

Planning Commission
November 28th, 2018
Meeting Minutes

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:31pm. The following members were present: Mr. Miller, Mr. Waddington, Chairman Zuilhof, Mr. McGory, Mr. Galea, and Mr. Whelan. Mr. Greg Voltz and Mr. Horsman represented the Planning Department; Mr. Trevor Hayberger represented the Law Department and Ms. Casey Sparks, Clerk from Community Development.

Mr. Waddington motioned to approve the minutes from October 24th, 2018; Mr. Galea seconded the motion.

Mr. Horsman stated that there are three type of changes that are being proposed include addition of criteria for granting certificates of appropriateness; allowing the Landmark Commission to delegate to staff the ability to administratively review minor changes; and streamlining language. Mr. Horsman reviewed the proposed changes to the requirements for demolitions and proposed changes to Section 1161.07(e) and 1161.07(f) which discuss the criteria for evaluating applications for demolition for existing Landmark and Historic buildings, sites, or districts. Mr. Horsman stated that when evaluating applications for changes to Landmark and Historic buildings, sites, or districts, the Sandusky Landmark Commission shall considered the U.S. Department of Interior Standards including a list that will be submitted within Section 1161.07. Mr. Horsman stated that the Landmark Commission may delegate the authority for Planning Department staff to review and grant Certificate of Appropriateness in the following instances: minor changes such as landscaping, fencing, and changes approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. If the Planning Department does not grant approval the applicant may request the application be heard by the Sandusky Landmark Commission which would be reviewed in accordance with application review schedule contained in this section. Any changes that were approved by the Planning Department staff shall be communicated to the Sandusky Landmark Commission at their subsequent meeting. The Landmark Commission communicated to staff that they would like to add landmark sites into Section 1161.04 and add a section that states that the Commission shall annually review the list of minor items staff can review. The Landmark Commission also ask staff to add stronger language regarding dealing with maintenance of historic buildings. Additionally, the Landmark Commission would also like staff to consider possibly removing the owner's consent for landmark designation.

Mr. Miller stated that he recalled when the Landmark Commission was being proposed, there was discussion regarding a building being designated as a Landmark, at that time it was stated that a building could not involuntarily be designated as a landmark. The Landmark district being proposed would appear to be in involuntary, this designation will allow buildings within the district to be set without the consent of property owners. Mr. Miller ask staff to clarify these changes.

Mr. Horsman stated that for clarification the proposed changes will not include any specific changes to the districts or those regulations.

Mr. Miller stated that Section 1161.02(i) states that the definition of historic district to be any area or building.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that something was added to the original ordinance that would require permission of the property owner for the approval of a historic designation.

Mr. Miller stated that the legislation references applicants but it does not reference the individuals who are involuntarily scripted to the landmark designation.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that the current ordinance would require Landmark Commission to approve a district and this is not a change. The Commission already approved the Sandusky downtown historic district under the current ordinance, all of the property owners were notified. There were public hearings conducted for this at both Landmark Commission and City Commission.

Mr. Miller stated that the Landmark Commission ordinance discusses permission of the property owners, however he was not clear that any changes to each of the buildings within the district had to receive approval from this commission.

Mr. Voltz stated that any changes to buildings within the historic district would need to seek approval of the Landmark Commission.

Mr. Miller stated that he must have missed that point, for example a building built in the 1950's would need to seek approval of the Landmark Commission for any proposed changes if it is within the district.

Mr. Zuilhof stated this is why they need to assure that the district does not become too broad.

Mr. Whelan stated he does not recall seeing anything that was not of historic nature within the approved district, he stated that he recalls most properties within that district are already on the National Register of historic places.

Mr. Zuilhof stated we are proposing some minor changes to allow some of these decisions to be done administratively, which would make it look easier on the applicant.

Mr. McGory ask if the library application was reviewed under these regulations or did it predate this process.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that they were reviewed and under these regulations. They had to apply for a demolition permit, the Landmark Commission voted 3 to 3 on a motion to approve which meant that it was not approved. The application appealed the decision and went to City Commission where they voted against the demolition of the building.

Mr. McGory ask how this would have worked with the proposed regulations, would they have required city approval because this is on the National Register, would they also need to seek approval from the Landmark Commission. The proposed regulations indicate more control of these situations.

Mr. Horsman stated that the proposed changes to the ordinance are made to spell out the regulations and provide the Commission with additional guidance.

Mr. Hayberger stated that much of this is housekeeping, the process with the library would have been the same.

Mr. Galea stated that at the time we did not have a process in place for demolition the ordinance now creates a document to assist future applicants to know what they should be armed with if they are requesting demolition of a building. Mr. Miller's point is well taken, we need to make sure we are not unintentionally bringing structures within the district. Mr. Galea stated that a comprehensive history of the ordinance should be presented at the public hearing to indicate how we got to this point.

Mr. Hayberger stated when drafting these areas we need to make sure that buildings and areas are narrowly tailored, when drafting a district you do not want to get overly broad, only get what properties you want within the district.

Mr. McGory stated that not every building is historic, we want to make sure that it is a relevant part of the district. Mr. McGory asked if it would be reasonable to recognize that some buildings are not historic in nature and need to be within the district.

Mr. Galea ask staff about the Huntly Building, if more of the changes were located within the rear of the building and that is the part of the building that was less historic in nature. Did the Landmark Commission review the building because it was historic in nature or because it was located within a district.

Mr. Voltz stated the Huntly building was within a district, but the rear of the building was an addition which the Landmark Commission reviewed differently than the front façade.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that applications should be made to go through the process but is not burdensome.

Mr. Horsman stated that within the district there are contributing and noncontributing structures which the Commission also does keep in mind when reviewing.

Mr. Miller ask about the proposed minimum maintenance requirements for the historic district, does this ordinance give authority to the city to assure that these historic buildings are being maintained.

Mr. Horsman stated that Landmark Commission brought this up; the Code Enforcement Department is tasked with this currently and we talked about prioritizing this issue within the ordinance. The ordinance will further clarify these requirements.

Mr. Miller ask what determines if it is a health or safety threat, what determines if it should be demolished or preserved.

Mr. Hayberger stated that this is done by a case by case basis for these issues.

Mr. Miller stated that for example the Keller building caused portions of the street to be closed down and it stayed within this condition for several months.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that in this example we did not have a landmark ordinance which would have assisted with this situation. It is important to keep in mind the rights of the community when looking at landlords that are not protecting their buildings. We could protect these buildings with a solid ordinance.

Mr. Waddington stated that he was on the Commission when this situation was occurring, it was a long battle to assure the Keller property was demolished. He believes that the process would be different now.

Mr. McGory state that the buildings on Water Street that had quite a bit of damage this past summer would now have to show economic reasons as to why it needs to come down as opposed to the library building that is not necessarily falling down but is rough inside.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that Landmark Commission made concessions for changes to the downtown buildings along Water Street for them to save the buildings.

The Commission discussed the proposed process for demolition and appeal to City Commission.

Mr. Whelan ask if the proposed legislation will have enough teeth to force people to take action if their building is damaged.

Mr. Hayberger stated that we will further look into this and the possibility of fines or citations.

Mr. Zuilhof stated they need to be to fine to force owners to take action. The cost for a community of an unremarkable house is not near the cost off an issue of a historic structures being demolished.

Mr. Whelan stated that in Section F staff should consider adding requirements that the applicant will need to do their due diligence on fixing the structure before they apply to demolish the structure.

Mr. Zuilhof discussed the section that states that Landmark Commission will meet as needed, the Commission has currently set aside dates and times each month for the meetings. Does the "as needed" require to meet before the scheduled time as referenced in 1161.03 (b).

Mr. Hayberger stated that the statue would only require the Commission to meet four times, however if something comes up they can meet earlier if needed.

Mr. Zuilhof ask the Commission if they should consider designating things other than structures, for instances sculptures, trees or objects.

Mr. Galea stated that the current ordinance states that objects can be designated as well.

Mr. Miller stated some minor grammatical changes to the document and ask about previous minutes that were missing from the website or not properly linked.

Mr. Galea ask when we host a public hearing on this issue will it be the intent of Planning Commission voted on that evening.

Mr. Horsman stated that it is staff's intent that Planning Commission would review and then forward to City Commission.

Mr. Galea stated that he would assume that staff would present a DRAFT in December, understanding that some of the changes will have effects on the property owners, how will they be bale to provide comment, will there be enough time between this meeting and the public hearing to City Commission for residents to review proposed changes.

Mr. Zuilhof discussed the public hearing process and stated that there are many opportunities for public input.

Mr. Miller discussed the special improvement district public process, when the landmark blocks were designated he does not believe that everyone understood that they do not have authority to make changes to the building without completing and application to the Landmark Commission.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that the example of the special improvement district was a unique situation.

Mr. Voltz stated that we will look at public process for these changes.

Mr. Voltz stated that he would like to discuss the downtown parking strategy for the summer with Planning Commission. In 2019 several large construction projects will begin and planning staff will have a plan in place.

Mr. Voltz stated that in 2014 the Downtown Sandusky Parking Supply/ Demand Study and Parking Management Plan that was created laid out possibilities for future parking strategies. The recent Bicentennial Vision Plan also touched on downtown parking. In 2016/2017 the parking usage count was also done. The 2014 parking study they studied 2,626 total spaces, include 690 on street and 1700 off-street spaces. When we did the parking usage study we expanded the area one block east and one block west from the previous parking study done in 2016/2017. The parking study showed peak utilization was 61.1% in the commercial central core. At that time staff also approved legislation that does not require parking requirements within the central downtown area.

Mr. Voltz stated that from the usage count done in 2016/2017 Staff was able to create heat maps to indicate the highest usage areas. Mr. Voltz stated that the south side of Market Street and Columbus Ave showed high usage.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that diagonal parking along Market Street will create an impression of higher usage.

Mr. Voltz stated that staff is coming to the commission now because of the future developments of Jackson Street Pier and Shoreline Drive. The study showed that Shoreline Drive was not generally a high usage area, Jackson Street pier current has 30 long term parking spaces, roughly 243 regular spaces. The spaces were mostly occupied in the month of June. When looking at Shoreline Drive the parking count was done it was done utilizing blocks not by block face so it is hard to tell exact usage on Shoreline but heat maps shows

largest usage on block ten. Mr. Votlz presented the image of the blocks and reported usage to Planning Commission.

Mr. Voltz described current and future developments that are under construction. Staff plans on increasing marketing, signage, and highlighting off street parking areas to be sure that visitors and those looking to park downtown longer than two hours aren't parking on the street. Staff also plan wayfinding signage and sandwich board signs for marketing where the long term parking will be located. Staff also plans on working with the ferry boat operators to share the message. The plan includes designating a location for paid long term spaces that will replace the designated long term spaces that were located on Jackson Street Pier. Mr. Voltz stated that they will utilize the parking area within the marina for long term spaces. Staff will also begin enforcing on-street parking time limits to be sure there is the property amount of turnover and direct people to parking structures and surface lots. Mr. Voltz stated that long term we see even more residential and commercial use continue downtown. We will continue to evaluate during 2019 as additional developments occur, looking at on- street time limitations, updating residential parking policy and permit locations, and parking meters for lots and on- street. Parking is never free, our long-term goal is that 15% of that on-street parking is available at all time.

Mr. Miller stated to get to the 15% you will do this by charging the amount that makes that 15% available.

Mr. Whelan ask about the construction timelines for these projects, asking if they are planning on doing Jackson Street Parking lot and Shoreline Drive at the same time.

Mr. Voltz stated that the construction is happening together and staff is well aware it will be tough for everyone, we think signage is important.

Mr. Wobser stated that we will be city hall by summer, our employees will not filling the garage during the weekend so we will have those additional parking spaces available. We believe the garage can be utilized and some of the other on-street parking lots. We do believe there are opportunities but it will be difficult for the summer, we will do the best we can while it is going on. Staff has had a meeting with the county to discuss additional signage opportunities to let individuals know that it is a free parking garage.

Mr. Miller ask if Steve Ernst is aware of this parking plan for bike week.

Mr. Wobser stated that he has spoke with Steve Ernst and they will be pushing everything to south of the plaza this year during construction but in 2020 he would like to take advantage of the new Pier and Shoreline Drive.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that Columbus Ave fills up quickly and to date there is no enforcement. He believes that just by chalking the cars with will be begin enforcement. He would strongly suggest painting the numerals fifteen near the parking space so individuals area aware of the timeframe.

Mr. Wobser stated that he would like to begin thinking of strategies on how to handle enforcement and manage the parking for the summer and future.

Mr. Galea ask about the methodology to determine peak parking on Pier and how did staff do the calculations.

Mr. Voltz stated that in regards to the Pier June and weekend were peak times approximately 70-80% occupied.

Mr. Galea ask if the counts were made at random times and did you average it.

Mr. Voltz discussed how the parking counts were done with the fifty-two collections. The data broke down more to a work days vs. weekends.

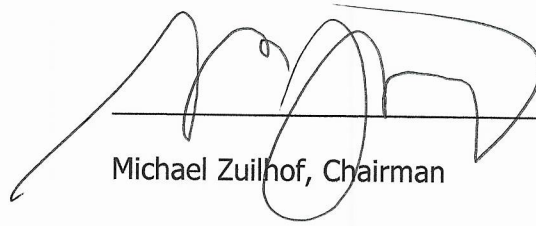
Mr. Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mr. McGory seconded the motion.

With no further business, the meeting at 5:55 PM.

APPROVED:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Casey Sparks", written over a horizontal line.

Casey Sparks, Clerk

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael Zuilhof", written over a horizontal line.

Michael Zuilhof, Chairman