



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission Workshop

Michael Suriano, Chair

John Hicks

Bobbie Burba

Donald R. Shepherd

Rick Duff

Thomas Shapaka

Thomas J. Wester

Krystal Gonchar, Deputy Clerk of Council

Wednesday, March 27, 2019

6:30 PM

City Hall, Committee Room

OPEN MEETING

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Members present: Hicks, Burba, Shapaka, Wester.

ITEMS

[CC-0001-2019](#)

To recommend approval to Council, changes to Part Eleven - Planning and Zoning Code, Chapters: 1105, 1108, 1131, 1133, 1153, 1165, 1169, 1177, 1181, and 1193, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Gahanna.

Priestas reviewed code changes for stormwater chapters, for stormwater guidelines; 1193 proposes two major changes to adapt to the new normal we are dealing with; due to climate change we are seeing 100 year flood events occurring every 20 years; 50 year events occurring twice a year; proposing tighter/more restrictive guidelines; reduce were currently 100 post developed peak rate would be detained to 100 pre-developed; would be 100 year rate of return to pre-developed 10 year return; always encouraging applicants to incorporate green infrastructure practices into designs; now there would be a code that says "must be implemented when required by city engineer"; driven by Franklin Soil and Water; we rely on their feedback.

Shepherd asked if other communities are adopting these changes. Priestas said encouraged by not adopted; we are ahead of the curve. Shepherd said his concern was about climate change, and what happens when we go back to dry cycles. Priestas said the City of Columbus already has this in place so we are not required something

that other municipalities are not.

Wester said he thinks this is a good thing; in the last 6-8 months a lot of drainage issues have come up; glad to see this being taken forward. Priestas said staff is dedicated to changing environment. Shapaka asked for examples for why there's a need for the change. Priestas cited rainfall events; frequent concerns for residents' back yards flooding; Paulina place is an example; can help mitigate impacts with these measures.

Hicks asked Gonchar to summarize her proposed changes. Gonchar stated that when we looked at updating the code, starting back in the fall, the idea was to modernize the process for public hearing notice advertising; when it was first brought up we discussed the costs of legal ads; we spent \$5,000 last year; currently the process calls on certain applications to be published in a local paper; the first option is to publish in the Rocky Fork Enterprise, which goes out once per week; if we can't make that deadline, then our other option is publish a legal ad in the Columbus Dispatch which is more expensive and not necessarily going out to Gahanna Residents; the proposal was to publish these notices at City Hall, on the city website, monthly city e-newsletter, social media; since we last discussed these options at Planning Commission, we have been implementing all of those things; the idea is that this reaches more people; don't want to cite in the code that we using specific websites because those sites could change. Hicks asked for input from City Attorney, Ewald.

Ewald stated this is a good topic to review; stated we should be more definitive with timeframe as opposed to "during two weeks prior." Gonchar stated we have a similar process for Council; certain items require a notice to be up 30 days prior; we could be more specific for these. Hicks said for the proposed changes, could be more consistent; publishing in a newspaper seems antiquated; also asked what "published at city hall" means. Gonchar stated there's a public hearing notices board outside of Council Chambers. Shepherd suggested specifying location of the board so that people know where the notices are located. Hicks asked for clarification, this would eliminate the requirement of publishing ads in the local paper. Gonchar said only in relation to Chapter 11; also noted that some applications that are for larger projects, require the additional notice time; zonings for example require a notice two weeks prior.

Wester asked how we would communicate this to the public. Shepherd

said we may want to publish an ad in the Rocky Fork and Dispatch to note that we are no longer going to be publishing legal ads in the paper. Ewald said most residents are aware of the cost-savings measures we are trying to implement; there's a fine balance between cutting costs and being transparent with our communication. Hicks said he believes more people would be made aware of notices by taking these further steps as opposed to just an ad in the newspaper which has a limited amount of readers. Ewald said this does not get rid of requirement of sending contiguous property owner letters, who are the people affected most.

Blackford said in the years he has worked here, he had never received a phone call stating the resident read about the project in the paper; a few other points, the requirement to post changes all of our internal deadlines for dealing with applicants; that's the number one complaint from applicants because of the delays; the cost of advertising exceeds the cost of the fee for the applications, not included hours of staff time. Wester asked if the city website is an official means of communication. Ewald confirmed. Shapaka asked if other municipalities are doing this. Gonchar confirmed.

Hicks asked Michael Blackford to review his proposed changes. Blackford said the changes involve general commercial and community service changes; are a reaction to development patterns we are seeing in the city; most popular uses we see are the gyms and similar types of activities; health clubs, fitness instructors, yoga; there are no issues with those types of uses being incompatible with surrounding areas; 7-8 acres in the city are zoned for these categories; would also like to add motion pictures and tv studios; would permit industries like movies, tv, radio.

Blackford said the last change would be to allow for electronic signs on a limited bases; allow as part of the design review application process; the application we saw before Planning Commission recently, we discussed these things: limit colors; limit size; overall display area, limit frequency of message change; no scrolling or flashing; would be for monument signs only. Blackford stated one challenge would be gas stations because they use multi-color. Wester said LEDs are energy efficient; are we being too restrictive or do we need to be more restrictive; LED lights can be many colors. Blackford said the Record of Action can be very specific to color; code enforcement would be able to determine from that and enforce.

Ewald mentioned during this cycle of election, we have had a complaint came forward about tempory signs; code does not take into account for

poly-vac signs; code refers to corrugated plastic but not the poly vac; there's a 30 day duration for those signs. Priestas said this came up and a proposal was made; would have 30 day life span for those signs; would add a notation that refers to "all other signs" will be brought forward after legal review.

Burba asked about the Peace Lutheran sign as it went to BZA, not only was the decision upheld in their favor but BZA also waived their fees; asked if that will that be the standard. Ewald said there's a place in the code that allows BZA plenary authority to waive fees; not based on type of applicant.

Hicks said even though it has not been brought forward yet, believes all would be in support of the new temporary sign code; likes the language for electronic signs.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair closed the meeting at 7:09 p.m.