

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 20, 2015

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of August 20, 2015 was called to order by Chairman Welch at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. No citizens were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Welch led the Commission and staff in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development & Neighborhood Services; and Michael West, Senior City Planner.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Forth called the roll and the following Commissioners were present: Bosch (yes), Stoffer (yes), Welch (yes), Dargitz (yes), Somers (yes), Schimmel (yes) and Richmond (yes). A motion was made by Commissioner Stoffer, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to approve the roll excusing Commissioners Patterson and Felicijan. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the July 16, 2015 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Dargitz, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Annual Capital Improvement Program Process Change. Mr. Forth summarized the August 14, 2015 Department of Community Development staff report regarding changes being made to the FY 2016/2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process. Mr. Forth indicated the purpose for this change was to solicit citizen and Commission input earlier in the CIP process. Mr. Forth discussed activities planned for September including public education and outreach efforts utilizing the Portager, creation of a CIP web page on the city website, an on-line survey, targeted email communications and mailings and a special CIP "Open House" scheduled for Monday, September 28th. Mr. Forth stated the comments received during these September activities will be summarized and considered by the City Administration during October and November and an initial draft version

of the CIP will be provided to the Planning Commission during the second meeting in January. A finalized CIP document will then be presented to the Planning Commission in March for final review and recommendation to City Council.

Mr. Forth asked the Commission about their availability to attend the September 28th CIP Open House. Chairman Welch stated he will be available to attend the Open House. Commissioner Dargitz stated she was looking forward to the new process and the opportunities for additional public input earlier in the CIP preparation. Commissioner Stoffer suggested that the Youth Advisory Board be invited to attend the September 28th CIP Open House. Mr. Forth stated he would discuss this matter with Deputy City Manager, Adam Herringa, who is the staff liaison to the Youth Advisory Board.

7:12 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess.

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

2. Urban Planning Discussion – Placemaking Concepts. Mr. Forth provided a brief introduction to the topic of “placemaking” and referred the Commission to the articles provided with the agenda materials. Commissioner Dargitz circulated an additional article entitled “Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places” and further discussed the concept and principles of placemaking and how the Planning Commission can encourage and facilitate placemaking through their normal duties and responsibilities. Commissioner Dargitz encouraged the Commission to consider ideas that focus on the unique characteristics and strengths of Portage with an emphasis on pedestrian interconnections, gathering places, wayfinding signage and special events/activities.

The Commission and staff next discussed placemaking concepts and ideas that may be applicable to certain areas of the city. Commissioner Richmond discussed the lack of sidewalks, multi-purpose trails and bikeways in the northeast portion of the city (Lexington Green neighborhood) and possibilities to connect this area of the city to existing/planned multi-purpose trails and bikeways. The Commission and staff discussed how placemaking can be accomplished through the CIP process and through review of private development projects.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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