

MINUTES

MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD

City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue

January 24, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT

Debbie Nuss, *acting chair* Gary Stith
Phil Anderson
John Ball

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ken Ebert, *chair*
Jerry Reynard, *vice-chair*
Neil Parikh

STAFF PRESENT

Chad Bunger, Assistant Director of Community Development; John Adam, Senior Planner; Barry Beagle, Senior Planner; Ben Chmiel, Planner II

1. CALL TO ORDER

- 1.1. Nuss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Staff called roll and stated there was a quorum.
- 1.2 Open Public Comments: there were none.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- 2.1 Approve the minutes of the January 7, 2019, Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board meeting

Stith moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda.

Nuss made a friendly amendment to the minutes, adding the word “table” to the motion of the General Agenda.

Anderson seconded. Motion passed 4–0–0.

3. WORK SESSION

- 3.1. Presentation of a proposal to amend some portions of the Aggieville Commercial (C-3) zoning district regulations in order to enable by-right development that accords with the Aggieville Community Vision Plan. Changes include increases to allowable building heights, adjustments to design standards, and changes to parking ratios.

Ben Chmiel presented the proposed amendments of the Aggieville Commercial (C-3) zoning district.

Stith asked if offices are allowed in the district. Chmiel replied yes. Adam said it is referred to as "Business and Professional Offices" in the regulations.

Stith asked if "miniature golf course" were an appropriate use for the district. Chmiel said no, not as a principal use. He said the regulations will be updated through the adoption of the UDO and will refine the uses of the district; the proposed amendment addresses more urgent changes.

Chmiel continued to present on proposed changes including increased building height maximums and building design standards.

Stith asked if EIFS will be allowed as a building material and if its use is limited to avoid placement on the ground floor. Chmiel said yes, it will be allowed but the regulations would limit its use on the ground floor. Adam added that in the current draft of the UDO, EIFS would not be allowed on the ground floor because of the damageability of the material. Stith asked if that could be modified in the proposed amendment. Chmiel said yes.

Chmiel continued to present proposed design and parking standards.

Stith noted that no parking is required for an establishment 15,000 feet or less. He then asked what constitutes an establishment. Chmiel said it is an individual business; so several different businesses within one development all under 15,000 would not be required to provide parking. Stith asked if the parking requirement would change if the businesses' demising walls were removed. Chmiel replied yes. Stith asked how you would add parking spaces to an existing development. Chmiel said they would have to add parking or go through a Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) process for an exception.

Bunger said establishments would have to get an exception from the BZA or the proposed use would be denied if it did not meet the parking requirements. The UDO will have some additional regulations for grandfathering parking situations if they are within reason.

Stith asked if the development of a five-story building with the required one parking space per bedroom is possible. Chmiel said there was recently a proposed development at 14th Street and Laramie that nearly met the proposed parking ratio.

Stith commented that the parking requirements may limit the potential development of a site, especially in Aggieville. He suggested going below one space per bedroom. Chmiel agreed. Bunger said staff had proposed 0.75 spaces per bedroom but the District opposed to going below one space per bedroom.

Stith said it is a minimum—developers could choose to add more parking.

Ball said the proposed standards were written so they will pass, because parking is a problem around Manhattan. Nuss disagreed. Bunger also disagreed, stating that studies have shown that parking is not an issue.

Ball said many community members have come before the board stating that parking is an issue. If parking is not provided it may interfere with other properties. He said studies may show different information, but the perception is that parking is a problem; going below a 1:1 parking ratio is perceived as being too low.

Bunger agreed: the perception of parking is the issue. Studies have shown that commuter traffic takes up most of the parking spaces. The lower ratio accounts for this because the residential parking is not the issue.

Ball stated that he could support 0.75 parking spaces per bedroom but they will not be able to sell that to individuals that perceive parking as a problem.

Stith asked if all the proposed changes are severable. Adam said they could change any part of the proposed regulations that the board offers as its recommendation.

Nuss said she appreciates staff's approach but in the long-term interest of the community the parking ratio should not be greater than 0.75 spaces per bedroom. Stith agreed. Anderson commented there will be a parking garage soon and he does not understand why Aggieville needs parking requirements. Stith commented that developers will build residential parking above the requirement anyway because renters will not want to walk.

Adam commented that the planning board may recommend whatever ratio they decided but suggested parking management also needs to be considered. Chmiel then presented parking management solutions the City could enact in conjunction with the parking standards, such as the change from unlimited to two-hour on-street parking along Laramie Street. It turned out many cars using lived in the Aggie Village apartments.

Chmiel said he was concerned about throwing out the baby with the bathwater. He said staff is trying to bring forward a number of critical changes to the district regulations to get ahead of the TIF district, so that desired development can happen by right. If the commission disagrees on the parking ratio issue, then it could delay adopting these changes. He suggested it might be good to fight that fight during UDO adoption.

Bunger noted that if the board makes a recommendation to the commission to change the parking ratio now, the commission will need a super-majority to go

against the recommendation. If they do not have that super-majority, the amendment will come back to the planning board for reconsideration.

Ball commented that how it is written is important. The regulations should follow what the studies and survey show as sufficient but to satisfy the district he proposed recommending a 0.9:1 ratio to prevent extra cost for future development. Stith agreed that a 0.9:1 ratio would be good. Ball commented that once the public can accept a ratio under 1:1; it will be easier to amend in the future as needed.

Stith said a calculation could be done that analyzes the typical size of a unit and building to determine the potential required parking to see how development changes from 1:1 to 0.9:1 ratio.

Ball commented that parking spaces are expensive and lowering the parking ratios lowers the cost of development which affects rental rates. Stith commented that it is expensive to have the parking spaces on site. It will also result in shorter buildings because there will not be enough space for ground parking.

Anderson asked if the parking garage was a TIF project. Staff replied yes. Stith said more development in the area results in more TIF generated to pay off the garage.

Anderson said that parking will be added so future conditions need to be anticipated for development. He noted the parking garage downtown is rarely filled; we need to make sure there is enough development to support the proposed parking garage in Aggieville.

Chmiel reviewed the non-substantive changes of the proposed amendments.

Anderson asked if the drive-thru restaurants were removed as a land use. Chmiel said yes; it was already eliminated in the changes made in 2017.

Chmiel shared the proposed timeline of the amendment.

Nuss opened the floor to public comment.

Ryan Bramhall, 4408 Leone Circle, Aggieville Business Association President, said he has been working on the redevelopment since the beginning. He said there are many issues with parking in Aggieville, and although there is a garage coming in the future the board needs to consider employee parking too. He supports the densification of the district but it will only increase the parking issue. The studies may show that residential parking is not an issue but Aggieville is a business district and employees need to be considered. Parking enforcement has improved the parking situation. He supports the remaining proposed amendments.

Ball asked if Bramhall supported the 1:1 parking ratio, forgiving the first four units. Bramhall replied yes.

Nuss asked how many property owners are there in Aggieville. Bramhall replied there are 97 businesses and he does not know the number of business owners.

Chmiel said he sent out 60 letters to business owners in the C-3 district, but Aggieville includes more than just the C-3, such as the Bluemont Hotel and the upcoming Aggieville Hotel.

Nuss asked if the survey was the entire C-3 district. Chmiel said it was just Aggieville businesses and property owners.

Stith commented that the community needs to be more educated on parking. Bunger said there have been many meetings, blog post, emails, and surveys to educate the public but people are still concerned that there will not be a parking garage. After the garage is built it may be easier to accept a decreased parking ratio.

Stith commented that development is not going to happen until after the parking garage is built. Anderson asked if the garage will be paid for with parking fees or the TIF. Bunger said it will most likely be paid for through the TIF.

Anderson asked if they have looked at a design with commercial space on the ground floor. Bunger said the designs being considered have commercial space wrapped around on the ground floor. The commercial space combine with revenue from the TIF and other sources will help pay for the garage, other landscaping improvements will be phased in later. Anderson said he appreciates the work being done to get the redevelopment accomplished.

Stith said in some places that allow developers to get a reduction in parking requirements if they buy tenants or employees passes for the ATA Bus. Part of the solution is getting more people to use public transit.

Anderson said scooters could help; they are all over Kansas City. Nuss said many cities do not have good regulations for scooters.

4. REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

4.1. Planning updates from staff

Bunger introduced Barry Beagle, the new Senior Planner for current planning.

Beagle said he was previously the County Planning Director of Shawnee County for 15 years and is looking forward to working in Manhattan.

Bunger announced an event on February 6th called Planning and Pints at Tallgrass Tap House at 6:30 pm. It will be a community gathering to discuss the Flint Hills MPO and City of Manhattan Bicycle and Pedestrian Systems Plan.

4.2. Comments from Board members

There were none.

4.3. Next meeting is on Monday, February 4, 2019.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Submitted by Lesley Frohberg, Planning Intern