

PLANNING COMMISSION

March 20, 2014

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of March 20, 2014 was called to order by Chairman Welch at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Five citizens were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Welch led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services; Michael West, Assistant City Planner; and Randy Brown, City Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Forth called the role and the following Commissioners were present: Patterson, Welch, Felicijan, Reiff, Dargitz, Schimmel and Somers.

A motion was made by Commissioner Felicijan, seconded by Commission Reiff, to approve the role and excuse Commissioners Stoffer and Bosch. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the March 6, 2014 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Reiff, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Special Land Use Permit: Great Lakes Convenience, 710 and 732 East Centre Avenue. Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the March 11, 2014 letter from the applicant (Mr. Donald Ziemke, Jr.) requesting the special land use permit for Great Lakes Convenience be withdrawn. A motion was made by Commissioner Felicijan, seconded by Commissioner Somers, to accept the applicant's request for a withdrawal of the Special Land Use Permit for Great Lakes Convenience, 710 and 732 East Centre Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. FY 2014-2024 Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Forth summarized the preliminary review of the CIP document conducted by the Planning Commission during the March 6, 2014 meeting and asked whether there were any additional comments or suggestions. Commissioner Reiff asked about the trade-in value of Fire Department vehicles identified in CIP. Mr. Forth it was premature to place a monetary value on the vehicles since the trade-ins were not planned for several years. After additional conversation, a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to accept the FY 2014-2024 Capital Improvement Program and forward to City Council with no changes. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

Mr. Craig Binder (743 East Centre Avenue) asked what the status was of the staff recommendation to initiate a rezoning of the several properties located along the south side of East Centre Avenue, east of Lakewood Drive. Mr. Forth stated the Community Development Department would be providing the Planning Commission background information regarding this matter at the April 3, 2014 meeting for further consideration and discussion.

7:10 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess.

7:15 p.m. - The Commission reconvened the meeting in City Hall Conference Room No. 1

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Proposed Planning Commission FY 2014-2015 Goals and Objectives. Mr. Forth summarized the staff report dated March 14, 2014 and referred the Commission to the draft memo included in the agenda packet. Commissioner Dargitz suggested reinserting “When appropriate, engage the Youth Advisory Committee in the community planning process” into the recommended FY 2014-2015 goals and objectives. The Commission discussed this suggestion and concurred. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Reiff, seconded by Commissioner Somers, to revise the draft memo to include “When appropriate, engage the Youth Advisory Committee in the community planning process” and forward to City Council the Recommended FY 2014-2015 Planning Commission Goals and Objectives. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

2. 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update, Community + Quality of Life. Mr. Forth referred the Commission to the draft Community + Quality of Life chapter of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update. Mr. Forth summarized the Introduction, Community Resources, Community Identity and Implementation sections and asked if the Commission had any comments.

Commissioner Dargitz asked what placemaking initiatives occurred in 2013 with the City of Portage 50th Anniversary celebration. Mr. Forth discussed the various initiatives including new logo and rebranding of the city as a “Natural Place to Move”. Commissioner Reiff stated the chapter was very well written and suggested relocating Item 26 of the Community Facilities Map to Waylee to reflect the pending demolition of the Portage Public Schools Administrative Building. Commissioner Patterson suggested expanding Item 46 of the Community Facilities Map to identify the additional property acquisition down to West Osterhout Avenue as part of the Eliason Nature Reserve. Commissioner Dargitz stated the area along the east side of Highland Drive, south of Zylman Avenue, should be identified as “woodlands” in the Natural Features Map. The Commission then discussed the pending demolition of the Portage Public Schools Administration Building and possible reuse of the structure. Commissioner Reiff asked staff to revisit the Implementations Strategies table and whether the Long Term category should have some check marks or whether the category should be deleted.

The Commission did not have any further comments regarding the draft Community + Quality of Life chapter. Mr. Forth stated the Transportation and Land Use chapters would be presented to the Planning Commission at the April 3rd meeting and a full draft document of the Comprehensive Plan Update would be presented to the Commission by LSL Planning at the April 17th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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