



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
November 23, 2021

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair
Elizabeth Jordan, Vice-Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Secretary
Robert Jewell
Harry Ryan
Lynn Sorenson
Leora Campbell

Staff Present

Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development
William Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator
Keizy Anpalagan, GIS Specialist
Joanne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney
Lauren Marshall, Planner I
Jonathon Mateen, Planner I

Absent:

April Cook-Hawkins

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

Assistant City Attorney Joanne Gurley read the Amendment to the Open Meeting Act adopted in Senate House Bill 1108 as passed on October 13, 2020 and signed into law on October 16, 2020.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Campbell: appearing
remotely, City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Blower: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Jewell: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: absent
Commissioner Sorenson: appearing
remotely, City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Jordan: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
Chairman Wesley: appearing remotely, City
of Flint, MI

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Jonathan Mateen, Planner I, stated an addition of I-475 Update to be placed at the end of the Reports Section.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Jewell motioned to adopt the agenda as updated. Commissioner Blower supported the motion.



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M/S – Jewell/Blower
Unanimously carried by voice vote.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Minutes of November 9th, 2021.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to adopt the minutes of November 9th, 2021, as corrected and clarified. Commissioner Campbell supported the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan, yes
Commissioner Campbell, yes
Commissioner Blower, yes
Commissioner Jewell, yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins, absent
Commissioner Sorenson, yes
Commissioner Jordan, yes
Chairman Wesley, yes

M/S – Jewell/Campbell
The motion carried

7 yes – 0 no – 1 absent

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one spoke for the public forum.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

No public hearings.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

No site plan review.

CASE REVIEW:

SPR 20-941: Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village is requesting a Site Plan Review at 4119 N Saginaw St. (PID# 46-36-428-059).

William Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator, stated that Doug Scott from ROWE Professional Services has brought in the plans that have been reviewed by and signed by Commissioner Wesley with the condition that a crosswalk is added to the plans. Mr. Vandercook stated the draft lighting agreement will be sent to ROWE this week.



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REPORTS:

Status of Draft Zoning Ordinance, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development:

Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development, stated staff is presenting the draft zoning ordinance to City Council the first part of January. Ms. Wilcox stated there needs to be educational sessions done before bringing the draft ordinance in front of Council. Ms. Wilcox stated that Inez Brown, City Clerk, would like to have a meeting with all of the City Council members prior to setting up individual meetings. Ms. Wilcox stated Ms. Brown is rescheduling the meeting with all the City Council members. Ms. Wilcox stated that once the meeting with all the City Council members happens staff will immediately move toward scheduling two-on-two meetings with City Council members.

Status of Permanent Marihuana Ordinance, JoAnne Gurley, Assistant City Attorney:

Attorney Gurley stated this item is dependent on when City Council is able to vote on the draft zoning ordinance and when staff have completed the updates to the permanent marihuana ordinance. Attorney Gurley stated it is the Law Department's recommendation that both the draft zoning ordinance and the permanent marihuana ordinance be presented to Council at the same time. Ms. Wilcox stated that staff have been reviewing the ordinances and amendments and identified changes that need to be made. Ms. Wilcox stated staff will have a summary of all of the changes including more comprehensive changes that need to occur after the draft zoning code is adopted in order to make physical amendments to the permanent marihuana ordinance.

Staffing Update, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development:

Ms. Wilcox stated that all the positions that were mentioned in the last Planning Commission meeting are posted. Ms. Wilcox stated the Building and Safety Inspections Department has four vacancies and interviews have been conducted over the past two weeks. Ms. Wilcox stated there are four vacancies in the Planning and Zoning Division and an interview has been conducted for the Urban Designer position. Ms. Wilcox stated recruitment for the Lead Planner position is ongoing and has expanded to audiences such as the Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Association of Planners, and the American Planning Association.

Ms. Wilcox stated the Choice Project Coordinator position is now vacant as of November 19th, 2021. Ms. Wilcox stated there are no applicants for that position and staff is looking into additional steps to potentially increase the pay. Ms. Wilcox stated the Choice Project Planner position will be vacant January 7th, 2022 and recruitment efforts are underway.

Ms. Wilcox stated Community and Economic Development has two vacancies. Ms. Wilcox stated one of the two vacancies has been filled and the applicant is expected to start December 6th, 2021. Ms. Wilcox also stated the administrative assistant position will be posted soon.



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Choice Neighborhood Initiative Update, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Commissioner Jordan thanked staff for sending out the transition memo. Commissioner Jordan asked when the partnership meeting on the status of projects and emerging needs would take place. Ms. Wilcox stated her understanding was there would be a steering group update and the thought is that it would be a partnership meeting where information can be presented. Ms. Wilcox stated staff can revisit and plan for a partnership meeting. Ms. Wilcox stated what staff have done is provided an update to the steering group from the Choice Neighborhood Coordinator, which is typically done bi-annually. Ms. Wilcox stated before the position became vacant the Coordinator did provide a comprehensive email to the steering group members. Ms. Wilcox stated she can provide the email to the Commissioners.

Michigan Association of Planning Memberships, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox stated the City has paid for 12 memberships for the Michigan Association of Planning which includes a combination of City staff and Commissioners. Ms. Wilcox stated that Commissioner Blower, Commissioner Jordan and Commissioner Wesley have a membership. Commissioner Jewell expressed his support of all the Commission members for both Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals members having memberships to MAP. Commissioner Campbell agreed with Commissioner Jewell.

Educational updates for the Planning Commission, William Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator:

Mr. Vandercook stated staff is still preparing presentations for places of worship. Mr. Vandercook stated the presentation on lounges will occur at the next Planning Commission meeting.

Status of Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting, Commissioner Blower

Commissioner Blower stated that there were three public hearings during the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on November 16th, 2021. Commissioner Blower stated one was a use variance for a mini storage facility next to the Ashley Furniture warehouse on Lapeer Rd. Commissioner Blower stated it was not a zoning change but a variance since the current zoning code does not make any reference to indoor mini storage facilities. Commissioner Blower stated that variance was granted.

Commissioner Blower stated the other two items were appeals for PC 21-409 and PC 21-410 RBRB Investments seeking location variances for both residential and places of worship. Commissioner Blower stated the applicant was appealing the cases due to the following reasons: 1) that the Planning Commission used Google Maps and were not looking at the right parcel during the discussion; 2) the applicant argued the variance should be measured door to door and not parcel line to parcel line; and 3) that the Planning Commission did not consider the public support of the project. Commissioner Blower



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stated the Zoning Board of Appeals upheld both of the decisions of the Planning Commission to deny both of the location variances for residential and from the place of worship.

Commissioner Jewell asked for an update on Commissioner Blower's role and ability during the ZBA meetings for voting and discussion of appeal cases. Commissioner Blower stated she did not have discussion nor voting rights during the appeals. Commissioner Blower stated that Chair Commissioner Telliga asked for a written legal opinion from the Law Department.

I-475 Update, Jonathan Mateen, Planner I

Mr. Mateen stated that the I-475 Planning and Environmental Linkages study has a virtual on-demand open house presentation that is available for the public to view and comment on through December 3rd, 2021.

RESOLUTIONS:

No resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS:

American Rescue Plan, Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning and Development

Ms. Wilcox stated that the Administration and Department of Finance drafted a resolution for City Council to enter into an agreement with Ernst & Young as the compliance firm. Ms. Wilcox stated the resolution has been postponed by Council and was not approved during the Monday, November 22nd, 2021 meeting and is still pending.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Ryan asked Attorney Gurley for clarity on if the new City Council should have taken office in January. Attorney Gurley stated that the state law says as of December 31st, 2021 unless the legislature makes an amendment that virtual meetings, public bodies will not be available under emergency declarations. Attorney Gurley stated there will not be virtual meetings unless someone is in the military service. Attorney Gurley stated there were problems regarding the swearing in of the new City Council and whether City Council could take office after the votes were certified by Genesee County. Attorney Gurley stated the City of Flint has language in its Charter that allows the Council to take place after the certification of the ballots and supersedes anything else. Attorney Gurley confirmed that the Council that is seated is proper.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Campbell/Sorenson

Unanimously carried by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.