will be up to the City Council to change the ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come to the Bloomington Planning Commission's attention, Mr. Pearson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Scritchlow supported the motion which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Woolard, City Planner

For further information contact:

Mr. Woolard, City Planner

Department of Planning and Code Enforcement

Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, IL 61701

Phone: (309) 434-2341 Fax: (309) 434-2857

E-mail: mwoolard@cityblm.org