



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
October 24th, 2023

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Vice-Chair
Lynn Sorenson, Secretary
Harry Ryan
Leora Campbell
Robert Jewell
Jeffrey Curtis Horton

Staff Present

Joanne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney
Max Lester, Int. Zoning Coordinator
Tyler Bailey, Deputy Director of Business Services

Absent:

April Cook-Hawkins
Mona Munroe-Younis

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:52 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: present in-person	Commissioner Sorenson: present in-person
Commissioner Campbell: absent	Commissioner Munroe-Younis: absent
Commissioner Blower: present in-person	Commissioner Horton: present in-person
Commissioner Jewell: present in-person	Chairperson Wesley: present in-person
Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent	

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Blower requested to add appointment of a PC Liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals to the agenda under New Business. Max Lester requested an addition for the Reports section, Recommendations to City Council.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Chairman Wesley asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Ryan motioned to accept the agenda as amended. Commissioner Jewell seconded the motion.

M/S – Ryan/Jewell

Unanimously carried by voice vote



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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Commissioner Sorenson and Commissioner Jewell corrected a few typos and grammatical issues in the minutes of September 12th, 2023. Commissioner Sorenson stated she will abstain from the vote due to her absence from the meeting.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes of September 12th, 2023 as corrected. Commissioner Blower supported this motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: yes

Commissioner Campbell: yes

Commissioner Blower: yes

Commissioner Jewell: yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent

Commissioner Sorenson: abstain

Commissioner Munroe-Younis: absent

Chairman Wesley: yes

M/S – Jewell/Blower

5 yes – 0 no – 1 abstain

The motion carried

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairman Wesley opened the floor for public forum.

Berton Brown, appearing virtually via Zoom, clarified that this is his only opportunity to speak to PC-23-7. Chairman Wesley confirmed that is the case.

Mr. Brown is the proprietor of 2502 S. Dort Hwy. He expressed frustration at how slowly the case has been moving. He pointed to the investments he's made in Flint and wishes to continue making to better the community. Mr. Brown claimed the cited sections in the Zoning Code do not reference façade lighting, but they do reference decorative lighting for which he further claimed they have followed all regulations. He then stated that due to the delays of approval for this case they have not been able to put forward a case on development for another building on the same site.

Chairman Wesley asked if anyone else wanted to address the Commission. No one spoke

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

No public hearings at this time.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

No site plans to review at this time.



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CASE REVIEW:

Green Skies Healing Tree, LLC – 3401 Corunna Rd:

Attorney Gurley provided an update. Attorney Gurley spoke with their attorney, he intended to get the last two pieces of information needed to move forward with this case. Unfortunately, he did not, and Attorney Gurley will follow up on it. She advised him that the next meeting would be on November 14th and November 28th after that, and it would be best to get this done sooner.

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

Max shared the final approval from September 22nd. It says that the EMC Center sign and the Green Plus wall sign are approved pending approval from the Building Department. The LEDs need to be shielded per the cited sections (50-170, 50-74).

Commissioner Jewell asked what the next step is for the Planning Commission on this case. Max stated the case is no longer an item for the Planning Commission.

Attorney Gurley commented that it needs to be made clear what constitutes a sign. Additionally, applicant needs to provide a purpose for the lighting to the Zoning Coordinator.

City Council Action on Planning Commission Recommendations

No updates at this time.

Zoning Board of Appeals

One case was heard at the October 17th, 2023 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting:

- **ZBA 23-16:** Uptown Reinvestment Corporation requests a Non-Use Variance for relief from Section 50-155 Building Foundation Zone Landscaping for the southern elevation of the MSU Expansion project at 200 E. First St., Flint, MI 48503 (PID # 41-18-126-020)
- The request was denied, with a vote of 4 yes – 4 no – 0 abstain, on the basis that not all five standards for a Non-Use Variance had been met.

Commissioner Jewell stated that this item may come before the Commission as a site plan. He asked if they would have to fulfill the landscaping requirement on the site plan. Max said yes. Commissioner Jewell then asked staff to make note of the Zoning Board of Appeals' ruling in the event a site plan comes before the Commission. Max said there were other variances this property was approved for; they will provide a log on all of them when a site plan is presented.



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REPORTS:

Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)

There is a joint meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 9th at 5:30 p.m. It will be run by the Michigan Association of Planners. The presentation is entitled “Know Your Role” and will discuss the importance of filling your role and responsibilities and how they fit into the big picture.

Tyler Bailey sent an email to all the Chairs and Vice-Chairs about the meeting and encouraged them to reach out to him with any questions.

Planning Commission Expired Terms

Commissioner Sorenson was voted through for reappointment.

There was a resolution to appoint Joshua Brown that was approved.

10-Year City of Flint Comprehensive Plan Review

No updates at this time.

Staffing Update

A new Planner I is starting Monday, October 30th and a second Zoning Coordinator is starting mid-November.

Commissioner Jewell asked that their contact information be provided.

Tyler Bailey explained that they can provide that, however it will not include their roles and responsibilities. This is because the Department is going through reorganization and the roles may change.

Commissioner Jewell was confused by this, as historically they get a generic list of their roles and responsibilities.

Recommendations to City Council

The Commission’s recommendation for Zoning Map amendments is set to go before the City Council on November 21st.

Equity in Zoning Policy Guide

Max wanted more time to prepare a thorough presentation on this at a later meeting. They will notify the Commission to add it to the agenda when they are prepared.

RESOLUTIONS:

No resolutions at this time.



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OLD BUSINESS:

No old business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

PC ZBA Liaison Appointment

The Zoning Board of Appeals is anticipating a Planning Commissioner to serve as a liaison. Max explained the ZBA wants this position filled as the City Charter dictates their vote tallies assume the position is filled regardless of whether or not it is. Meaning a 9-person board is considered 10 people, so a two thirds vote would require 7 votes to pass instead of 6.

Commissioner Blower explained she had served that role for several years and wanted to ensure the role and its responsibilities are clearly communicated. She explained the liaison would not be allowed to speak on any topics. Her belief is that the role is wasteful.

Max explained the liaison can only speak on appeals from the Planning Commission that said liaison voted on. Commissioner Blower further expressed her grievances with the role. Max stated a benefit of the role is that a member of the Planning Commission gets a chance to see what variances come up often and can use that as a basis for presenting alterations to the Zoning Code.

Max proposed the idea of having two alternates filling the position instead of a planning commission member. This would involve amending the City Charter, making it a poor short-term solution, someone would still need to fill that role during that process.

Chairman Wesley expressed that the Planning Commission is a board of volunteers and believes attending Zoning Board of Appeals meetings without being allowed to speak is a waste of time.

Attorney Gurley clarified the powers of the liaison. She advised the commission to research the bylaws to better determine the powers and limitations of the role. She intends to do further research herself on the matter.

Commissioner Jewell talked about the benefits of having a representative on the Zoning Board of Appeals for cases related to the Planning Commission.

Max mentioned the relevancy of the upcoming joint meeting in terms of helping clarify the role. Tyler Bailey said he will reach out to the Michigan Association of Planning regarding the role to be covered at the training.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Sorenson/Blower

Unanimously carried by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM.