

Zoning and Annexation Committee Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers, John Knisely Centre
September 26, 2016

The Zoning and Annexation Committee meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. Committee members in attendance were Mr. Darrin Lautenschleger, Mrs. Aimee May, and Mrs. Cheryl Ramos, Committee Chair. The Chair announced that the meeting would be recorded. Guests attending were: Sam Hitchcock (Council President), Dean Holland, Kelly Ricklic, and John Zucal (Council members); Mayor Joel B. Day, Council Clerk Julie Courtright, and Grep Popham (Safety Director). Present for part of the meeting were: Rob Maurer (Councilman), Service Director Ron McAbier, and Marvin Fete (Law Director).

PURPOSE: To discuss the expansion of the Central Business District by rezoning the residential area on Fair Ave NW from 2nd Drive and Ray Ave NW to 3rd St NW and the residential area on 3rd St SW to Bank Lane SW and 2nd Drive SW to the railroad tracks to Central Business. This is proposed Ordinance 14-2016.

The Chair stated that due to the limited time tonight she felt that the Committee and Council would begin to look at this proposal although the intention is that the property owners have input from the beginning. The Clerk has said that she would mail out notices to the property owners/residents tomorrow regarding the next meeting planned for 10/10 at 5:45 p.m. when there has been more time allotted for discussion. The meeting has been scheduled for one hour to give time for the property owners to present their feeling about this rezoning. The Chair noted that all council members have received a map of the proposed area to change to Central Business along with a list of the property owners affected, proposed Ordinance 14-2016, and copies of the Planning Commission meeting minutes.

Mayor Day explained that the Planning Commission has approved this change with the goal that the Central Business District would be squared up and that property owners would have more opportunities as to how they used their properties. The Chair stated that the uses for the Central Business District are codified in Chapter 1165 of the Ordinances.

Mrs. May asked if the squaring up of the Central Business District had to do with the look of the squaring the map. Mayor Day explained that due to the conditions of some of the houses that the Commission thought the property owners should have another option for the use of their property and if these properties were purchased by businesses they would more likely be able to keep the properties from further deterioration.

Mr. Lautenschleger stated that he has long been against spot zoning. He felt that the Planning Commission has taken a step towards looking at the natural and best use of property by looking at this area. He felt that overtime neighborhoods and their purposes have changed due to traffic flow and the interstate; over time we would see the natural change of the purpose. He stated appreciation for the Planning Commission looking at this issue.

Mr. Holland stated that zoning should not be done on a spot basis without looking to the future without a Comprehensive Master Plan for zoning in the City. He noted that we are losing grants due to not having a master plan. He felt that we are approving zoning changes on a spot basis without a Master Plan.

The Mayor stated that a master plan is in process but for the Comprehensive Master Plan we would have to hire someone with the expertise to put together this plan. Mr. Lautenschleger noted that there should be a plan in suggestion form on file that had been suggested by the previous Service Director and that the area under consideration was part of that. He reminded Council of the controversy that occurred when a national drug store chain wanted to locate on West High Avenue in a residentially zoned area. He felt that this happened because of the spot zoning that had occurred over the years and that a Master Plan is badly needed.

Mr. Zucal supported the idea of a Master Plan and that this re-zoning is a step towards that goal. He also noted that like other cities, we would need an architectural committee to be involved as to how structures are erected so that new structures can be blended in with the residences and other businesses. Mr. Fete felt that the Planning Commission is a dedicated group with expertise and they have approved this. Mr. Hitchcock felt that we could make decisions on a smaller scale at this point without hiring someone from the outside. The Planning Commission is involved and zoning can go through Council. He stated that we did need to have direction to go with consideration given to how neighborhoods would be affected.

No other questions were asked or concerns noted. The Chair encouraged everyone to read the Central Business District parameters in Chapter 1165 and that signage concerns were addressed in the ordinances.

The Chair thanked the Mayor for his vision of developing a Master Plan and working with the Planning Commission. The Committee will have another meeting on October 10, 2016 at 5:45 p.m. and all property owners will be notified of the Committee meeting. The proposed legislation will also be discussed at that meeting.

As no other matter was before Committee Mrs. May motioned to adjourn at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mrs. Cheryl L. Ramos

Zoning & Annexation Chairwoman

A recording of this meeting is available from the Council Clerk.