

Meeting Minutes

CITY PLAN COMMISSION (Comprehensive Planning)

Monday, August 25, 2003, 4:00 pm PRESENT: Plan Commission Members: Chairman Mayor Wescott; Bud Flood; Fred Steffen; Lois Feldman; Ann Shannon; Mike Phillips; Karen Aldinger Other Committee Members: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Markham, Seiser, Sowieja, Barr, Molski, Rackow & Moore; Bob Freckmann; Liz McDonald; Carl Rasmussen; Mark Seiler; Bill Meyer; Lee Beveridge; Bill Carlson; Stephanie Lind
ALSO PRESENT: Comm. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Jeff Schuler, Sarah Nimmer, Dan Bowers, Tim Semmann, & Kathy Foelker of Po. Co. Zoning; City Clerk, Victoria Zdroik; Mayoral Assis. Jami Gebert; Daryl Kurtenbach; Virginia Clark; Patricia Arnold; Rich Sommer; Bev Mancl; Hank Becker; Bernice Woitczak; Dan Mahoney, Village of Plover Administrator; Mary Ann Sandstrom; Henry Korger; Debra Meyer; Tom Ludwig; Jeff May; Cathy Dugan

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

- Existing Housing - Future Housing - Sewer Service Area - Transportation

Chairman Wescott noted the key today is discussion. We have a rich history of working with the Village of Plover and the County. The City and the Village of Plover continue to work together on a variety of issues and we will continue to build on that foundation. He noted John Gardner will do a power point presentation and he encouraged questions from the audience.

John Gardner presented slides and encouraged discussion regarding policies on where future housing should be developed, should there be design standards for new development, consideration of impact fees, amount and location of affordable housing, consideration of restrictive covenants, and student housing. Should we adopt a policy and work with our neighboring townships to create zones that would be undeveloped until the city expands into the zones. Can this be done through extra-territorial plat review. Should all of the city's growth be hinged purely on the population projections, or should there be a policy that says the economic health of the central city is important enough to be a separate factor in assigning growth in the future. Would community stress factors be a way of assigning growth areas over and above population projections. Should there be policies to construct more homes on municipal sewer systems than on-site waste systems Should there be policies to condense and cluster development instead of dispersing development.

Elbert Rackow feels it is prudent for properties adjacent to areas currently served by our municipal sewer system to cluster the development so that if and when it becomes necessary for them to be connected to a municipal sewer system, they can be and it is not cost prohibitive.

John Gardner reviewed the projected population and housing units, the additional acreage needed, and the effects of different lot sizes for these projected additional housing units. He questioned whether the city should reserve sewer capacity for existing homes, next to, but not in the city for when they may or may not decide to come into the city.

Ald. Markham suggested some a program that would say if your going to want sewer in the next 10 years, sign up now.

Fred Steffen suggested deferred assessments.

John Gardner asked whether impact fees should be charged to new development to pay for utility system expansion costs. The advantage is new development pays for future expansions. Impact fees may act as a disincentive to construction on sanitary sewer systems.

He asked should new construction be subject to design review standards and discussed garages closer to the front property line than the house, porches, masonry/brick/stone facade requirements, and corner lot development.

Ann Shannon questioned how many of the new subdivisions have restrictive covenants.

John Gardner responded he was not sure, but usually restrictive covenants tend to be for the single family subdivisions.

Ald. Seiser felt overall, we should be going in the direction of plan review.

John Gardner responded on the other hand, municipalities would be telling people what they can and cannot have on their property. That is the other side of the issue.

Mark Seiler noted the university area where parking has been created in the front yard. There should be some review of the aesthetics in these neighborhoods.

John Gardner showed slides of new, higher density student housing in Madison where poor housing was razed. Earlier meetings discussed dissatisfaction with college housing maintenance. Is there interest in clearing out dilapidated buildings or vacant buildings like the former County Market grocery building and making land available for student housing. High density student housing is already being built in several areas of the city and noted the apartments recently built north of the YMCA and behind Partner's Pub.

Ald. Moore felt we can encourage student housing owners to take care of their properties by enforcing laws that are already in effect. Some of the student housing is not in good shape and as habitable as it should be.

Stephanie Lind felt there is definitely a market for new housing development. The nicer places go faster. We need more regulation because there are people living in basements.

Daryl Kurtenbach stated he would like to see the city inspect their student rental properties on a regular basis, and felt John Gardner's staff should be increased so that they can regulate student housing. We need to do a good job with what we have.

John Gardner reviewed affordable housing. Should we address how restrictive covenants affect affordable housing. Design review and other higher standards may make properties more expensive which has an affect on affordability.

Fred Steffen stated you can go to extremes. Some subdivisions in Madison require a brick mailbox in front of the home, alternate setbacks of 25' and 30', and a brass emblem on your home with your name on it. He likes to see one house blue and one house red; variety without controls.

Cathy Dugan reviewed #9 of the 14 State goals that states we must provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community. Not just some communities.

John Gardner felt it means each town, village, and city needs to define "affordable" for themselves. Affordable housing can include renting as well as purchasing.

Rich Sommer stated with regard to slide #17 that talks about working with housing developers to raze poor housing near campus and replace it with new, higher density housing, years ago the city took a stand to move student housing away from the university by downzoning to two family. He doesn't understand the part about poor housing when the recent assessments went up higher for properties around the university than anywhere else. If the city were to enforce the housing policies in the rest of the city like they do for the student housing properties, the city would look better than it does right now. Throw item #17 out and deal with real problems.

Fred Steffen stated if you want to buy a house under \$90,000, Stevens Point is the only place in Portage County your going to buy it unless your going to go to a smaller community such as Polonia, Junction City, or Almond. That means we do have affordable housing.

Lee Beveridge felt we need to look at what level of income the average citizen cannot afford the housing that is out there. Are we looking at multiple family only to fill that gap.

John Gardner noted he will put numbers together for the next meeting for range of income, current interest rates, etc.

Chairman Wescott noted commissioners and alderpersons have been given a lot of material to think about today. When we gather again, he would like to hear more conversation on what the commissioners are thinking on the key questions. Maybe next month we won't have the power point presentation and get feedback from commissioners and alderpersons..

The next meeting will be Monday, September 29, 2003. Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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