City of Columbus
Regular Planning Commission Meeting
May 21, 2014

The May 21, 2014 regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Columbus was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chair Garth Sternberg at the City Hall. Present were Commission members Mark Daly, Pam Wolowski, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, Planner Dean Johnson, and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were Frank Wagamon, and Pat Preiner.

AGENDA APPROVAL

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

APPROVAL - REGULAR PC MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 7, 2014

Motion by Krebs to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2014 regular Planning Commission joint meeting as written. Second by Wolowski. Motion carried.

PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

Before beginning the workshop, City Administrator Mursko announced that Planning Commission member Barb Hvass resigned from the PC, effective yesterday. Mursko said Hvass said it was a pleasure serving, but she felt it was time to resign. Mursko said there are currently two vacancies on the PC. There is no one on the list. There are also vacancies on the Park Board, Fall Fest Committee, and the EDA. The City has been advertising these openings.

I. Timeline & Process
II. Discussion
    A. Alternative Lot Design Ordinance
        (PUD) – Planned Unit Development
        (TDR) – Transfer Density Rights

PC members agreed they would like to make the ordinance more flexible, to allow for maximizing the use of buildable upland without increasing overall density. The City is 65% wetlands. The concept of lot averaging was discussed at length. The existing portion of the ordinance allowing PUDs is for the suburban residential district only. If this is expanded to RR, you are making it easier to create more rooftops by keeping the overall density, but allowing houses to be in closer proximity.

City Planner Johnson said the whole idea of lot averaging is that you can allow design flexibility to match the circumstances. It doesn't always mean you're going to get eight lots on a forty, if you couldn't get them conventionally. You begin with our current City standards of how many homes the existing land is eligible for. Then you establish a minimum lot size and a minimum lot width. You're not creating density. The starting point is a determination of what they are entitled to, based on your current standards. You aren't increasing the number of homes to which a landowner is entitled on a given parcel. This flexibility also lowers development costs, creates shorter streets, and results in less maintenance costs for the City.

Johnson said he will bring scaled examples to the next meeting to show different standards. To begin the process, he will use the conventional standards: 220' of frontage, five acres, and so

forth, to determine eligibility on any individual parcel. That will guarantee that you aren't increasing the actual number of units. Then he will begin with minimums of 2 ½ acres, 160' of frontage, keep 60' on the cul de sac, and 160' is still at setback. Creation of out lots will not be allowed unless they are owned by an association. Some fundamental rules have to be set. Bare minimums need to be lot width, lot area, how eligibility is determined, and whether or not the creation of out lots will be allowed. Amendment to the ordinance would take place in the PUD section of the performance standards in the zoning ordinance. It will be restructured so part one is SR, and part two would be RR, and will identify this concept.

Mursko explained that these examples will come back to PC members at their next meeting. Changes can still be made. It would then need to be approved and passed on to the Council. If they agree with it, they would call for a public hearing. After the hearing, whatever is approved by the PC would go back to the CC for approval. It could then be published.

B. R-2 District

A new zoning district would create new densities and require a Comp Plan amendment. The PC will look at this after completing an alternative lot design ordinance. Creating a new zoning district is a longer process, as indicated on the timeline handout, probably at least six months.

C. Lake Drive/Buffer Zone

The only reference to screening in the City's ordinance is at pg. 7A-56 K. When looking at a Lake Drive buffer zone, this is the section that would need to be expanded or have criteria added. Mursko asked PC members to think about what they might want to see for buffering between the Commercial and Residential districts. There was discussion about the importance of businesses having an idea up-front of what kind of screening costs to expect. That will lessen the likelihood that they will have to re-draw plans, amend permits, etc.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Frank Wagamon asked a question about setback possibilities that were discussed earlier.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mursko reported that PC members may hear a request for a waiver for subdivision at their next meeting (6/4). At the following meeting (6/18) there will likely be a hearing for an IUP amendment due to a billboard change.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT

Commission members had nothing to report.

ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING

Sternberg is scheduled to attend the City Council meeting on May 28, 2014.

Motion by Krebs to adjourn. Second by Sternberg. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Karen Boland, Recording Secretary