PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

December 20, 2019

Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the City Planning Commission was held this day at 9:00 a.m. in the J. Martin Griesel Room of Two Centennial Plaza with the following members present: Vice-Chair Byron Stallworth, Mr. John Eby, Vice-Mayor Christopher Smitherman, Mr. Jacob Samad, and Assistant City Manager John Juech. Ms. Anne Sesler was absent.

Also in attendance were Mr. Charles Martinez, legal counsel, and Department of City Planning staff: Director Katherine Keough-Jurs, Mr. Alex Peppers, Mr. James Weaver, Ms. Stacey Hoffman, Mr. Jared Ellis, Ms. Samantha McLean, Mr. Andy Juengling, Mr. Felix Bere, Mr. Michael Allen, and Ms. Kira Palmer.

Mr. Stallworth called the meeting to order and asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Stallworth noted an error in the October 18, 2019 minutes and asked that they be revised and brought back to the next meeting for approval. He then asked that the November 1, 2019, and November 15, 2019 minutes be approved.

The Commission approved the minutes from November 1, 2019 and November 15, 2019.
Mr. Smitherman made the motion, which Mr. Juech seconded.
Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Samad, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth.

Consent Item – Quasi-Judicial

Mr. Barrett Tullis, on behalf of the applicant, requested that Item 5, a report and recommendation on the proposed division of land at 1305 Dillon Avenue in Mount Lookout, be tabled until January 17, 2020.

The Commission moved to table Item 5 until January 17, 2020.
Mr. Juech made the motion, which Mr. Samad seconded.
Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Samad, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth.

Consent Items – Legislative

Mr. Stallworth called for the vote on Item 2 first for Mr. Samad to recuse himself. Mr. Samad

Item 2 was a report and recommendation on a proposed sale of eight City-owned properties in Over-the-Rhine. The Department of City Planning staff recommended approval.
The Commission adopted the staff’s recommendation for Item 2 on the Legislative Consent Agenda.
Mr. Eby made the motion, which Mr. Juech seconded.
Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth.

Mr. Samad returned to the meeting.

Item 1 was a report and recommendation on a proposed vacation and sale of a portion of Nebraska Avenue in West Price Hill. The Department of City Planning staff recommended approval.

Item 3 was a report and recommendation on a proposed no-build easement to facilitate rear access to 2617 Short Vine Street in Corryville. The Department of City Planning staff recommended approval.

Item 4 was a report and recommendation on a proposed aerial easement 719 Main Street in the Central Business District. The Department of City Planning staff recommended approval.

The Commission adopted the staff’s recommendations for Items 1, 3, and 4 on the Legislative Consent Agenda.
Mr. Eby made the motion, which Mr. Smitherman seconded.
Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Samad, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth

Discussion Items – Legislative

Ms. Hoffman presented Item 6, a report and recommendation on the Avondale QOL, Avondale’s Quality of Life Movement, as the neighborhood’s guiding comprehensive plan.

Sandra Jones-Mitchell, President of the Avondale Community Council, described her work and involvement with the Avondale Community Council and was supportive of the Avondale QOL plan.

April Galleli, Project Manager for the Avondale QOL plan and member of the Avondale Development Corporation, presented more details on the Avondale QOL plan during a slide presentation, which included the four themes developed from the visioning section. The four themes of the Avondale QOL plan included Increasing Safety, Sharing Success, Connecting Residents & Building Partnerships with Institutions, and Improving Housing.

Henry Brown, Chair of the Avondale Development Corporation, stated that the Avondale QOL plan had successfully encapsulated the thoughts, input, energy, and spirit of the people of Avondale. Mr. Brown noted that the community partnerships with other organizations and institutions were supportive of the Avondale QOL plan and strongly recommended that the City Planning Commission approve the plan.
Ms. Hoffman made references to the Land Use map within the plan and discussed the timeline of the planning process.

Jennifer Foster, Avondale resident, provided a background on her experience with the Avondale neighborhood and the Avondale Community Council. Ms. Foster also discussed her role as a subcommittee member of the Avondale QOL plan and stated that the quality of life in Avondale needed to change.

Russ Hairston, Executive Director of the Avondale Development Corporation, voiced his support for the Avondale QOL plan and the effort that went into the plan. Mr. Hairston also thanked the people and organizations that contributed to the plan.

Crystal Davis, member of the Avondale Community Council and Avondale resident, discussed her work in Avondale with children and senior citizens and her role in the development of affordable housing. Ms. Davis also expressed her concerns for allowing seniors to stay in their homes. Mr. Stallworth asked Ms. Davis for additional details regarding the affordable housing strategy. Ms. Davis referenced the Chalfonte Place affordable housing model in Avondale and the success it could duplicate.

John Spencer, member of the Avondale Community Council, described his experience with opening a new business in Avondale. Mr. Spencer went on to thank the Avondale neighborhood, Community Building Institute (CBI), Local Initiatives Support Group (LISC), Avondale Community Council, and the residents of Avondale who were a part of the planning process.

Ms. Keough-Jurs congratulated the Avondale community, Avondale Community Council, Avondale Development Corporation, CBI, and LISC for their contributions in making the plan possible.

Mr. Smitherman remarked on the leadership of Avondale and their emphasis on the people of Avondale. Mr. Smitherman also noted the partnership between Avondale and Cincinnati Public Schools and expressed his concern with the media coverage of Avondale. Mr. Smitherman concluded by thanking the Department of City Planning and the Port Authority.

Mr. Juech stated that the Avondale QOL plan document was very impressive and comprehensive and agreed with Mr. Smitherman that there should be more media focus on the positive aspects of Avondale. Mr. Juech concluded by congratulating all of those who had contributed to the Avondale QOL Plan.

Ms. Keough-Jurs thanked the City Planning Commissioners for their praise and acknowledged that the difficult work was done by the Avondale community and their leadership.

Mr. Stallworth also thanked those who had participated in the Avondale QOL plan and applauded their efforts.
The Commission adopted the staff's recommendation for Item 6 on the Legislative Discussion Agenda.
Mr. Smitherman made the motion, which Mr. Juech seconded.
Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Samad, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth

Mr. Allen presented Item 7, a report and recommendation on a proposed Local Historic District designation of the Warsaw Avenue Local Historic District in East Price Hill.

Rachel Hastings, Executive Director of Price Hill Will, described the process beginning with the rental use of the firehouse on the corner of Warsaw Avenue and Considine Avenue and described the purchase of most of the block in the vicinity of the firehouse. She added that community partnerships were working to improve Warsaw Avenue to make it safer and more vibrant.

Tom Gamel, Vice President of the East Price Hill Improvement Association (EPHIA), discussed the PIVOT (Place Based Investigations of Violent Offender Territories) program success and the goal to revive the historic buildings within the district. Ms. Hastings added that the plan for the properties within the proposed Historic District included the Warsaw Avenue Creative Campus to serve youth and families through the arts, an affordable restaurant, and affordable housing for the upper floor of the buildings within the proposed district.

Mr. Stallworth noted the historic properties on the west side and thanked those involved in the process, including Price Hill Will.

Mr. Eby asked for more information on the Historic District boundary. Mr. Martinez explained that a historic district imposed guidelines on appropriateness for exterior modifications on the exterior of the buildings, new development, and site improvements within the district. Mr. Eby asked Mr. Martinez who the arbiter of the appropriate modifications to building exteriors was within a Historic District, to which Mr. Martinez replied the Urban Conservator and the Historic Conservation Board.

Mr. Eby then asked Ms. Hastings if she was aware that the price of construction would be increased in order to remain compliant within a Historic District. Ms. Hastings replied that they were aware and were hoping to apply for National Register Historic District status in order to receive state and federal tax credits to fund some of the renovations.

Mr. Smitherman thanked those in attendance for their efforts in improving the neighborhood and citing their organic energy and the positive energy of the neighborhood.

Sheila Rosenthal, President of EPHIA, described the proposed Historic District and the proposed Warsaw Avenue Creative Campus serving as a gateway to the community that she hoped would spur further development. Ms. Rosenthal added that the building within the proposed Historic District were a best part of what the community had to offer to families and children.
Mr. Stallworth asked Ms. Rosenthal to elaborate on the ages of the youth and elderly within the community. Ms. Rosenthal responded that the youth involved in the recreation centers of the community were as young as six, and that the recreation centers also served seniors. She also stated that the library renovation had caused the library to be moved in to the recreation center, bringing more youth to the recreation center and the library use to the seniors. She added that the dynamic had created new relationships within the community.

Mr. Stallworth also asked if any local high schools were engaged with Ms. Rosenthal’s community efforts, to which Ms. Rosenthal responded that relationships were being built among local high schools. Mr. Stallworth noted that high school students sometimes needed to get volunteer hours before they graduate, and Ms. Rosenthal stated that volunteers from local high schools were generally involved in community clean-ups and that she was looking to grow other opportunities.

Mr. Gamel stated that more youth were in the process of getting more involved with the community.

Mr. Smitherman thanked Ms. Rosenthal for her work in East Price Hill and noted the good relationship between the Cincinnati Police Department and East Price Hill leadership.

Mr. Juech thanked everyone in attendance that were from the East Price Hill neighborhood and mentioned his own experience at the Price Hill Recreation Center. He also thanked the Cincinnati Police Department and the implementation of the new PIVOT program.

Margo Warminski, member of the Cincinnati Preservation Association, stated her support for the Warsaw Avenue Local Historic District and noted it was the first Local Historic District on the west side. Ms. Warminski added that the approval of the Warsaw Avenue Historic District would open the doors for state Historic Tax Credits and for possible National Register Historic District designation to be eligible for federal tax credits. Mr. Stallworth thanked Ms. Warminski for her attendance and her statement.

Ms. Keough-Jurs added her congratulations to the East Price Hill community and to Price Hill Will for their work. Ms. Keough-Jurs reminded the Commission that the Warsaw Alive! Plan approved in 2018 and that the proposed Warsaw Avenue Local Historic District was an implementation goal of the Plan.

Mr. Eby thanked Mr. Juech for all the resources that the City had invested in the recreation centers. Mr. Smitherman echoed Mr. Eby’s statement and stressed the importance of investment in recreation centers.

**The Commission adopted the staff’s recommendation for Item 7 on the Legislative Discussion Agenda.**

Mr. Eby made the motion, which Mr. Smitherman seconded.

Ayes: Mr. Smitherman, Mr. Juech, Mr. Samad, Mr. Eby, and Mr. Stallworth
Director's Report

Ms. Keough-Jurs mentioned the Zoning Board of Appeals calendar for the 2020 and the availability of the Commissioners. Ms. Keough-Jurs thanked the Commissioners for all of their hard work throughout the year and reminded them of the upcoming work in 2020. Ms. Keough-Jurs also reminded everyone that there would be no City Planning Commission meeting held on January 3, 2020 and that the next meeting would be held on January 17, 2020. She also noted that the David J. Allor Planning and Zoning Workshop would be held on March 6, 2020 and the Neighborhood Summit would be held on March 14, 2020. Ms. Keough-Jurs stated that the theme of the Neighborhood Summit would align with the 2020 Census and that April 1, 2020 was Census Day. She mentioned the Complete Count Committee and the work it was striving to achieve. Ms. Keough-Jurs stressed the importance of a complete count and of the Census itself. She concluded with mentioning that a 2019 annual report would be given at the January meeting and thanked Mr. Allen for his presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Katherine Keough-Jurs, AICP, Director
Department of City Planning
Date: 07 FEB 2020

Byron Stallworth, Vice-Chair
City Planning Commission
Date: 07 FEB 2020