

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY MEETING FORMAT
STATUTES SECTION 13D.021
11-15-2023**

The 11-15-2023 Planning Commission meeting for the City of Columbus was called to order by Commission Chair Lynn Carver-Quinn at the City Hall at 6:02 PM. Present were Planning Commission members Lynn Carver-Quinn, Barb Bobick, and Robin Wood, City Council Liaison Jesse Preiner, City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, Planning and Zoning Tech Eleanor Hahn, Janet Hegland, Ron Hanegraaf, and John Young.

Planning Commissioner Judy Huntosh was absent from the meeting

The meeting was held in an interactive technology meeting format.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER –City Council and Planning Commission Meeting – 6:01 p.m.**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA** Motion Bobick. Second Wood. Motion carried with all in favor.
- 4. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 1, 2023 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES** Motion Barrette. Second Bobick. Motion carried with all in favor.
- 5. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 1, 2023 PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES – M. SHEAR RESIDENTIAL DOG KENNEL IUP** Motion Wood. Second Barrette. Motion carried with all in favor.
- 6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION – PLANNING AND ZONING APPLICATION PROCESS**
At this time Planning and Zoning Technician Eleanor Hahn and City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko gave a presentation outlining the application process. The purpose of the presentation is to provide some insight into the Planning and Zoning Application process from a staff perspective, as well as review the legal standards that guide that process. The presentation split the process into four phases to better explain the application timeline. Although this four-phase approach is ideal for any application, the process is rarely as simple as that. There are often several stakeholders other than the applicant involved with a project all submitting different materials at different times, which can result in a non-linear review process.

Concept Review

Most projects due diligence begins prior to a formal application being submitted. Discussions via phone or email are held with the prospective applicant to clarify necessary

steps. All project applicants have an opportunity to present a non-binding concept plan to the Planning Commission, however it is a voluntary process. For more complicated projects, an in-person meeting is scheduled with professional staff to discuss the project, location and any questions they may have about the city requirements. During that meeting, a non-binding concept plan is discussed and is recommended to all, but expressly recommended by staff if it is a large, complicated project or a text amendment is required for the use. Once the applicant has a full understanding of what is required of them, an application is submitted.

Submittal Review

When an application is first received, the Planning and Zoning Tech discusses the timeline requirements of 15 days for completeness review, 60 days for total review time and the optional 60-day extension if needed. Each type of application has different application requirements (pre-plat, final plat, IUP, CUP). City staff reviews and determines the completeness of the application.

The City has checklists for each type of permit and city staff evaluates whether all documents are included. Incomplete letters are required to be sent after receipt of an incomplete application identifying the required documentation that is missing. The burden is on the City to tell the applicant that their application is incomplete, and the 60-day rule stops the process until more information is submitted to deem the application complete. Columbus is a very entrepreneurial city, and many residents attempt to do the work themselves rather than hire an engineer or other consultants with expertise. Oftentimes, the majority of staff's time is spent educating residents on the regulations. The City Ordinance stipulates that a formal review cannot occur without all the required materials. Once an application is found to be complete, a Public Hearing is scheduled, and professional reports are prepared. There is a requirement for public notice to be given 10 days prior to the meeting when an application is reviewed, which has to be coordinated with newspaper publishing timelines.

Planning Commission and City Council Meetings

The next phase of the process is the Planning Commission and City Council reviews. The Planning Commission's role is fact finding, providing advice, asking questions, and making a recommendation to the City Council based on the information in the record. This process also includes public hearings and a presentation by the applicant. Mursko emphasizes that the fact finding for any given project is a collaborative effort between staff and Planning Commission members. Applicants may give false or misleading information over the counter that comes to light in a Public Hearing or from a site-visit. She also encourages the Planning Commission to submit additional information they receive regarding a project as soon as they can, so that it can be added to the meeting materials.

Timeline Example

Hahn reviews the application timeline from the date it was received by the city to the end of the 60-day review period. The legal statutes that dictate the deadlines for certain reviews, and examples of common issues that hold up the process were presented to Planning Commission members.

Mursko asks the Planning Commission if there are any changes to the process that they would like to see in the future. Chair Carver-Quinn suggests that staff inform applicants that Planning Commission members will be reaching out to inquire about site visits prior to the meeting.

7. **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM** Nothing at this time.
8. **PLANNER COMMISSIONER'S REPORT** Nothing at this time.
9. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S AND PLANNING & ZONING TECH REPORT** Nothing at this time.
10. **ADJOURN** *Motion* Wood. Second Barrette. Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Eleanor Hahn

Respectfully Submitted: Recording Secretary Eleanor Hahn.