

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BERKLEY CITY PLANNING COMMISSION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 P.M. APRIL 21, 2016 AT CITY HALL BY MAYOR PHIL O'DWYER AND CHAIRPERSON BARNETT.

PRESENT: Phil O'Dwyer Alan Kideckel Steve Baker
Eileen Steadman Jack Blanchard

PRESENT: Martin Smith Mark Richardson Dottie Popp
David Barnett Ann Shadle Eric Murrell
Tim Murad (arr. 7:25 PM)

ABSENT: Colleen Graveline Dan Terbrack
Michele Buckler Joe Tangari

ALSO PRESENT: Matt Baumgarten
Darchelle Strickland Love, Assistant City Manager
Richard Eshman, Interim City Manager
Phommady A. Boucher, City Clerk
Amy Vansen, City Planner

* * * * *

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Steadman moved to approve the Agenda.
Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Baker.
Ayes: Blanchard, Kideckel, Steadman, Baker, O'Dwyer
Nays: None
Absent: Graveline, Terbrack
Motion Approved.

* * * * *

1. Form Based Code in Residential Districts – A Preview

Ms. Vansen reviewed the Planning Commission's work thus far. She reviewed where duplexes and triplexes would be permitted, where townhouses would be permitted, and the expanded multiple family residential district. She also stated that the Planning Commission's was planning on hosting a community open house to discuss the proposed changes with the public.

The City Council was in favor of the proposed changes. Mayor Pro Tem Baker emphasized keeping all messages regarding the proposed changes as positive as possible.

* * * * *

2. Coolidge Highway Streetscape

Ms. Vansen reviewed the idea of changing the name of Coolidge Highway to something other than Highway. The Council was in favor of making that change.

There was discussion regarding investigating some temporary measures to try out three lanes on Coolidge.

There was discussion about lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour.

Ms. Vansen advised that even if the money was in hand, rebuilding Coolidge whether at three lanes or four lanes would take three years.

The Mayor established that there was consensus to form a Coolidge Task Force composed of two Councilmembers, two Planning Commissioners, two DDA members, two Chamber of Commerce representatives, and one member of Public Safety.

* * * * *

3. Business Uses in the Downtown

There was discussion regarding a desire to market the City to desired businesses. There was discussion regarding the future closing of Northwood Shopping Center as well as the Rite Aid merger. While the businesses at Northwood would be highly desired within the City of Berkley, it was recognized that assembling property which is large enough for even one of those businesses is difficult. Other challenges such as the prohibition of parking on the street at night and property owners with inflated ideas of property values were discussed.

* * * * *

4. Woodward Avenue Strategies for Maintenance and Improvement

Ms. Vansen reviewed the status of Woodward maintenance. Ms. Strickland Love advised that she had recently heard from Birmingham and Birmingham (along with Huntington Woods) was interested in pursuing a united maintenance strategy.

The City Council was interested in having MDOT relinquish the land to the City. There was discussion about advising the City's representatives in Lansing about the issue.

* * * * *

5. Robina Plaza

Public Safety Director Richard Eshman outlined the features that would need to be included in any design to address the safety issues.

The programing of the space was also discussed.

There was consensus to move forward with the project.

* * * * *

6. Bicycle Route Implementation

The Mayor advised that the Wayfinding Study was completed and that the bicycle signage was part of that study. The implementation was delayed because of the Branding Study which was recently completed. There was consensus with the Planning Commission and City Council that now was the time to move forward with choosing a sign style and beginning to implement the Wayfinding recommendations with the bicycle route signage.

* * * * *

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

* * * * *

COMMUNICATIONS

The new City Manager was recognized. Mr. Baumgarten stated he was anxious to get started with these new projects.

Commissioner Richardson acknowledged the work of the City Administration and the City Council in approving the Eaton property agreement with Vinsetta Garage.

There was discussion regarding the 24 Second Party Bus attendees using the municipal parking lot for all day free parking.

Mayor Pro Tem Baker introduced the group to Next Energy.

There was consensus that the Planning Commission and City Council should meet every 6 months.

* * * * *

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.