



FLINT MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes October 6, 2015



Members Present:

Judy Hovey
Councilwoman Poplar
Pamela Hawkins
Linda Boose
Paul Mattern – absent, excused
Mona Monroe-Younis

Charles Tutt
Raynetta Speed
Elizabeth Jordan
Sandra Robinson
Bob Wesley
Jim Richardson

Members Not Present:

Bryant Nolden
Barry Williams
Councilwoman, VanBuren - excused

Isaiah Oliver
Clarence Pierce
John Henry

Staff Present:

Kevin Schronce
Jonathan Moore

Katie Ross
Isaac DeGraaf

CALL TO ORDER:

Co-Chair Jim Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. The meeting was held at the Flint Public Library, 1026 Kearsley St., Flint, MI room B1.

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.

PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE:

Co-Chair Richardson called on Bob Wesley to give the Planning Commission update. Several important dates were shared with the Steering Committee, first, a Choice Neighborhoods workshop will be held at Brennan Community Center 10/20 starting at 6:00 p.m. She noted that there will be a shuttle for residents. Secondly, the Brennan Park community build is going to be held on 10/24 starting at 9:00 a.m., food and beverages will be provided for all volunteers. Information for both events can be found at the imagineflint.com page or the Imagine Flint Facebook page. Additionally Mrs. Jordan informed the committee that the *Imagine Flint* Master Plan has received The Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan from the Michigan Association of Planning.

DRAFT ZONING CODE DISCUSSION:

Co-Chair Richardson called on Kevin Schronce to begin discussion on the zoning code. Mr. Schronce began by explaining that Planning staff is continuing to move through the ClearZoning (CZ) recommendations and is currently working through the parking and landscaping standards. Mr. Schronce referenced a table in the code dedicated to off-street parking standards, he explained that there have been revisions made to reorganize and add content to complete the table. He asked the committee to review the uses and return with any questions or comments.

Mr. Schronce then moved to discuss the issue of parking islands for interior landscaping, he tells the committee that CZ has suggested that the language is changed to allow for fewer, yet larger parking islands (the current

Language enforces 1 island per 10 spaces, the CZ suggestion would call for 1 island every 15 spaces but the islands would be double the width of the existing). Co-chair Richardson posed the question, why would we consider fewer, larger islands? Mr. Schronce replied, the justification is that larger islands will allow for trees to grow and ultimately have room to establish their roots, creating more shade for vehicles, higher infiltration through the soil of runoff, and overall healthier trees.

Ms. Boose commented that the maintenance cost associated with larger trees would be higher. She then asked if the species of trees allowed for landscaping is regulated. Mr. Schronce replied – yes, to minimize the maintenance costs low-litter or coniferous would be a landscaping option.

Ms. Hovey asked if there is a comparison of the small vs larger parking island example to demonstrate to considerations. Mr. Schronce answered, no – we have not found a specific comparison in our research.

Co-chair Richardson commented that the larger landscaping might limit the amount of parking needed for a business to operate.

Ms. Monroe-Younis commented that other sustainable designs may also help with infiltration without sacrificing space. She offered an example of using pervious pavement and recessed parking islands to drain runoff directly into the island in the event of precipitation (saltwater tolerant plants would be implemented in this case) and/or incorporating language to require islands either 6 inches above or below parking areas.

Ms. Poplar suggested that shrubberies be used instead of trees for parking islands to limit the concern on plant roots. Mr. Schronce mentioned that shrubberies are allowed for parking islands but that the shade from trees is also desirable for vehicles.

Ms. Poplar asked how the maintenance costs would be handled for parking lot landscaping if larger islands were chosen. Mr. Schronce replied that the cost of maintenance is the responsibility of the business owner.

Co-chair Richardson announced that he is in favor of larger islands, he then proposed that designated pathways be required in congested parking lots to promote safety.

Ms. Poplar commented, you do not want to discourage developers with a long list of requirements. Mrs. Jordan replied that exceptions could be made by the Planning Commission for parking requirements if developers are willing to implement other desired safety features or green infrastructure.

Ms. Monroe-Younis asked if you can suggest an action be taken in the code without requiring it. Mr. Schronce replied no, the language must be stronger than that, however, bonuses may be offered to those developers who chose to take suggestions.

Mr. Schronce moved the discussion to surface lots. He shared public comments received regarding parking issues in residential districts and began by posing a question to the committee, if vacant lots should be repurposed for parking in GN and TN districts and if that were allowed, what the stipulations should be enforced regarding use (does it make sense to make parking a primary use of a non-adjacent parcel, accessory use of an adjacent parcel, should there be proximity requirements). He referenced a handout of asphalt alternatives, and asked if any of the listed alternatives should be used for the purpose.

Ms. Boose commented that she is concerned about the effected of freeze-thaw on the proposed use.

Ms. Monroe-Younis commented that making parking the primary use of a non-adjacent parcel would be difficult and would disrupt the flow of a residential neighborhood.

Ms. Jordan asked if parking should be a special use based on the public impact, uses, and environmental impact. Co-chair Richardson agreed with Ms. Jordan's suggestion, he also likes the idea of minimal impact of the asphalt alternatives to blend better with the uses in the neighborhood districts.

Ms. Monroe-Younis commented that she likes the idea of using turf, it will filter water through infiltration as the surface and looks similar to adjacent parcels.

The committee concluded that this topic will have to be discussed further at another meeting, but that there is potential for adjacent residential parcels to be used for parking in select cases.

ZONING CODE REVISIONS UPDATE:

Mr. Schronce shared with the committee that more revisions will be made in collaboration with CZ in relation to PUD, adaptive reuse, and nonconforming uses. He shared that the definitions section has been completely revised, over 60 graphics have been identified for revisions and the overall process of revisions is roughly 75% complete. Moving forward the next steps will be to move through the next set of revisions from CZ.

NOVEMBER MPSC MEETING UPDATE:

Due to the holiday and election the next Steering Committee meeting will be held on December 1st, 2015.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Co-chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm and thanked everyone for their input.

Submitted by: Katie Ross 10.9.2015