

Planning Commission
January 23rd, 2019
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. Wobser gave Planning Commission a copy of the book Walkability City Rules and informed them that staff will be meeting to discuss the book and encouraged Planning Commission to read the book and join the discussions.

Nomination of Officers

Mr. McGory nominated all existing officers for a new term; Mr. Waddington seconded the motion. The no further discussion the motion passes.

Mr. Zuilhof discussed the proposed corrections on the minutes. Mr. Miller motioned to approve the minutes with the corrections as discussed; Mr. Waddington seconded the motion.

Continuation of a Public Hearing for several parcels along First Street.

Mr. Horsman stated that the application was for two properties currently zoned as Single Family Residence, the application is proposing to rezone these parcels to Commercial Recreation. Mr. Horsman stated that the surrounding properties are zoned as Single Family Residential. Since the time of the last public hearing staff has reviewed the application and the permitted uses with the Commercial Recreation zoning district and the business districts. Staff is concerned about the available uses by right within the Commercial Recreation District and how they would affect the surrounding uses. Staff also reviewed the existing comprehensive plan and the previous comprehensive plan which called for low density residential. Understanding that staff reviews applications based on the best long term plans for the City, staff is recommending that zoning remain the same. The City is looking at long term strategies for development. Currently First Street is listed as a priority corridor for infrastructure and improvement, the city is offering residential tax abatement, and a future bike path is planned. For these reasons staff will uphold their position to maintain this as Single Family Residential zoning district.

Mr. Galea ask if there has been any discussion or plans for the engineering changes to First Street, in regards to traffic calming. The character of First Street directs Cedar Point traffic down that corridor which is not conducive to Single Family Residential. He ask if these changes were currently in the works or will the City be waiting for development to implement the changes.

Mr. Horsman stated that there is a number of corridors we are looking into; it is not something that is occurring currently but it is a priority.

Mr. Miller stated that there is single family resident's entrance to Cedar Point and the residence hate this option. Trying to slow down the traffic within this area does not help Cedar Point.

Mr. Horseman stated that the first priority is the residence of Sandusky, studies show that traffic calming will have negligible effects on putting traffic through an area. We want to make sure cars are not speeding through the area.

Mr. Miller stated that the area in question has fundamentally changed, the current houses are not what the existing market is craving.

Mr. Horsman stated that the vacant lots within the area will give opportunities for development, understanding the proximity to the water and connecting the area to opportunities such as the bike path.

Mr. Zuilof stated that the priority is respecting the rights of the current landowners. Mr. Zuilhof stated that there are three major property owners within the area, a street that does carry heavy traffic, and the area could be residential however it could be tough with houses having their own driveway along First Street. He is against this application because it is spot zoning. He feels that there are alternatives that should be looked into such as mixed uses, multifamily, or a planned unit development. A storage building on the entire lot does not serve the area well in the future. Zoning for a particular use in isolation is not a good policy.

Mr. McGory stated that he understands the concepts of the Bicentennial Vision plan and he knows there is intent to connect the Cedar Point facility on Cleveland Road, but cannot fathom First Street traffic ever changing. It is not conducive to developing residential, it is conducive to Commercial Recreation zoning.

Mr. Whelan stated that at the last meeting the Commission discussed a more holistic approach to rezoning the area, and ask staff if there has been any conversations along the line that staff could share with the Commission.

Mr. Horsman stated that they did discuss the rezoning in a holistic approach but went ahead with the original recommendation to not rezone these parcels in question.

Mrs. Byington stated that looking long term traffic calming on First Street is important. Staff also recognizes with the CRA being city wide, tax abatement being available, and the new housing programs residential development could be possible within this location. The uses that would be permitted if the property is rezoned to Commercial Recreation could be detrimental to the existing residential uses. Mrs. Byington stated that she is not speaking to the proposed development, only to the uses that would be permitted within the CR Commercial Recreation zoning district.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that if the application is approved we are done; if the application is not approved we are not necessarily done as staff can continue to look at other options with the applicant.

Mr. Rengel provided an attachment to the Commission regarding the comments that staff provided. Mr. Rengel stated that Planning staff stated that 25% of the houses west of Farwell are owner occupied. Mr. Rengel stated that there are 145 lots east of Farwell Street, of those 145 lots 24 of those are residential homes. At least 12 out of the 24 houses are not owner occupied houses. This would mean less than 8% of them are owner occupied. Mr. Rengel stated that many of the permitted uses within the Commercial Recreation zoning district would likely not occur and some of them will not be detrimental to the area, or different than what has already been developed within the area. The trend within the area is not residential, however it is more commercial uses that have already been developed. There will be immediate benefits within the area if the property is zoned to Commercial Recreation. Mr. Rengel stated that the vision of the Planning Department cannot occur without cooperation of the surrounding property owners and he is proof that one of the property owners do not agree with the current city plan.

Mr. Zuilhof stated he is voting against this, however he wants to point out that only having 8% of homes as owner occupied does not mean that the neighborhood is not stable. He is voting no because he believes it is spot zoning.

Beatrice Beckham, 1216 West Bogart Road, stated that they are attending to see what taking place, she agrees that spot zoning would not be good for the property. There are not many individuals property owners within the area, however many of them have lived there for 30-40 years. Mr. Beckham stated that she is a property owner with the area, she currently owns a property on Third Street.

Mr. Miller stated that the motion could be positive or negative, what is the next step, what needs to be changed or different. He understands staff's opinion however what the next step is for the applicant.

Ms. Byington stated that this matter will go to City Commission and a public hearing will be set no matter what the decision. If it is denied staff will continue to work with applicant. Mrs. Byington stated that they can also look at possibly reviewing the code to modify the uses permitted within the Commercial Recreation zoning district. Staff can also review the option of a zoning overlay district for transient rental. Staff can continue to look into long term solution for investments along First Street.

Mr. Miller ask staff if Planning Commission recommends denial does it takes a super majority of City Commission to rezone the property.

Ms. Byington confirmed that this is correct.

Mr. Miller motioned to approve the application for the requested zoning amendment for several parcels along First Street; Mr. Whelan seconded the motion.

With no further discussion the motion passed; 5 to 1.

Mr. Voltz asked the Commission to table the application from Carmelo Ruta regarding a petition for the vacation of a 20' alley between 1643 and 149 Cleveland Road and parcels on South Larchmont Drive.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that the application was withdrawn so it is off the agenda.

Mr. Robert Waldock asked if the application will then go to City Commission.

Mr. Zuilhof stated that it will go to City Commission and it will take a super majority of City Commission to override a recommendation to Planning Commissions.


The Commission nominated Joe Galea to the CRA Committee.

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

With no further business, the meeting at 5:24 PM.

APPROVED:


Casey Sparks, Clerk


Michael Zuilhof, Chairman