

Meeting Minutes

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

(Comprehensive Planning)

Monday, April 28, 2003 PRESENT: Plan Commission Members: Chairman Mayor Wescott; Karen Aldinger; Lois Feldman; Jeff Zabel; Mike Phillips; Bud Flood (Fred Steffen, excused)

Other Committee Members: Ald. Sevenich, Walther, Markham, Seiser, Sowieja, Stroik, Moore, and Rackow; Bob Freckmann; Liz McDonald; Carl Rasmussen; Mark Seiler; Lee Beveridge; Ann Shannon; Bill Carlson

ALSO PRESENT: Com. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Jeff Schuler, Po. Co. Planning/Zoning; Dan Bowers, Po. Co. Planning/Zoning; Kathy Belker, Po. Co. Planning/Zoning; Cathy Dugan

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING: Discussion and possible action on the Issues and Opportunities Chapter.

Ald. Mike Phillips called the meeting to order in the absence of Ch. Wescott who will be a little late.

New commission members introduced themselves: Ann Shannon, representing Sewer & Water Commission; Mark Seiler, representing UWSP; Bill Carlson, representing Stevens Point Schools; and two new alderpersons, Randy Stroik, 9th District and Lynn Markham, 3rd District.

Jeff Schuler, Portage County Planning/Zoning, reviewed where we are at this point for those that are new and noted the plan should be in place by June 1, 2004. We want to allow as much time as possible for each topic.

Dan Bowers presented a slide presentation of the various areas of the city. He noted they are interested in comments for each area.

Area #1 - located northeast of Hwy. 66/airport including Whitetail Subdivision.

Lois Feldman questioned if any of this is dedicated for park areas.

John Gardner responded an 80-acre portion was set aside for parkland in exchange for the State buying some land in Schmeackle Reserve. The water table is high limiting development.

Bob Freckmann noted land west of Whitetail Subdivision has potential for disc golf.

Ald. Seiser noted natural landscaping and not having lawns are quality of life issues and should be incorporated in this section.

Liz McDonald felt the connection between this area and the rest of the city is limited because of the Hwy. 66 corridor. Maybe walking paths or bike paths along Hwy. 66 would be appropriate.

Jami Gebert felt it is good to have areas like this in the city. Some people want to live in the city but want a 2-acre lot.

Area #2 - area located east of Hwy. 66 and west of Brilowski Road.

Bob Freckmann questioned what the status is of the Plover River east of I-39.

John Gardner noted there are several levels of protection. Some areas are owned by the Water Dept., some by the city, and some private ownership. The city has an arrangement with the Isaac Walton League to not develop their property. Out of the city limits is governed by county zoning which has the Plover River Valley zoned Conservancy.

Ann Shannon questioned if there is any State designation to protect the Plover River like the Wolf River has the "Wild and Scenic" designation.

Ald. Markham noted there is a State designation for Wild and Scenic Rivers. They can be designated either by the State, on a county basis, or a city basis. It would be up to the local government to determine what "Wild and Scenic River" means.

Area #3 - Highway 10 East - commercial and residential

Karen Aldinger felt the area is not user-friendly - no sidewalks.

Ann Shannon noted the area has grown and there are major transportation issues.

Ald. Markham felt with more residential happening out there, bike paths are needed.

Ald. Seiser felt the signage is terrible out there and is glad we have a Sign Ordinance..

Area #4 - Portage County Business Park area

Ann Shannon felt recreational opportunities are lacking on that part of town. A small park would be nice. Is there still talk about pedestrian crossings by the railroad under I-39.

Bob Freckmann noted the railroad corridor was and is a nice prairie corridor.

Karen Aldinger felt the Green Circle Trail should be continued to this area.

Ald. Rackow suggested we should consider a connection between the industrial parks.

Area #5 - area west of the Wisconsin River

Ald. Stroik discussed train noise issues both on County Trunk P and West River Drive. With increased train traffic, there are concerns about pedestrian crossings.

Bob Freckmann felt lowlands and wetlands should be left undeveloped.

Lee Beveridge noted storm water drainage is a big issue and felt we should look at extension of curb and gutter.

Area #6 - area east of Michigan Ave. and north of Main St.

Ald. Walther noted concerns about expansion of St. Michael's Hospital and Mid-State Technical College and neighborhood parking and traffic.

Ann Shannon noted with those expansions, housing is lost.

Cathy Dugan expressed concern with the loss of trees and homes for the needed parking for these expansions. Maybe they could look at a parking garage or shuttle service.

Area #7 - University area.

Liz McDonald noted concern about the number of unrelated people allowed in student housing and parking lots in yards.

Mark Seiler felt the condition of rental housing is run down. We have a clean campus with lots of vegetation.

Carl Rasmussen noted when people come to look at the campus, they are also choosing a community to be a part of.

Lee Beveridge suggested including exterior maintenance of student rentals as a part of the housing license procedure.

Area #8 - area west of Division St. and north of Center Point Dr. (Bukolt Park, schools, and apartments)

Ald. Seiser felt there is value to rehabbing older, smaller homes such as the one shown on Fifth Ave.

Lee Beveridge felt that if the house is structurally sound, the property on Fifth Ave. could be rehabbed. There are many older properties on the north side that have been painted and remodeled.

Elbert Rackow noted several older, deteriorated properties have been torn down to make way for Habitat for Humanity or CAP Services to construct new ones. Many times, that is a better course of action than rehabbing them.

Area #9 - Downtown area.

Liz McDonald noted benches need to be replaced, and there is trash on the streets on week-ends.

Ald. Sevenich felt we need to be more proactive downtown. Enforce maintenance guidelines.

Area #10 - Southside.

Cathy Dugan expressed displeasure with the plans for removing buildings for the southside business area (Dixon and Division Streets).

Liz McDonald noted sidewalk repair needs to be addressed. A small neighborhood park should be looked into.

Area #11 - area east of Division St./west of Park Ridge. from Main St. To Patch St.

Ald. Moore felt issues to be discussed for this area are curb & gutter, and sidewalks

Ald. Rackow felt sidewalks need to be continuous on all streets.

Lois Feldman felt the signal lights at Main/Wilshire and Main/Sunset need to be coordinated.

Ald. Sowieja noted with regard to the new house being built following the fire in the 2200 block of Main Street, it doesn't fit in with the style of houses around it. Isn't there something that can be done to keep that type of atmosphere.

Lee Beveridge noted we had a similar issue that prompted extending the Clark Street Historic District.

Elbert Rackow noted there is concern about Dixon Street being a truck route.

Liz McDonald supported park development for the old Emerson School property.

Area #12 - area south of Patch St. and west of Minnesota Ave. (Riverview/HH)

Bob Freckmann felt the HH area toward the river should be kept natural as much as possible.

Liz McDonald noted the old dump area on Whiting Ave. is an eyesore.

Ald. Sowieja noted Bus. 51/South Church St. needs to be looked at for future development. We need to decide whether we want to continue to allow housing along there or designate that corridor as business.

Ald. Sevenich felt more landscaping is needed along Church St.

Mark Seiler agreed that big trees should also be included. We need more greenery.

Ald. Markham suggested maybe any new development along Church St. should be closer to the street with parking behind the building.

Liz McDonald felt Stock lumber and Vetter sites on Wood St. should be cleaned up.

Ald.. Sowieja noted utilities should be put underground along Church St./Bus. 51 if we ever decide to do anything in the street along there. It

would look much better.

Mike Phillips felt abandoned telephone poles should be removed.

Area #13 - City Industrial Park

Ann Shannon noted there should be an overpass for the train on Country Club Drive.

Carl Rasmussen noted sidewalks should extend along Hoover Ave. and also along Patch Street.

Jeff Zabel noted the widened pavement on Heffron St. Extended between Leahy and Hoover is a great idea. It can accommodate walkers and bikers. We should do more of that.

Bob Freckmann noted there is an effort to buy the Erickson lots along the Plover River which would be a very nice addition to the park and very worthwhile preservation of habitat along the river.

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, the next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 28.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

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Bottom of Form