

City of Columbus
Regular Planning Commission Joint Meeting
May 18, 2016

The May 18, 2016 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: James Watson, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; joint with City Council Members Bill Krebs, Jeff Duraine, Mark Daly, Denny Peterson and Mayor Dave Povolny; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, Attorney Jacob Steen, City Planner Dean Johnson, and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were Kris King, Paul Peskar, Susan Copeland, Alena Bodner, Angela Copeland Roemhild, Mary Preiner, and Pat Preiner.

AGENDA APPROVAL

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

**APPROVAL – WINIECKI ESTATES PRELIMINARY PLAT PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2016**

Motion by Commissioner Krebs to approve the minutes from the Winiecki Estates Preliminary Plat Public Hearing held on April 20, 2016. Second by Watson. Motion carried.

APPROVAL - REGULAR PC MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2016

Motion by Preiner to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2016 regular Planning Commission meeting as written. Second by Watson. Motion carried.

PLANNING COMMISSION – CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Mursko outlined the agenda items for discussion. She said staff reviewed things that have been on the shelf, which could be worked on. The idea is not to get them resolved, but to get a conceptual view of where the Council would like to go with them. Mursko introduced Assistant City Attorney Jacob Steen.

Chapter 9 – Excavation vs. Extraction

Mursko explained that the current process is that, under Chapter 9, you just apply for an excavation permit if removing over 100 cubic yards and up to 1000 cubic yards of earthly deposits. If the City Administrator finds a permit “doubtful” it can be brought before the PC. This leaves things pretty open. There was discussion of the definition of a mining operation, uplands vs. wetlands, and new home construction.

Steen said many communities make it an IUP over a certain threshold and then list exceptions and attach reasonable conditions. He said you could pick areas where you would not allow it. Johnson added that, for instance, in some communities it is a requirement to use major roadways; haul routes can be restricted.

Steen said a moratorium could be adopted to hold off any new permits until the issue can be studied. A public hearing could be held by the PC to get public input.

After further discussion, the consensus was to have Steen prepare a moratorium for consideration at the next Council meeting. If it is for one year, that does not mean it has to stay in place that long.

The intent is for the PC to hold a hearing on this issue on June 1st and begin looking at this ordinance.

Chapter 7A – Chicken Densities and Chicken Structure Criteria

Mursko explained that it has come to her attention there are many chickens in the RR area, but little guidance in the current ordinance. She said there is nothing in the current ordinance that says chickens need a coop, they just need a pasture. Also, the current formula allows up to 1000 chickens on a five-acre parcel.

Mursko added that the complaints she receives are that we require five acres to have chickens. People feel that is too restrictive. Chickens are allowed on residential lots in Minneapolis. Do we want density restrictions for chickens? Do we want any regulation and/or standards as to where chickens are kept?

Steen said the City can regulate structure for housing chickens, and the location of the structure on the owner's property. He said some communities require a license, others prohibit roosters. It is a matter of deciding how the City wants to regulate.

Johnson suggested that the FDA must have density standards in place for what qualifies as "free range" chickens. Those might be helpful, as we don't want standards that don't work or that make things worse.

There was much discussion about numbers, coops, and acreage. The Council directed the PC to work on determining how many chickens to allow, how they should be housed, whether chickens may be kept on lots which are less than five acres, and whether roosters should be allowed.

Agricultural Zoning

Mursko explained that the City had an inquiry about Ag zoning. There is currently no agricultural zoning in Columbus. Farms are zoned RR with agricultural use.

The consensus was that at this time there is no reason to pursue Agricultural Zoning in Columbus.

Forestry Regulations

Mursko explained that the Forestry Regulations are in the municipal code; there are no public hearing requirements. She pointed out that a number of things included in this Code are no longer in existence: the Tree Board, the Oak Wood program, a Forester. There are some items, however, that should be kept.

The consensus was that City staff should determine what items from Chapter 20 should possibly be retained, and where they can be relocated. It may be possible to eliminate the rest of Chapter 20.

Land Use Priorities

Mursko said the McCombs study identified that we have a lot of CR property in the freeway district. What do we want to do with uses? Do we want to incorporate that topic into Comp Plan discussion?

Johnson doesn't know of anything so different with commercial uses right now that forces the City to reevaluate it. One issue is that we've used the SR overlay within the freeway district for quite some time. Should we look at outright zoning of that rather than leaving the option up to the property owners, as it is now? Some property owners have indicated that their property hasn't been marketed commercially in the 10 years. Part of the fear in developing one parcel residentially is if

it is still surrounded by commercial uses. That's a big issue Johnson believes should be looked at with the Comp Plan.

The PC looked at other cities and began looking at the zoning maps. Should the City be moving toward something more complex in that area? Johnson is not a fan of a large number of land use or zoning categories. It is too complicated to pre-pick those. The more general it is, particularly in the Comp Plan, the easier it is to work with.

The McCombs study identified an excess of Community Retail. Johnson feels it best to replace it with something with a lot more allowable uses, which includes Commercial Showroom.

The Mayor's believes it is important to stick to plans that were put in motion. He is concerned that drastically changing the plan affects people living on the edge of rezoning.

Comprehensive Plan Process and Timeline

Johnson reported that the Met Council added \$500,000 to their grant fund. Columbus will receive a \$10,000 grant to assist in updating the Comp Plan.

The mandatory parts of the Plan include: land use, transportation, housing, parks and an implementation section. These are required by law. This time, the Met Council is promoting two optional categories: a resilience element (healthy living, exercise, family, schools, etc.), and economic competitiveness. The Comp Plan deadline is December 2019, but six months prior to that, the City must have comments back from its adjoining communities. If we want any kind of density standard changes, and want the new label of the higher-density rural residential community designation, we have to use the Comp Plan to do it. Johnson believes the fall, after elections, is the best time to start the process. Public information meetings need to be held – ideally in spring. And the hope is to have a draft plan ready by the summer of 2017.

Expenses were discussed. Mursko said the water supply plan, which is new and required, will cost approximately \$12,000. It will cost approximately another \$20,000 to complete the rest of the Plan. The grant money will cover \$10,000 of the total.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Susan Copeland of 14115 Lake Drive presented at public open forum. She asked if the City has ever considered a bounty on coyotes. She is concerned about their numbers and their willingness to approach homes and people. She believes it has become a safety concern.

CC members told her that with a MN Small Game License, coyotes can be hunted all year, any time.

Copeland asked if others in the City have expressed concern or complained about coyotes. Mursko said no.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mursko had two policy questions for the Council.

First, with regard to the Thurnbeck development: The development is now much smaller than the originally discussed 57 homes. The City has not yet received a plat. The developer would like to build a model home with a driveway that will come off of Broadway. She told him she would bring it to the Council for their thoughts. The Council expressed concerns about there being a model before there is a subdivision. The City has received nothing more than a conceptual plan at this point. The consensus of the Council was that they would not be in favor of it, and want to see a plat first.

Second, with regard to John's Black Dirt: They have begun hauling for the season. Their permit expires in June of 2018, and they have approximately 138 days left to haul. Forest Lake Contracting posted the road at 40 mph for their drivers on 181st, and 20 mph on Tulane and Vassar. Tulane has more dust complaints than Vassar, because it is sunnier and drier. There have been complaints about dust, including two property owners in attendance. Mursko discussed dust issues and complaints, road watering issues, and road sweeping issues. She asked if the CC's intent was that F. L. Contracting implement dust control only if their trucks create the dust, or if they do dust control on any day they're hauling. She also asked if it was the CC's intent that F. L. Contracting sweep on 181st on every day they're hauling. The consensus of the Council was that F. L. Contracting should be proactive in all these things. For example, any day they are hauling, they should water before running trucks, if conditions are dusty, as well as later, if necessary. They should sweep on hauling days. Speed limits should be adhered to. Street signs should be flipped to reflect accurate hauling information, etc.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT

KREBS COMMENT:

Commissioner Krebs attended the MN DOT I-35 presentation at Eagle Brook Church. She received the contact information for Adam Josephson, one of the project managers.

ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING

Watson will attend the City Council meeting on May 25, 2015.

Motion by Sternberg to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Krebs. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Boland, Recording Secretary