

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

**PLANNING COMMISSION/
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
October 20, 2009**

Commissioners Present: Cowman, McLean, Smith, Gage, Bonner, Wrischnik
Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Gotfredson, Amy Barenklau, Brian McCauley

Item 1: Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2: Consider minutes from the September 15, 2009 meeting

Chair Cowman called the meeting to order. The first order of business was the consideration of the minutes from the September 15, 2009 meeting.

Commissioners Cowman and Bonner made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Item 3: Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Planner Gotfredson presented an overview of the proposed plan, the history and some issues that the Commissioners might want to consider.

Commissioner Wrischnik inquired about how the area was determined. Planner Gotfredson explained that he was not certain, but that most likely the county appraisal information had been utilized to determine which areas were included in the program. Planner Gotfredson indicated that he would get information on how much the program has been utilized from Miami County. He indicated that there might be more incentive to property owners in the current area if comparing potential properties for the area.

Commissioner Cowman stated he would be interested to know how many property owners had taken advantage and how many of those were owner occupied and how many were rental structures. He said that the program does not appear to cost anything; just giving up some tax dollars, but the community as a whole gains from the program.

Commissioner Bonner stated that it would be a good incentive especially for young couples. They could purchase a home, make improvements, get the tax rebate and have a nice home.

Commissioner Smith stated he felt that more areas could be included in the program. Commissioner Wrischnik stated that the incentive for the rest of the city would not be bad, either.

Planner Gotfredson stated he would bring additional information and possibly have City Clerk Droste available at the next meeting.

Item 4: City Planner Report.

Planner Gotfredson updated Commissioners on the status of items from the September meeting. Mr. Gotfredson then introduced some potential amendments to the existing sign regulations. He gave an overview of the proposed changes.

Mr. Gotfredson explained that the City Council had suggested regulations that would fit illuminated signs, and asked the Commissioners for their thoughts on these types of signs. Commissioner Cowman stated he felt that electronic signs will be the norm in the future.

Planner Gotfredson discussed banner signs and explained how a provision to allow these for an extended period would make it easier for business owners to obey the law and still have the option to advertise. He stated that currently there is no provision in the sign regulations to allow banner signs as more than a temporary advertisement.

Commissioner Cowman inquired why a temporary banner would be allowed for a period of up to one year. Planner Gotfredson explained that the intent is to allow the business owner time to obtain a permit for a permanent sign.

Planner Gotfredson explained the suggested regulation for development signs. Commissioner Smith inquired about what is currently in place. Planner Gotfredson explained that currently the only signage allowed for developments is what is allowed in the specific zoning district.

Commissioner Cowman inquired about who enforces proposed Section 7.50; how violators are convicted and the process for a conviction of a violation. Mr. Gotfredson explained that it would be handled as any other zoning violation, through the municipal court system. He stated that most times when a violator is notified they are in violation of a regulation, they fix the problem. Commissioner Cowman stated that he felt the fine amount should be large enough to get everyone's attention.

Commissioner McLean inquired about how long abandoned signs can remain. Planner Gotfredson stated that the place abandoned signs are currently addressed in the LDO is if they are non-conforming.

Commissioner Smith inquired about ways to address non-conforming signs. Planner Gotfredson explained that there are currently a few instances when they can be addressed, but that he would look closer at that section.

Item 5: Items from Commissioners

Commissioner Bonner inquired if there had been any word about a new Commissioner. Planner Gotfredson stated he would check with Mayor Stuteville.

Item 6: Adjournment

Commissioners Cowman and McLean made a motion to adjourn. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:42 pm.