



## FLINT MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE Meeting Notes June 2, 2015

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### Members Present:

Pamela Hawkins  
Councilwoman VanBuren  
Sandra Robinson  
Bob Wesley (Co-Chair)  
Jim Richardson (Co-Chair)

Raynetta Speed  
Linda Boose  
Elizabeth Jordan  
Councilwoman Poplar

### Members Not Present:

Bryant Nolden  
Barry Williams (excused)  
Mona Munroe-Younis (excused)  
John Henry  
Clarence Pierce

Isaiah Oliver  
Charles Tutt  
Judy Hovey  
Paul Mattern

### Staff Present:

Megan Hunter  
Kevin Schronce

Kristin Stevenson

### CALL TO ORDER:

Co-Chair Jim Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm. The meeting was held at the Flint Public Library, 1026 Kearsley St., Flint, MI room 205.

### PUBLIC FORUM:

Co-Chair Richardson stated that this is a working meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee. Therefore, public comment will be limited to the first ten minutes in order to allow for dialogue between Steering Committee members.

No public comments were submitted.

### PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE

Co-Chair Bob Wesley informed the committee that the Planning Commission continues to deal with a lot of compassion clinic requests. He suggested that anyone interested in compassion clinics should come to the Planning Commission meeting on June 9.

### DRAFT ZONING CODE DISCUSSION:

Co-Chair Richardson called on Mr. Kevin Schronce to begin the discussion on the draft zoning code.

Mr. Schronce prefaced discussion by saying that the City is not looking for final decisions to come out of the meeting but just a discussion with suggestions. The topics for the evening included chicken keeping and signage. Mr. Schronce described the proposed language in the draft code on livestock (Article 9 Section 14). The question posed to the committee is whether chicken keeping should be permitted as a special use in some districts.

Council person Jackie Poplar asked who monitors the situation. Will there be someone sent to check compliance? She suggests that there should be an ordinance. Mr. Schronce and Mrs. Hunter responded that the department of

Building & Safety are to enforce the code and the code can specify how the inspection should be done.

Committee member, Leora Campbell mentioned that she remembers the committee recommending no chickens. Co-chair Jim Richardson responded that the committee did not make a final decision but instead sent it to the Planning Commission to decide. Mr. Schronce confirmed the response and added that staff was interested in having some more dialogue regarding chickens.

Mrs. Megan Hunter explained that there was talk about the possibility of adding an overlay where chicken keeping is allowed in some neighborhoods but not in all.

Co-chair Richardson asked what the reasoning is for why people do and don't want chickens. Mr. Schronce responded that it's important not to generalize but the primary reason is the land vacancy; chickens can help w/ landscaping and if there aren't neighbors, they can be a local source, improving sustainability. Committee member, Sandra Robinson added that sustainability equals personal, quality food. Committee member Barry Williams also responded that people do not like the idea of living in a city with farm animals. Committee member Elizabeth Jordan responded that chickens are a source of protein. Committee member Pamela Hawkins responded that they are organic.

Committee member Raynetta Speed stated that she is opposed to chicken keeping in the city because not everyone will be a good caretaker. Mrs. Hunter responded that one benefit of including language on chicken keeping in the zoning code is that there is then a mechanism to evaluate, permit, license, and charge fees. Council person Poplar responded that not everyone will be clean. Mrs. Hunter reaffirmed her original suggestion that an overlay is created specifically for chickens.

Co-chair Richardson suggested that it be made a requirement to request support of one's surrounding community in order to keep chickens. Co-chair Bob Wesley responded to Mrs. Hunter's suggestion by asking how an overlay can be undone once it's created. Mrs. Hunter responded that there is a process, similar to a district change, but it is possible to repeal.

Mrs. Elizabeth Jordan asked about people trying to get a permit; what would they need? Mrs. Hunter responded that it would operate the same as most permitting, they would need a drawing, pay the fine, there would be an on-site inspection and finally authorization.

Co-chair Richardson asked about the cost of permitting, inspections, and renewals; if it's \$200, is it worth it? He also asked that in terms of enforcement, what capacity is available now? Mrs. Hunter responded that inspections and renewals would be maybe every three years. Co-chair Richardson asked how realistic it is to have legitimate enforcement when the city does not have much capacity. Mrs. Hunter responded that permitting does not add a lot of work and the city is deficient in code enforcement officers but is working to attain more resources.

Committee member Mona Monroe-Younis shared that it's important to think about Flint's future ie, attracting and retaining people. She stated that the proposed language is middle of the road. She then asked if it is necessary to do the overlay in order to pilot the idea; is it possible to write in language that addresses property cleanliness in the code? Mrs. Hunter responded that staff would have to check but also warned that it's important not to be subjective. She added that staff would clear up the language to say 'protected', 'covered', 'steel container' and that the city will be hosting a specific workshop on the topic of chicken keeping.

Committee member Barry Williams asked Mrs. Hunter if the recommendation to the Planning Commission will be neutral. She responded that she is not pro or anti –chickens but she does want to allow property owners to do what they want without infringing on the rights of others. Mr. Williams then remarked that the city does not have the ability to enforce. Mrs. Hunter responded that this was not the right attitude; we need to plan for the city, the code should be first written and funding figured out after.

Mr. Schronce reiterates that staff does plan to host a workshop on the specific topic of chickens where scenarios are presented.

Co-chair Richardson stated that he hopes the workshop would include the risks / downsides of chicken keeping. Mrs. Hunter responded by saying that she does not think we should say the negative and positives but should rather just present the topic. Council person Poplar added that the workshop should allow people who are experts on chicken keeping to share information so that people can be informed.

Mr. Schronce moved the discussion on to Article 15 of the draft zoning code: Signs. He stated that this was not a time for formalized recommendations but rather a time for discussion and the committee members to begin thinking about the topic. He then gave a brief overview of the proposed language and posed the question: "How strict does the City want to be in regulating signs?" Mrs. Hunter added that this new language on signs would be the biggest fundamental change to the current code. Mr. Schronce also asked for thoughts regarding how aggressive the city should be with amortization of non-conforming signs, noting that the draft code proposes five years.

Co-chair Richardson asked how it is determined what an "ugly" sign looks like. Mrs. Hunter responded that there are standards and they depend on the district but we cannot regulate wording or content. Co-chair Richardson inquired about signs on churches in residential areas. Mrs. Hunter said that language can be added regulating such occurrences. Mrs. Jordan explained that it is visible when you drive through other communities with zoning regulations on signs; it looks better. Committee member Charles Tutt responded that it's pretty objective. Mrs. Hunter offered to show images of other communities if it's helpful. Ms. Robinson asked what can be done about sign content. Mrs. Hunter responded that some sign owners can be contacted and size can be regulated.

Ms. Speed asked if there is language regarding temporary signage? Mrs. Hunter responded that currently temporary banners and signs do need a permit and should be included in the new code.

Mr. Schronce encouraged the committee to talk with community members about amortization and begin gauging the public opinion. He then briefly introduced the a website entitled Zoning Check that can be used to see where your business/development would be allowed in the City based on the proposed zoning.

Co-chair Richardson indicated the time at 7:26pm and said there would be 10 minutes remaining.

#### **CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UPDATE:**

Megan Hunter gave a brief update on the planning process for Choice Neighborhoods. She described the deliverables, the consultant selection process, the plan to have an entirely inclusive process, an outreach staff job opportunity, and upcoming events at Atherton East.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT:**

Co-chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:36pm and thanked everyone for their input.

Submitted by: Kristin Stevenson 8.10.2015.15