

**MINUTES**  
**MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD**  
**City Commission Room, City Hall**  
**1101 Poyntz Avenue**  
**June 20, 2016**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Ball, Chairperson; Neil Parikh, Vice-Chairperson; Gary Stith; Jerry Reynard; Phil Anderson; Debbie Nuss; and Ken Ebert.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Eric Cattell, Assistant Director for Planning; Chad Bunger, Senior Planner; Lance Evans, Senior Planner; and Ben Chmiel, Planner.

**OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No one spoke.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 6, 2016, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETING.**

Ebert made a clarification on his comments about the parking ratio page 5, stating that the 5% maximum for assembly occupancies may be too restrictive.

Ball noted a correction to his comment on page 5 stating that the comment regarding airport land reads “are” but should be “area.”

Cattell indicated he had already received and made Ebert’s clarification and will make Ball’s.

Reynard moved that the Board approve the minutes as amended. Anderson seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 6-1-0 with Stith abstaining.

**GENERAL AGENDA**

**TABLE THE PUBLIC HEARING TO ANNEX AND REZONE THE BLUEVILLE NURSERY CENTER, AN 8.2 ACRE TRACT OF LAND FROM COUNTY C-4, HIGHWAY BUSINESS DISTRICT, TO C-5, HIGHWAY SERVICE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. (Applicant/Owners: Keith D. Westervelt, Blueville Nursery)**

Stith moved that the Planning Board table the hearing on the item to the July 7, 2016, Manhattan Urban Planning Board meeting.

Reynard seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 7-0.

## **WORK SESSION**

### **UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF THE AGGIEVILLE COMMUNITY VISION PLAN.**

Evans presented an overview and update on the Aggieville Community Vision Plan.

Parikh asked if there was a possibility for making Moro Street pedestrian only on the weekends, or if it happens now.

Evans said that is an idea that has come up before, but now it is typically only closed for special events and parades.

Anderson commented that there are cities such as Boulder, CO and Burlington, VT that have permanently closed a street, increasing walkability and retail value.

Ball commented that on the slides that were shown, he liked the hybrid right-of-way example with vehicles and bike access during the week, with the possibility of blocking it off on weekends and special events. He commented that by removing parking or making it light traffic such as one lane, parking would need to be available somewhere else. Additionally, handicap access, parking and drop off would need to be available nearby.

Ball asked if pedestrian only access meant no bikes.

Anderson commented that bikes need to be included. It is a long range vision to change transportation plans in the neighborhood. However, in terms of creating walking neighborhoods, he stressed the importance of safe neighborhoods with public transit, bike lanes and adequate lighting. He suggested that the lighting wouldn't necessarily be the responsibility of the city with certain citizen participation programs such as a front porch light campaign, where some cities have paid people to leave their lights on at night to increase safety. He said a similar campaign has worked at the Jardine apartments on campus.

Reynard commented on all the high density housing being proposed within four to five blocks of Aggieville. He suggested making Moro Street pedestrian only, to make a cohesive streetscape with more retail opportunities. Aggieville is now mostly eating and drinking establishments and there needs to be more variety with ADA accessibility. He recalled that Aggieville used to have more retail with a grocery store and a drug store on Moro Street.

Stith said that his research on the pedestrian streets and his experience with a similar development in Silver Spring, Maryland, many streets that that were converted to pedestrian only in the 1970's and 80's failed and were opened back up to cars.

Anderson asked why some pedestrian only streets were successful.

Stith said he was unsure; however most of them are in university communities. He commented that Moro Street needed to be less auto oriented, with wider sidewalks for

outdoor dining and designed to be closed off during weekends. There needs to be a better mix of uses, by regulation or incentives. Maintaining some vehicular access and on-street parking during the week would increase the visibility for retail stores, which is critical to their success. Stith said that while the ratio of parking and walking needs to change, he cautioned against making Moro exclusively pedestrian only all the time.

Chmiel added that from his discussion with Aggieville business owners, they shared the same hesitancy to close off Moro completely. Parking was a high priority for the area and proposing to take away parking needs to be balanced with replacing it close by. Chmiel said that there is likely a compromise between parking and streetscape improvements.

Ball asked about the Marriott and parking garage proposal that went before City Commission.

Cattell said the City Manager's office was gauging the City Commission's level of interest in leveraging city parking lots as part of a public-private partnership. The Commission expressed interest in public-private partnerships and possibly an RFP process. However they were not ready to pursue the proposal that was presented to them at this time. They want a better financial deal and a greater amount of net parking spaces from a garage. They also wanted time for the Aggieville Vision process to be completed.

Stith commented that the two larger public parking lots would be suitable for an RFP process with structured parking on them; however the lot on Bluemont Avenue is too small to be developed by itself. A public private partnership could work in conjunction with a neighboring property, similar to what had been presented to the Commission.

Cattell commented that the proposal was for a five-story hotel and four-story parking garage. With an additional floor it could have increased the net number of parking stalls; however it increased the building costs.

Stith suggested there are financing mechanisms that could offset increased building costs associated with public parking garages.

Anderson said that when we do a public survey, most people identify what they want today, but the Planning Board needs to be concerned about the future. He has concerns over increasing densities and parking within such a small area and said he favored solutions such as Kansas City's recently constructed street car system. Rather than adding parking congestion, the city should look into public transportation options. There being no further comments, Ball closed the item.

## **REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Cattell noted the upcoming meetings including the special joint meeting with Pottawatomie County on July 13th. Upcoming discussions include review of the CIP for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and in August a new chair and vice chair will be elected.

Cattell announced that this is Lance Evans' last Planning Board meeting with the City of Manhattan.

Evans gave a brief description of where he was going.

Stith asked if Evans' departure would affect the progress of the Aggieville Plan.

Cattell said he hoped it would not, with the remaining staff and progress achieved so far. However, losing a full time planner will have some impact.

Stith thanked Evans for his work with the City.

Stith said he was absent from the meeting which discussed the Urban Core Residential District (UCR) and asked what the next steps would be.

Cattell said that due to the budget season, the work session with the City Commission over the proposed UCR District won't be until September. There are a few minor issues being finalized in the draft. After the work session there will be a public hearing to and the UCR to the Zoning Regulations and then the identified blocks will need to be rezoned. Those steps should occur in late fall or winter. He added that planning staff held a second round of focus group meetings last week over the UCR with architects and land owners.

Anderson reported that Manhattan Christian College is about to expand their gymnasium, which would demolish the house at 1417 Laramie. Commissioner Morse raised the issue and they have spoken with the Christian College about offering the house so that it could be saved and moved to a different location. Anderson suggested that when demolition permits are applied for, the option of moving the house should be encouraged by the city.

Anderson said he was in discussion with realtors and bankers about houses that had been converted into multi-family, being renovated back to single family. He suggested the City could encourage this with tax breaks for older houses and encourage the redevelopment of older neighborhoods.

Stith said he had previously worked in a city that required a 30-day public notice on demolition permits. Anderson said he thought that would be a good idea.

Ball said he would be out of town for both the July 7<sup>th</sup> and July 18<sup>th</sup> meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Lewis