

City of Columbus
Regular Planning Commission Meeting
09.04.19

The September 4th, 2019 regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Columbus was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Chair Ron Hanegraaf at the City Hall. Present were Commission members: Kris King, Pam Wolowski, Barb Bobick and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko; City Planning Technician Ben Gutknecht; Planner Mentor Dean Johnson and Recording Secretary Rochelle Busch.

Also, in attendance were Mayor Jesse Preiner; City Council Members Denny Peterson, Shelly Logren and Janet Hegland; John Young, and Tom Palmquist.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Krebs to approve amended agenda, striking items 7, 8, and 9. Second by Wolowski. Motion carried unanimously.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION – NE QUAD DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE HIGH-DENSITY MIXED-USE DISTRICT

Planner Johnson explained preparing a base ordinance in a PUD must have flexibility for variety. The Planning Commission will not add specifics on building staggering and exact look but may designate big items such as underground parking. Larger markets demand for higher end units, such as the one looking to develop in Columbus, are not 100% masonry. Johnson noted that making standards of higher expense products, may turn potential development away.

Planner Johnson reviewed the list of the architectural features, building materials on the exteriors, color variation and other design considerations. Wolowski noted that the list dictates that underground parking is a must, which she believes not to be feasible in the area due to the high-water table. Johnson stated with that being listed it was addressing that most of the residence of the apartment building would be parking in the interior of the building as there wouldn't be enough parking spots dedicated per each unit on a flat lot. Bobick stated parking shouldn't be a city issue, it should be a management issue. King responded by explaining that by stating there will be adequate parking they will be trying to minimize issues that come in over the counter to the City, as well as issues concerning towed vehicles.

The commercial standards in the NE Quadrant is what the members are working around in order to help the apartment building move forward with the application. The standards being developed will be used across the Residential High-Density area. Color schemes developed due to Hy-Vee development. The color scheme and material types were discussed. Krebs agreed with Planner Johnson regarding not to lock in specific requirements, but stay with a color scheme to help guide future development in the area. When working with a color scheme it is leaving some flexibility for future developers to set their building apart.

Members discussed architectural features, in using a combination of materials and features to make the building appealing and not “shoe box” like. They would like to see building materials using both vertical and horizontal components. Johnson stated balconies are common feature for multi family buildings. Members agreed that balconies are a good outdoor private space for the residence to use but should not be used for outdoor storage of items. They would like to see a prominent entrance on the building and not have it blend into the surroundings.

Planner Johnson explained the benefits of using PUD trade-offs. He noted that in those trade-offs some items that could be added are a roof-top common area, as well as a park for children. In the high traffic area this building is proposing to be in, there is no park or recreation area for children to play, which could become dangerous. Members agreed with the importance of adding playground equipment in designated area for children to play.

In conclusion, Planning Commission Members agreed with the design standard matrix compiled by Planner Johnson and changes notated from City Council.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Nothing to report

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

City Planning Technician Ben Gutknecht gave a brief update on the City Code Chapter 7B Sign Regulations, Section 7B-310 billboard ordinance. Gutknecht reviewed maps with Planning commission members and stated that under the draft ordinance 4 billboards were set to be removed. However, in previous discussion the members stated they did not want to force removal of those billboards. As the ordinance was further developed at the August 28th, 2019 City Council meeting, new language was added that allows an IUP that currently exists on the property with commercial/industrial use to remain on the property. However, the new language also proposes any residential or vacant properties developed to commercial, the billboard must then be removed. Council had also requested from the current billboard companies that they develop up to 4 designs to improve or update their structures that they deemed affordable. The council will review the designs and decide whether to change the current language around updating. Council Member Logren directed a question at City Administrator Mursko, on whether a property owner would be allowed to have more than 1 billboard on a property. Mursko stated that because it's the same principal use under the IUP, if the owner had enough land, there could potentially be more than one billboard on a property.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT

Krebs stated children have started back at school. She wanted to remind everyone to be aware of school buses and laws around driving with school buses.

ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING

Bobick is scheduled to attend the City Council meeting on September 11th, 2019.

Motion by Krebs to adjourn. Second by Wolowski. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Rochelle Busch, Recording Secretary

