



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
October 10th, 2023

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Vice-Chair
Lynn Sorenson, Secretary
Robert Jewell
Mona Munroe-Younis
Jeffrey Curtis Horton

Staff Present

Joanne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney
Max Lester, Int. Zoning Coordinator
Tyler Bailey, Deputy Director of Business Services
Emily Doerr Director of Planning & Development
Montel Menifee, Cannabis Licensing Coordinator

Absent:

Harry Ryan
Leora Campbell
April Cook-Hawkins

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was held both in-person in the Council Chambers and via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent
Commissioner Campbell: absent
Commissioner Blower: present
Commissioner Jewell: present
Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent

Commissioner Sorenson: appearing online via
Zoom Conferencing
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: present
Commissioner Horton: present
Chairperson Wesley: present

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Wesley asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Blower motioned to accept the agenda as amended. Commissioner Munroe-Younis seconded the motion.

M/S – Blower/Munroe-Younis
Unanimously carried by voice vote



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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes of August 8th, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Blower supported the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent
Commissioner Campbell: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent
Commissioner Sorenson: abstain
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: abstain
Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Jewell/Blower

4 yes – 0 no – 2 abstain

Motion carried by voice vote

Commissioners Jewell and Munroe-Younis note some grammatical issues to be corrected for the minutes of August 22nd, 2023.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes of August 22nd, 2023 with correction. Commissioner Blower supported the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent
Commissioner Campbell: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent
Commissioner Sorenson: abstain
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Jewell/Blower

5 yes – 0 no – 1 abstain

Motion carried by voice vote

The minutes for September 12th have been completed but were not prepared to be provided at this meeting. The minutes for September 26th are still in progress at this time.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Wesley opened the Public Forum. No one spoke.



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PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

None.

CASE REVIEW:

1901 S. Dort Hwy., Sign Permit PID: 41-16-251-020 CE – Commerce & Employment:

Max provided an update on the application. Max met with the applicant to discuss the additional issues the Planning Commission discussed September 26th and went on to advise the applicant to seek approval of temporary signage and reapply for the permanent signage at a later date.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis wanted to confirm that the LED sign discussed previously had also been shut off.

Commissioner Blower motioned to approve the permits for temporary signage. Commissioner Munroe-Younis supported the motion.

Chairman Wesley opened the floor for further discussion. No one spoke.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent

Commissioner Campbell: absent

Commissioner Sorenson: yes

Commissioner Blower: yes

Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes

Commissioner Jewell: yes

Chairman Wesley: yes

Commissioner Horton: yes

M/S – Blower/ Munroe-Younis

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Unanimously carried by voice vote

Green Skies Healing Tree, LLC – 3401 Corunna Rd:

Attorney Gurley provided an update. She responded to the applicant regarding the need for specs of certain materials as well as requirements for a blight exemption plan. A meeting had been requested and had not been scheduled at this time.



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PC-23-7: Alpine Development Group, LLC-2502 S. Dort Hwy:

Welson Sarkis, the property owner, was in attendance to discuss the property. Mr. Sarkis had been working with Max to get approval for signage and other updates to the building.

Due to conversations and email exchanges had the week of this meeting, Max does not wish to discuss the application at this time. Commissioner Jewell asked for clarification on this. Max explained they had previously submitted a staff report in favor of approving the permits, however due to communications had this week that are still ongoing they need more time to discuss internally the next steps.

Emily Doerr explained that following the conditional approval of this request an administrative review was performed on the LED technology for the EMC cabinet and façade lighting. After comparing the provided materials to the Zoning Code, staff concluded that the LED lights on the façade of the building did not comply and must be shut off until proper shielding is installed. After communicating this, there were accusations made against the Planning Department alleging incorrect and unjust enforcement. These were forwarded to Attorney Gurley for review.

Attorney Gurley confirmed receipt of this information and stated she has not had proper time to go over it. Emily Doerr adds that Mayor Neeley has also been made aware of this correspondence.

Commissioner Jewell motioned to postpone discussion until the next meeting on October 24th. Commissioner Munroe-Younis supported the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent
Commissioner Campbell: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent
Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/ Munroe-Younis

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Unanimously carried by voice vote

City Council Action on Planning Commission Recommendations

No updates at this time.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Next update to be provided at the October 24th, 2023 meeting.



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REPORTS:

Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)

Tyler Bailey explained the certification process is moving forward soon, which involves having a joint training between the Planning Commission, the EDC, HDC, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there will be any prep materials for the training. Tyler Bailey says if there are they will be emailed out, but planning of the joint meeting was still in early stages.

Tyler Bailey will compile an update on their progress towards RRC certification.

Director Doerr explained the benefits of the certification.

Planning Commission Expired Terms

Director Doerr explained Vice-Chair Blower had been re-appointed by City Council. Commissioner Ryan is now considered to live in Ward- due to redrawn lines. Waiting on Commissioner Murphy to provide support to either Commissioner Campbell or Ryan. Councilman Pfeiffer gave support to Commissioner Sorenson, but her resume is needed for reappointment.

Chairman Wesley asked about Commissioner Cook-Hawkins' seat. Director Doerr explained there was talk of the Ward 1 seat at City Council. Additionally, she will follow up on the update for the Ward 7 representative.

10-Year City of Flint Comprehensive Plan Review

Chairman Wesley said they are working on it and explained he forwarded transportation information to the director.

Staffing Update

Director Doerr explained they interviewed a qualified applicant for the Zoning Coordinator role and are working on putting forward an offer.

Similarly, they interviewed several qualified applicants for the open Planner I position and have one they intend to move forward with a job offer on.

City Council had not yet approved for funding for additional administrative support.

Recommendations to City Council

The W. Fifth Ave. rezonings and the map and text amendments that were reviewed and motioned for recommendation to City Council are being prepared as resolutions to move forward to Council.

Director Doerr stated that she and Attorney Gurley have scheduled a meeting to go over the proper process to forward the recommendations to City Council.



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FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Commissioner Blower recalled hearing there was a timeframe attached to this process. She asked if that takes the form of a deadline. Max explained that the timeframe is for City Council. Doerr stressed the importance of getting it done before the end of the year, as it affects the assessments of properties.

Attorney Gurley explained that for the City Council to see this they must go through the process as though they are introducing a new zoning code and that requires at least 15 days after publishing a public hearing for City Council to be held. These 15 days are nonnegotiable under State law.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis asked if the 15 days resets if the changes are not brought to City Council in that time. Attorney Gurley explained there are procedures to avoid that scenario, for example they could request the public hearing to be at the beginning of City Council and could ask for a recess in the event of a lack of a quorum.

Director Doerr wanted to address some questions posed to the Zoning Coordinator. One was on the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. Director Doerr explained her predecessor never filled the Planner II position so very little work was done on the initiative. Fortunately, in the last two months they have been able to get some forward movement on it and she listed some properties they have been able to place bids on. Deputy Director of Community Services Ashley Harris has been leading this.

The other question regarded the agreement with Habitat for Housing Rehab. Director Doerr confirmed this has moved forward, the city is working with a state program to get qualified residents repairs for their residential facades.

Finally, there was some discussion on temporary marijuana event licenses, Director Doerr would rather come back to this topic at a later date. Commissioner Jewell said they had pushed back this discussion in the past and asked for staff's recommendations on how to handle them. Montel Menifee, Cannabis Licensing Coordinator for The City of Flint, explained that he had discussed the licenses with Attorney Campbell along with his proposed amendments to the marijuana ordinances.

Educational Materials

Two documents are attached for discussion at the meeting, staff previously mentioned these items for future discussion when an agenda would allow. As we do not have a public hearing scheduled now is a good time to share some insights, interesting ideas, and discuss how these may impact our decision making.

- Fourteen Ways to Build a Better Planning Commission, Michigan Planner July/August 2023 Issue
- Equity in Zoning Policy Guide, American Planning Association

Max expressed these are helpful materials worth review by the Planning Commission to discuss improvements to communications and workflow.

Chairman Wesley said he had not had a chance to review these materials and asked the Commission if they would like to discuss them more in depth on a later date. The Commission agreed.



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RESOLUTIONS:

No resolutions at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Blower/Munroe-Younis

Unanimously carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

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