

**CITY OF COVINGTON
Planning Commission Minutes**

February 7, 2013

City Hall Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Key called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Daniel Key, Vice Chair Paul Max, Sonia Foss, Ed Holmes, Bill Judd, Sean Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT

Alex White

STAFF PRESENT

Richard Hart, Community Development Director
Salina Lyons, Senior Planner
Ann Mueller, Senior Planner
Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- **1. Commissioner Foss moved and Commissioner Smith seconded to approve the consent agenda and the minutes for November 15, 2012. Motion carried 6-0.**

CITIZEN COMMENTS – NONE

PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Northern Gateway Area Study Scope of Work for Hawk Gravel Pit

Community Development Director Richard Hart provided the Planning Commission a copy of the blue sheet that the City Council approved for the subarea plan for the Northern Gateway Area Phase II. There will be extensive public participation process that will involve the Planning Commission.

The City Council reviewed analysis about their vision on the Town Center as well as the Northern Gateway area at their recent retreat. They discussed how these properties can complement each other. The sub-area planning process will allow the developer, the public and the council to weigh in. The actual re-zoning (current zoning is mineral) specifics will not be determined until 1st quarter of 2014.

Chair Key opened the discussion to questions from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Smith asked for clarification of the study area on the map.

Mr. Hart explained that this study deals with the area to the southeast of Highway 18 and clarified that a portion of the stream is not part of the Urban Growth Area (UGA).

Chair Key appreciated the scope of work and the start of the analysis of the vision between the two areas of the city.

2. Discussion of 2013 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket Items

Mr. Hart stated that the City has not received any applications for Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket Items. But there are still a couple of weeks to see if anything is submitted. If nothing is, this will free up approximately 500 hours of staff time for code amendments.

3. Discussion of Potential Zoning Code Amendment to Add Developer's Agreement Option in the Town Center Zone

Senior Planner Salina Lyons reviewed the memo discussing Developer's Agreements. The variance process may make allowances based on specific criteria while Developer's Agreement may allow for some negotiation and mitigation measures. There is a legal basis for Developer Agreements outlined in the RCW's.

Mr. Hart shared that he met with the City Manager and two developers. The developers reviewed the current regulations for specific properties. One of the developers has experience with mixed use development. The 60% retail street frontage can be problematic especially when dealing with movie theaters and parking garages. The other developer was interested in more residential space with office use. The Developer's Agreements could offer some greater flexibility and greater public benefits without going through the variance process or going before the hearing examiner. This was discussed with the City Council at their annual retreat and the council supported considering some of the changes.

Commissioner Foss likes the idea and feels this is important to give developers options. The variance process is time consuming.

Mr. Hart stated that offering Developer's Agreements allows for some flexibility and control and it doesn't change the vision in the Town Center. The City Council would like the Town Center to have a variety of components and the city would not want to close the door to that opportunity.

Commissioner Judd likes the idea also. If the city has a reputation for being easy to work with, that momentum will work in the city's favor. Development is competitive and he appreciates the ability to help and make adjustments and draw in the developments.

Commissioner Holmes agrees that the regulations match the vision. He felt there has been a need for some compromise. His only concern was potential litigation.

Ms. Lyons stated that Developer's Agreements have been tested. These are voluntary agreements and the developer always has the option to go straight zoning. This is a negotiation process and generally involves attorneys. The decision goes before the City Council.

Mr. Hart stated that the minimum property sizes will be defined with some reason and logic and there are only a few pieces of property that would be able to utilize this process.

Vice Chair Max has experience in dealing with these agreements and has found them to be beneficial. He feels it is a great idea.

Chair Key talked about how this relates to the action we took last year. We have policies and the vision and required minimums as a starting point. He is glad the minimums were determined before this was introduced. He would like to see some examples of other cities Developer's Agreements.

ATTENDANCE VOTE –

- **Commissioner Holmes moved and Vice Chair Max seconded to excuse Commissioner White. Motion carried 6-0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT- NONE

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF

Mr. Hart let the Planning Commission know that there will only be one meeting in February and March. In April and May there may need to be two meetings.

ADJOURN

The February 7, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kelly Thompson", is written over a horizontal line.

Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary