

**MINUTES
MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
December 7, 2009
7:00 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Meredith, Chairperson; Jerry Reynard, Vice-Chair; Linda Morse; Stephanie Rolley; and Mike Kratochvil.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nikki Miller; Mike Hill

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Cattell, Assistant Director for Planning; Steve Zilkie, Senior Planner; Lance Evans, Senior Planner; Cam Moeller, Planner II; and, Chad Bunger, Planner II.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one spoke.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2009, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETING.

Reynard moved that the Planning Board approve the Consent Agenda. Rolley seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 5-0.

GENERAL AGENDA

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING FOR THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE MANHATTAN URBAN AREA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO RECEIVE COMMENTS TO DETERMINE IF THERE ARE ANY SIGNIFICANT ISSUES THAT MIGHT NEED FURTHER STUDY OR OTHER ACTION.

Evans indicated the item was to provide the public with the opportunity to discuss issues and provide comments on the Comprehensive Plan. He said comments on the Plan were also being obtained from the City Commission and Riley County. The Community Development Department will compile all comments received and schedule a work session to discuss them with the Board in early 2010, to prioritize and develop an action plan.

Meredith asked for public comment.

Larry Quinn, 1020 Houston Street, expressed concern about the lack of affordable housing for service workers in the community. He said it is difficult to find nice housing that is affordable because of the increased population from Fort Riley and increased competition from university students, who will pay more for housing than local residents,

resulting in forcing local residents out of the community. Because he can't live on campus or on Fort Riley, he suggested identifying a portion of the community to provide housing only to local residents and not for military or university populations.

With no one else speaking, Meredith closed the public input session.

WORK SESSION

DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC NOTICE FOR ZONING HEARINGS AND REVISIONS SUGGESTED BY CITY ADMINISTRATION.

Cattell indicated that the City Commission held a work session in October 2009, to discuss possible revisions to the way the City provides public notice for zoning hearings. After receiving public comments, the City Commission had asked for comment from the Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals on City Administration's proposed revisions. Cattell provided an overview of the issue, including: statutory requirements; the city's application process; neighborhood meetings; findings of a survey of other first class cities in Kansas; legal challenges to extending the distance for mailed notification; and the City's suggested revisions. He also summarized public comments and the City Commission's comments made during the City Commission's work session.

Meredith asked for public comments, to be followed by the Board's comments.

Mark Bachamp, Schultz Construction, indicated he had attended the City Commission's work session and that he supports providing public notice. He has been a consultant for developers and for cities around the state and supported keeping the statutory 200/1,000 foot boundary for mailed notification. He supported a required neighborhood meeting to be held by the applicant, and indicated that Schultz Construction sometimes holds two meetings, consisting of a preliminary meeting to discuss issues and concepts and a follow-up meeting once plans have been more fully developed. He supported the early InTouch notice suggested by the City; however had some concern that it might be difficult to anticipate how many people to plan for at a neighborhood meeting when it's advertised through InTouch, and that some people may show up to try to disrupt the meeting. He indicated that informational fliers they provide on home-for-sale signs tend to disappear overnight and he didn't want the lack of fliers to delay the application process. He said the current standardized public hearing signs are very noticeable and should not be changed.

Morse complimented the City on providing the survey results from other cities which puts the issue in perspective for the Board. She wasn't sure how to balance the timing for a neighborhood that is trying to understand the issues, the process, and zoning standards to prepare a persuasive presentation, with a developer who has had more time to prepare for the hearing. She was concerned that people located beyond the 200 foot boundary might not know about a project and may be perceived to have less impact on the outcome. Anyone in the community should be welcome to speak at the hearings and feel that their comments are important to the broader interests of the community, such as on the downtown redevelopment project. She said larger projects have more impact on more people. She supported a graduated distance for notice similar to the Wichita example.

She valued neighborhood association input; however associations don't cover or represent the whole community. She expressed concern that there are often conflicting interpretations and reports of what occurs at the developer's neighborhood meeting.

Kratochvil supported keeping the statutory 200/1,000 foot notification distances. He suggested using larger 4 by 8 foot public hearing signs on larger rezoning sites and placing signs on each street frontage. He said neighborhood groups located in the core areas of the community were very active during the traditional neighborhood study and that newer associations such as in Miller Ranch have also been active in the planning process. He indicated the City's current notification process provides good public access and he encouraged citizens to be more observant and call the phone number on the public hearing signs to find out what is being proposed. He said there were pros and cons to Wichita's approach.

Rolley said that because the notification distance appears to be tied to legal standing, the use of public hearing signs may be the best method of notice. She suggested that size and location of signs is important, such as when the end of a cul-de-sac is being rezoned, there should be different standards for placement of the sign, so that people will be more likely to see it. Being able to call a phone number on the sign to get information is as accommodating as it can get. She thought the idea of fliers blowing around was wasteful and would promote trash and reflect poorly on the city's image. She had some concern with using the InTouch system to notify the general public of neighborhood meetings because it could change the way those meeting become part of the process. The meetings are currently more of a discussion between the neighborhood and developer, and not a forum for the general public as part of the formal public record. She suggested being careful about how neighborhood meetings are defined, what their content is, how they are recorded, and how they are disseminated.

Reynard said incorporating holders on public hearing signs for informational fliers was a bad idea, because it would need to be monitored constantly. He supported the proposed InTouch option for broader and earlier notification, and suggested more citizens need to utilize that system to stay informed about what's going on in the community, as most people do have different forms of internet and email access.

Meredith supported keeping the distance for mailed notification as it currently exists. He said the graduated distance approach used by Wichita is of interest, but didn't know that it would be appropriate for Manhattan. He supported a required neighborhood meeting and in a common form for applicants, so everyone gets the same information more consistently. He agreed with other Board members' comments on public hearing signage and its importance in providing notice.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

There were no reports or comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Cattell, Assistant Director for Planning