

PLANNING COMMISSION

December 19, 2013

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of December 19, 2013 was called to order by Vice-Chairman Felicijan at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. No citizens were in attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Patterson, Dave Felicijan, Betty Schimmel, Brian Somers, Wayne Stoffer, Miko Dargitz and Allan Reiff (arrived at 7:10pm).

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Paul Welch and Rick Bosch

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services and Michael west, Assistant City Planner.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice-Chairman Felicijan led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Vice-Chairman Felicijan referred the Commission to the December 5, 2013 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was approved 6-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

<p>7:03 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess. 7:07 p.m. - The Commission reconvened the meeting in City Hall Conference Room No. 1</p>

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update, Community Snapshot – Existing Conditions Report: Mr. Forth introduced the item and discussed the background information contained in the Community Snapshot – Existing Conditions Report. Mr. Forth also referred the Commission to the 12/18/2013 email responses from staff to Chairman Welch and Commission Patterson that were included in the final agenda materials.

The Commission discussed the possibility of a marina along Portage Road, near Austin Lake and West Lake, and where such a recommendation should be included in the Comprehensive Plan Update. Mr. Forth stated the recommendation could be included in the Comprehensive Plan Update as either a goal/objective or as an implementation strategy. Commissioner Somers discussed the possibility of a goal/objective in the

Comprehensive Plan Update that addresses a “line of sight” provision/requirement for single family home construction along lakes (e.g., 45 degree line of sight to preserve lake views and provide a more consistent building setback). Commissioner Dargitz suggested inserting language into the Community Identify & History section of the report that references Portage as a “Natural Place to Move” with interconnected trails and bikeways. Commissioner Reiff asked if the Community Snapshot – Existing Conditions Report could include a brief discussion of the transformation of the employment base in the city over the past few decades from a large single employer (Pfizer) to a greater reliance on several smaller employers.

Commissioner Dargitz suggested that forested areas (>5 acres) be included on the Natural Features Map to reflect existing open space areas where the city could be more diligent during review of development projects. Commissioner Dargitz also discussed possible open space or conservation zoning regulations as ways to preserve forested and open space areas on private properties. The Commission discussed how the city could regulate or encourage preservation of open space areas on private properties. Mr. Forth and Mr. West discussed zoning mechanisms including the use of the planned development zoning districts (e.g., Harbors West Planned Development) as methods of encouraging developers to preserve unique natural areas during design of development projects. Mr. Forth indicated he would discuss with the consultant inclusion of forested areas (>5 acres) on the Natural Features Map and goals/objectives and implementation strategies that could be included in the Comprehensive Plan Update to encourage open space and natural area preservation.

Commissioner Dargitz asked why the State Game Area land was included under the “vacant” category of the 2007-2012 Land Use Comparison table and also asked if an acreage breakdown could be provided for the “public/quasi-public recreational & institutional” category. Mr. Forth stated he would review these issues with the consultant and provide more information at a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher T. Forth, AICP
Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services