

CITY OF GARY- PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES
Thursday, July 20, 2023
3:00 P.M. CT

Attendees:

PC members: William Cook, Lloyd Fisher, Alan Harrell, Willie Miller, Deputy Mayor Trent McCain, David Shilling, Tom Cera, Tai Adkins

Staff: Attorney Rodney Pol presided over the meeting for Zoning Administrator Shavon King

Meeting called to order and roll call, present were:

Commissioner Lloyd Fisher
 Commissioner Alan Harrell
 Commissioner Willie Miller (missed roll call, joined the meeting later)
 Commissioner David Shilling
 Commissioner Tai Adkins
 Commissioner Taryl Bonds, President

Absent

Vice President Tom Cera
 Commissioner Trent McCain
 Commissioner Bill Cook

Agenda

Motion to approve the PC Agenda: Commissioner Fisher
 2nd: Commissioner Harrell
 Result of vote: motion carries 5-0

| Member | Comm. Adkins | Comm. Bonds | Comm. Cook | Comm. Fisher | Comm. Harrell | Comm. Miller | Comm. McCain | Comm. Shilling |
|--------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Vote | Yes | Yes | - | Yes | Yes | - | - | Yes |

Minutes

Motion to approve the PC Minutes for June 15, 2023: Commissioner Harrell
 2nd: Commissioner Fisher
 Result of vote: motion carries 5-0

| Member | Comm. Adkins | Comm. Bonds | Comm. Cook | Comm. Fisher | Comm. Harrell | Comm. Miller | Comm. McCain | Comm. Shilling |
|--------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Vote | Yes | Yes | - | Yes | Yes | | - | Yes |

NEW BUSINESS

1. PC-23-04 (not referred to by PC number on the record, Site Plan / Planned Unit Development ("PUD") / Landscaping Ordinance)

Attorney Rodney Pol provided an introduction of the Site Plan / PUD / Landscaping Ordinance. The ordinance was being provided to the members as only an informational introduction so that the commissioners could review the ordinance prior to the next meeting. No vote is to be taken.

Commissioner Miller stated his excitement about the ordinance and it being a good approach.

Commissioner Tai Adkins asked who participated in the process of drafting the ordinance. Attorney Pol stated that zoning staffer Carla McVey and AJ Bytnar worked together to draft the ordinance. He stated that they looked at where our ordinances currently stand and what the City's needs were.

Commissioner Adkins asked if they could keep track of any changes made to the ordinance as it makes its way through the drafting and legislative process. Attorney Pol stated yes.

Commissioner Adkins stated that the comprehensive plan for the City was passed in 2019 and that former Zoning Administrator Eric Boria was aware of the changes. She asked if we looked at all aspects of what the changes to the PUD and site plan regulations would need in relation to what comprehensive plan anticipated or required. Attorney Pol stated that this would be a question better answered by Carla McVey as she worked closely with Eric Boria.

Commissioner Adkins next confirmed with Attorney Pol that the contents of the ordinance addressed the PUD requirements.

Attorney Pol clarified that this was the first in multiple steps and meetings for passage of the ordinance. The ordinance would first go through the planning commission and then Gary Common Council, who would ultimately determine what passed.

Commissioner Adkins then asked who the lead would be for comments to be directed to about the ordinance. Attorney Pol stated he would.

Commissioner Adkins asked about when the next meeting would be. Attorney Pol stated the next regularly scheduled meeting would be the third Thursday of the month.

Commissioner Adkins asked about the timeline of reviewing of the Pulaski School property. Attorney Pol stated he was not sure about a timeline.

President Bonds asked if Ms. King, the new Zoning Administrator, had an opportunity to become aware of some of the projects in zoning. Ms. King (off-mic) stated that she is getting brought up to speed because she just started.

Commissioner Adkins asked whether the guidelines in the proposed ordinance are all new or are there some that are existing. Attorney Pol stated that some were new and some are existing. Commissioner Adkins requested that a distinction made in the proposed draft between the old and new regulations.

Commissioner Miller stated that there were typos where other city names were in the ordinance. President Bonds stated that this would be cleaned up and encouraged all the commissioners to review the ordinance to be prepared to discuss it.

2. **PC-2022-02: Final Plat of Djuric Trucking PUD**

Motion to approve the **PC-23-04 (not referred to by PC number on the record, Site Plan / PUD / Landscaping Ordinance)**: Commissioner McCain

2nd: Commissioner Adkins

Result of vote: motion carries 8-0

| Member | Comm. Adkins | Comm. Bonds | Comm. Cook | Comm. Fisher | Comm. Harrell | Comm. Miller | Comm. McCain | Comm. Shilling |
|--------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Vote | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Attorney Pol provided the overview of the final plat submission of the Djuric Trucking PUD at 5400 W. 5th Ave. Attorney Pol explained this was the last review needed for the Djuric Trucking project. Attorney Pol stated that there would be one comment from Commissioner Shilling. Attorney Pol provided the Commissioners with copies of the mylars of the final plat.

Commissioner Shilling stated that this was a straight forward plat where there was not vacating of a right of way. He stated that there were easements that ringed the site. Commissioner Shilling's request was that the mylars specifically stated that the easements were "hereby dedicated" to show that they are not previously existing easements, but newly dedicated easements. He also pointed out that the project was dedicating part of South Bend Ave. for an eventual bike path for the Gary Green Links. He also asked that the Board of Public Works title block should be also included so that the easement can be accepted.

President Bonds asked that the motion be restated. Commissioner Shilling made the motion to approve the final plat on the condition that the easements are hereby dedicated (Gerry, Burr, and 5th Ave.) and that they include the certificate for the board of public works and safety. Attorney Pol restated the motion and pointed to the plat for clarification. Commissioner Adkins seconded the motion.

President Bonds opened the floor for public comment on the motion. No public comments were made.

Motion to approve the **PC-2022-02**: Commissioner Shilling

2nd: Commissioner Adkins

Result of vote: motion carries 6-0

| Member | Comm. Adkins | Comm. Bonds | Comm. Cook | Comm. Fisher | Comm. Harrell | Comm. Miller | Comm. McCain | Comm. Shilling |
|--------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Vote | Yes | Yes | - | Yes | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |

3. Introduction of the Midtown Revitalization Plan

President Bond introduced the Midtown Revitalization Plan and asked for an overview. Attorney Pol provided the overview explaining that like the prior agenda item for the site plan ordinance, this was only for introduction and review. The Midtown Revitalization Plan was submitted by the Gary Eastside CDC. He stated that there was not a representative of the Gary Eastside CDC in attendance to present the plan. The plan was introduced to cover the midtown area, the planning process, the goals of the plan, and the implementation of the plan. Attorney Pol stated that the plan is a large document and suggested the Commissioners review the plan and come to the next meeting with questions and comments about the plan.

Attorney Pol pointed out that this was the first step at the planning commission to get an approval and implementation of the plan. He suggested that the group (GE CDC) appear at the next meeting to discuss and present the plan.

President Bonds asked for any questions. Commissioner Adkins asked to make comments. She pointed out that this plan was not drafted by anyone within the City staff. She pointed out that the plan includes parts of the 4th and 5th district of the City and that she and councilwoman Barnes-Caldwell were not included in any of the drafting of the plan either. She stated that it lacks input of the community. She stated that the community and city staff spent four years working on the last comprehensive plan. She stated that to approve this plan for just this neighborhood and not the City as a whole would be a disservice to the City.

Commissioner Adkins also pointed out that this was not the first time this plan had been presented. She stated the plan came before the Common Council in an ordinance requesting \$1.2 Million in ARPA money and was not assigned to a committee at the June 20th council meeting. She pointed out that the plan was removed from the Redevelopment Meeting budget the day before. She recommended that the plan be discussed and worked on with the entities she mentioned to ensure that it was inline with the comprehensive plan and was in the interests as a whole.

Commissioner Miller concurred with Commissioner Adkins and echoed her concerns.

Commissioner Harrell asked Commissioner Adkins about the three zones in the plan's areas and asked her to provide input as to whether that would fit the area. Commissioner Adkins stated that she was not sure whether the zones would "fit" that area. She asked that this would need to be referred to the zoning department. She was not sure about the zoning codes. Commissioner Harrell agreed that he had never seen these type of zones.

President Bonds agreed with the other commissioners and stated that he believed the plan showed the overall area but not the Gary Eastside CDC's specific development intent.

Commissioner Fisher asked Commissioner Adkins where the proposals were coming from. Commissioner Adkins stated that Attorney Pol stated that the Gary Eastside CDC provided the proposal.

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner Adkins
2nd: Commissioner Fisher