

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

**PLANNING COMMISSION/
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
January 29, 2010**

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

Others Present: Mike Gotfredson, Amy Barenklau, Jesse Trimble

Item 1: Pledge of Allegiance

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

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

Commissioners Cowman and Bonner made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted with all Commissioners voting in favor.

Item 3: Consideration and vote on amendments to the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

Planner Gotfredson presented the staff brief and stated that changes presented had been implemented into the plan. He explained that the premise is to encourage redevelopment of dilapidated properties. Vacant properties were added to the plan and the physical area of the plan was increased to encompass much of the older areas of the city.

Mr. Gotfredson's findings are that the request is consistent with the General Plan and that the request promotes the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Planner Gotfredson recommends approval of the proposed changes to the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

Commissioner Cowman inquired about the amount of increase in the plan's coverage. Planner Gotfredson stated that the plan had doubled, if not increased by two-thirds. The original plan area was fairly small and use was limited due to the small area included.

Commissioner Bonner stated that it appeared that basically all older parts of town were now included in the proposed plan.

Commissioners Cowman and Smith made a motion to recommend approval of the amendments to the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. All Commissioners voted in favor.

Item 4: City Planner Report.

Planner Gotfredson presented a basic overview of public regulation of private property. He then presented a recap of accomplishments from the community development department, including seven new home permits in city limits and two in the growth area in 2009.

Mr. Gotfredson gave an update on building incentives that are being considered and stated that they are still preliminary and exploratory. He asked the Commissioners for any comments or ideas, as the incentives are still a work in progress.

Commissioner Bonner stated he felt the philosophy was good, but feels that builders may not even start for a while due to the economy. He stated he had seen several local builders had filed for bankruptcy. Commissioner Gage stated his concern about builders getting the break and not passing along to the home buyer. Mr. Gotfredson explained that the plans are to offer any rebates to the buyer at closing of the home purchase.

Commissioner Smith stated that targeting commercial businesses might be more productive for the city. Planner Gotfredson asked what amount might be enough of an incentive for commercial developers. Commissioner Smith stated that property tax incentives have been utilized in the past, but with the current economy he was unsure what would need to be offered.

Commissioner Smith mentioned the free land in the industrial park and that it did not seem to have been successful. Once the property owner realizes the assessment for the streets and property taxes, it really is not much of an incentive. He reiterated that he is seeing more activity on commercial properties than residential properties, but anything is a tough sell right now. He stated that he could understand tax incentives for a few years, but indefinitely; not in Paola.

Commissioner Wrischnik stated that he felt there were a lot of commercial projects on hold in general because no one seems to know what is happening with the economy. He stated the only major commercial projects in the area are in Wyandotte County and they are giving away everything to get commercial projects there.

Item 5: Items from Commissioners

There were no items from the Commissioners at this time.

Item 6: Adjournment

Commissioners Cowman and McLean made a motion to adjourn with all Commissioners voting in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:16 pm.