

**City of Columbus**  
**Regular Planning Commission Meeting**  
**February 5, 2014**

The February 5, 2014 regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Columbus was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Barbara Hvass at the City Hall. Present were Commission members Andy Anderson, Mark Daly, Pam Wolowski, Jesse Preiner, Jody Krebs, and Garth Sternberg; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were City Council members Bill Krebs, Jeff Duraine, and Mayor David Povolny; and Ryan Wolowski.

**WELCOME NEW PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER**

Hvass and PC members welcomed new Planning Commission Member, Mark Daly.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the Agenda as presented. Second by Anderson. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL - REGULAR PC MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2013**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2013 regular Planning Commission meeting as written. Second by Wolowski. Motion carried.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

• **Election of Chairperson and Vice Chair**

Anderson nominated Hvass as PC Chairperson. Wolowski seconded the nomination. Krebs nominated Sternberg as PC Chairperson. Preiner seconded the nomination.

A vote was taken using paper ballots submitted by each PC member. Hvass was elected as PC Chairperson.

*Motion* by Preiner to elect a Vice Chairperson for a one-year term for 2014. Second by Krebs. Motion carried.

Anderson nominated Sternberg as PC Vice Chairperson. Hvass seconded the nomination. A vote was taken. Sternberg was elected as PC Vice Chairperson.

• **Discussion – 2014 Goals/Research Format**

Mursko said the City Council would like to hold four joint meetings again in 2014. They have asked the PC to determine goals they want to work on, and then to present research, tangibles and conclusions to the City Council. E.g. What are the reasons it's a good idea to increase rooftops? How do we do it? If you are targeting areas for higher densities, which areas and what are your reasons for choosing those areas? The Council is asking for reasons and specifics applicable to Columbus.

Subtracting C/I areas, and keeping with the 10:1 ratio in the Comp Plan, it leaves the theoretical possibility of 2844 residential rural households in Columbus. As of 2013 we have 1453 improved residential parcels, meaning that's how many residential parcels pay taxes. How many do we want? What's our goal? What makes the most sense on a map?

Mursko said the Deputy City Clerk is working with a GIS person with Anoka County to get maps that show how many 5-acre lots we have, how many one-acre lots we have, etc., to get a better feel for the density spread we already have in Columbus.

The Suburban Residential Overlay in the NE corner includes approximately 61 acres of net developable land that will support 183 housing units at the minimum density of three units per acre. The SE corner is about 122 acres and will support 366 housing units. This kind of data is a place to start when looking at something like rooftops. The Comp Plan may not need to be amended to increase rooftops.

Following discussion, PC members agreed on the following goals they would like to focus on in 2014:

**1) Decrease Tax Rates for Property Owners in Columbus**

(Where and how should Columbus grow?)

A. Increase housing developments:

- Consideration of Residential PUD or lot averaging concept for residential areas.
- Should residential density be changed in certain areas?

**2) Increase Potential Land Sales in Commercial Corridors**

- Provide higher density housing alternatives in the I-35 Corridor.

**3) How can we step outside the box and take different approaches to encourage development?**

- Transitional land use IUP in the residential areas immediately abutting commercial district

Hvass suggested presenting data to the Council using the Finding of Facts/Recommendations format used now when doing applications.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

There was no topic raised for discussion for Open Forum.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mursko said the PC will be hearing an IUP request from Forest Lake Contracting at their next meeting on February 19, 2014.

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT**

**STERNBERG COMMENT**

Sternberg asked Mursko to clarify some information in the Land Use Plan. It shows gross acreage of 28,435 that could support the 2844 rural households. He asked if that is high ground. Mursko said there are 48 sections of land. The total acreage of Columbus is 30,573. The 28,435 is just residential acres. The rest are commercial acres. Some of the 28,435 is unbuildable, because of wetlands. The maps requested from Anoka County will show what's vacant, what's developed, and what areas are wetlands.

**PREINER COMMENT**

Preiner asked Mursko if a change in the 10:1 ratio would need to be approved by the Met Council. She said it would. She explained that the 10:1 ratio is for land zoned rural residential.

**ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING**

Sternberg is scheduled to attend the City Council meeting on February 12, 2014.

*Motion* by Krebs to adjourn. Second by Sternberg. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Boland, Recording Secretary