

MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. David Stanczak; Mr. Kevin Suess; Mr. John Protzman; Ms. Megan Headean; Mr. Mark Muehleck; Mr. Thomas Kreiger; Mr. Tyson Mohr; Ms. Megan McCann; Chairman Justin Boyd

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Eric Penn

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Katie Simpson, City Planner; Ms. Izzy Mandujano, Assistant City Planner; Mr. Bob Mahrt, Community Development Director; Mr. George Boyle, Assistant Corporate Counsel

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Boyd called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Mr. Mahrt called roll. With nine members present, a quorum was established.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MINUTES: The Commission reviewed the minutes of the December 12, 2018, regular meeting of the Bloomington Planning Commission. Mr. Protzman motioned to approve the minutes as presented; Mr. Stanczak seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 8-0-1 with the following votes cast: Mr. Stanczak—yes; Mr. Suess—abstain; Mr. Protzman—yes; Ms. Headan—yes; Mr. Muehleck—yes; Mr. Kreiger—yes; Mr. Mohr—yes; Ms. McCann—yes; Chairman Boyd—yes.

REGULAR AGENDA: *Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Plan. Consideration, review and action on the Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Plan (Ward 1, Ward 6). Recommended action: That the Planning Commission motion to accept and acknowledge the Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Plan, prepared by the McLean County Regional Planning Commission and with comments provided by City staff. The Planning Commission further acknowledge the efforts of the Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Association in this neighborhood planning process.*

Chairman Boyd introduced the case. Ms. Simpson stated staff’s recommendation is to accept and acknowledge the Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Plan, and provided an overview from the August 22, 2018 presentation given by Ms. Vasudha Gadhiraaju, Director of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Simpson explained that the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the City encourage neighborhood level plans that align with the broader goals of the Comprehensive Plan and that the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the City develop a tool kit that neighborhood groups can use to create neighborhood level plans. Ms. Simpson stated that Ms. Gadhiraaju said the Dimmitt’s Grove Neighborhood Plan was a pilot project for

developing neighborhood level plans. Ms. Simpson stated that following the August 22, 2018 presentation, City staff reviewed the draft plan and provided a few supplemental comments and feedback on the utility, zoning and parking recommendations of the plan. She shared comments from the Water Department which suggested the need to clarify between public water mains and private water services. The Department tested the public water mains for the neighborhood and found adequate flow and pressure. The Department also reviewed water main breaks for the neighborhood and found the neighborhood experienced few breaks over the past fifteen years. The Water Department suggested that the pressure issues reported by residents may be the result of corroded water services, typically constructed of galvanized steel, that result in reduced pressure, uneven distribution, and reduced flow from the public main into the home. Ms. Simpson clarified that the neighborhood plan was presented to the City after the city had hired the consultant for the zoning ordinance revision. She stated that the recommended rezoning of property in Dimmitt's Grove was not included in the scope of work for the zoning ordinance revision project. Ms. Simpson stated that further analysis would be needed to evaluate the square footage of lots, size of homes, desired density of the area, and existing uses prior to amending the zoning designations for the neighborhood. She also noted the need to notify property owners of a change. Ms. Simpson stated that while amending the zoning on the neighborhood was not part of the original scope of work for the zoning ordinance revision, this is a project that could occur at a later date. Ms. Simpson also stated that the parking program recommendations in the neighborhood plan would require further analysis. She stated that staff is recommending acceptance and acknowledgement of the plan.

Ms. Headan asked for clarification on a Neighborhood Conservation District. Ms. Simpson explained that a neighborhood conservation district is similar to a historic preservation district with specific design criteria for the character of a neighborhood. She stated that some communities have a board that oversees the review of projects within a neighborhood conservation district. Mr. Mohr asked if the maps staff presented were included in the neighborhood plan. Ms. Simpson affirmed.

Mr. Mohr stated that he was impressed by the document and recognized the amount of work that went into creating the plan. He stated that a few parts of the plan may need updated such as the food desert map and references to a downtown hotel. He suggested that the Executive Summary is updated to state the goals of the plan. He recommended subheadings to strengthen the connection to the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Mohr motioned to accept and acknowledge the Dimmitt's Grove Neighborhood Plan. Mr. Protzman seconded the motion. Chairman Boyd commended the neighborhood organization on their work. The motion passed unanimously with the following votes cast: Mr. Stanczak—yes; Mr. Suess—yes; Mr. Protzman—yes; Ms. Headan—yes; Mr. Muehleck—yes; Mr. Kreiger—yes; Mr. Mohr—yes; Ms. McCann—yes; Chairman Boyd—yes.

OLD BUSINESS: Mr. Mohr requested a status update on the R-3B Zoning District discussion from the previous meeting. Ms. Simpson stated that staff reviewed the past meeting and found that most of the concerns shared at the meeting pertained to the specific zoning of individual properties and the purpose and intent of the R-3B district. She stated that Houseal Lavigne &

Associates provided a revised purpose and intent for the district, which Ms. Simpson read to the Commission. She stated the revised purpose removes language that denotes single family homes as undesirable and language appears to encourage the demolition of these homes. She stated that staff and the consultants chose to not adjust the district's density at this moment since the district applies to other areas of the community and the ramifications of changing the density has not been evaluated. Ms. Simpson stated there are approximately 700 properties zoned R-3B in Bloomington. Mr. Boyle added that staff has concerns about adding several hundred properties to a map amendment petition at this stage since it could prolong adoption of the entire ordinance. He stated that the City would have to provide notice to these properties and hold a new public hearing, a process that could take multiple months to complete. Mr. Boyle explained that many developers anticipate the revisions to the ordinance and are in a state of limbo until it is adopted. He said that a property owner or City Council could submit a petition or resolution initiating a zoning change at any time. Ms. Simpson added that the City would have to weigh the pros and cons of postponing adoption of the ordinance to accommodate a zoning map amendment in the R-3B district. She added that staff would need direction from Council regarding which properties zoned R-3B they would like evaluated. Ms. Simpson explained that staff looked briefly at the zoning changes recommended for the Dimmitt's Grove Neighborhood in the Dimmitt's Grove Neighborhood Plan and determined rezoning these properties from R-3B to R-2 could result in 32 new nonconforming single family lots, 5 new nonconforming duplex lots, and 30 nonconforming multifamily structures. She added that this is preliminary and staff used data from the tax assessor; staff did not perform site visits.

Chairman Boyd asked if each property owner would have to submit a petition. Ms. Simpson stated that City Council could petition for a map amendment or the property owners could submit a petition to rezone their property. Mr. Boyle added that we have received petitions from groups of property owners but a petition has to come from the property owner or the Council. Mr. Mohr asked if it were possible for staff to look at the amount of nonconforming lots and uses created by amending the zoning to R-3A. Chairman Boyd added that the area of concern stated during the meeting was the periphery of the downtown. Ms. Simpson confirmed that staff would work on Mr. Mohr's request. Mr. Boyle stated that staff is available if anyone has questions or would like to discuss the ordinance. Ms. Headan suggested that it would be helpful to share the process someone would have to go through to build a 70 unit structure.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 by voice vote, motioned by Ms. Headan and seconded by Mr. Suess.

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Simpson,
City Planner