

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION
VILLAGE HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBER
October 1, 2015
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair David Mann; Commissioners Jeremy Burton, Garret Eakin, Mark Gartland, JoBeth Halpin and Greg Marsey, Kristin Nordman, (arrived 7:12 p.m.)

EXCUSED: Commissioners Douglas Gilbert, Monica Sanders

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Jacob Karaca, Attorney; Arista Strungys, Camiros LTD

Roll Call

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Mann asked for comments on the minutes from September 3, 2015.

Commissioner Gartland moved to approve the minutes from September 3, 2015. Commissioner Eakin seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

Public Hearing(s)

None

Other Business

Presentation by Camiros LTD on the full Zoning Ordinance Framework Plan

Ms. Arista Strungys, Camiros, went through the framework report. She explained this was a high level overview of the current zoning document. The next steps would be incorporating any direction from commissioners, reformat the document with any changes and hold a public forum on the document so that residents and business owners could be made aware of changes to the zoning ordinance.

She said a key goal was to make the document user-friendly. They want a document that has good organization, was easy to read and consistent throughout. She said they were looking to compartmentalize the document to make it easier to read.

Ms. Strungys said they were looking to clean up the use section and allow for a more generic use approach. They were looking to create one matrix for uses. She said definitions, with examples, would be spelled out for generic uses as well as any specific uses that are called out in the document. They want to look at commercial districts and consider retail corridors if they were appropriate or to add residential on the ground floor in areas if appropriate. These topics will be explored in more detail later in the revision process.

She said they would address temporary uses, like farmer's markets, food trucks, sidewalk sales, etc.

Ms. Strungys said in the residential districts they were looking at creating a set percentage of lot coverage requirements for zones rather than the current averaging. She said they'd consider impervious structures and green space issues when setting this. They were proposing a proportional control of side yards for the

smaller lots. She said the R-3 zone was highlighted in the report because about 36 % of the lots are nonconforming to the current standards. One option to address this issue would be to split the district into two R-3 districts to address the different lot coverage requirements. She said they'd have very basic design standards for residential properties.

She said for commercial districts rather than overlays they would like to create district that reflects the main commercial areas in village. The main Lake Street downtown district and Oak Park Avenue would be two that are similar. The Harrison Street Arts District would be a unique district within the commercial areas. Areas like Roosevelt Road and North Avenue would be similar because they abut other municipalities. Basic, objective design standards would be included here as well.

Ms. Strungys said they were proposing two new districts- a municipal district for government and educational facilities and an open space district that targets parks and would be the only allowed use.

She said a comprehensive list of accessory structures will be included. They will also address general uses like home occupations and storage; sustainability issues; and issues like chickens and bees. They will also address lighting standards and permitted encroachments.

She said off-street parking will be comprehensively studied and updated if necessary. They want to integrate required bicycle parking. She said they want to get out of the variance practice for parking issues. They are looking at grandfathering provisions, exempting small residential developments and allowing review by the zoning administrator to help accomplish this.

She said they want to update and streamline the planned development process. They will include examples of public amenities and benefits. They want to allow administrative changes to planned developments on small changes. The requirement for LEED certification has been looked at and they want to include certification from other sustainable sites initiatives and not just limit it to LEED certification. Also, they were considering moving away from the LEED certification requirement but still requiring that applicants show that they were meeting the standards through third-party review. She said a bigger change would be to have applications come directly to the Zoning Board of Appeals or Plan Commission rather than go through a referral process from the Village Board first.

She said in the variation section, they want to eliminate the use variance process that is in place. Dimensional standards could still be varied, but they would be adding an administrative variation process for smaller things, like 10% spacing variation. Any appeals would go through the Zoning Board of Appeals.

She said non-conformity rules will be spelled out clearly. They would be creating a nonconforming site element, such as parking, landscape, and exterior lighting so that the structure would stay in conforming status but would allow for elements to be considered nonconforming.

Chair Mann said he liked the idea of clarifying the text and using graphics and examples to simplifying it for laypeople to read. He asked about personal service uses and how broad the definition would be. Ms. Strungys said certain personal uses could be pulled out and further defined, like massage parlors.

Chair Mann asked about pop-up shops, would they fit into temporary uses. Ms. Strungys said generally it would be interpreted under a retail goods establishment, but if there was a desire they could create a temporary use for it. Mr. Failor said generally, the village has not had any issues with this.

Commissioner Marsey asked if recent amendments to the zoning code like permeable pavers and open space requirements would be reflected in the revision. Mr. Failor said there were a few examples like this

that they would examine when they go deeper into each restriction. Staff said text amendments would be included in the rewrite.

Commissioner Marsey asked how the zoning code would integrate with building code. Mr. Failor said they would be different documents and the zoning code would reference the building code; but there have been no real issues integrating the two codes.

Commissioner Marsey asked how design standards would be included for historic districts. Mr. Failor said historic districts would still need to meet set back and lot coverage requirements but design issues would be dictated by the Architectural Review Guidelines of the Historic Preservation Commission. Commissioner Marsey asked about current planned developments and future changes made to those buildings. Mr. Failor said the code allows for major and minor changes to planned developments and the revision would keep this, as well as allowing certain administrative-level changes to be made, depending on the level of changes.

Chair Mann asked which design standards would take precedent- the design standard document set to be adopted for commercial, mixed-use and multi-family buildings or the design standards in the zoning code. Mr. Failor said they will need to further look at this and ensure the two documents work together.

Chair Mann suggested the local zoning district be called neighborhood zoning district. Ms. Strungys agreed.

Commissioner Marsey asked if the village has any purview over parks and playgrounds. Attorney Karaca said park districts and schools need to meet zoning requirements. Commissioner Marsey suggested talking with the school districts and park district so that they could weigh in on the process.

Chair Mann said the reductions in parking need to be clearly spelled out in the revision. Ms. Strungys agreed.

Commissioner Gartland asked about landscape and planting for new developments: if the plantings die off, how was that rectified. Mr. Failor said most communities have a one year bond to insure new developments, but the village does not have that in the zoning code. Commissioner Marsey said the bond should be in the zoning code for the first year. A short discussion ensued about the forestry division and the standards for parkway trees. Commissioner Marsey suggested talking with the forestry division regarding tree standards and guidance for the landscape portion of the revision. Ms. Strungys agreed.

Chair Mann asked if submittal requirements for planned development applications would be reviewed. Ms. Strungys said when they get further into details of the revision this will be examined. Mr. Failor suggested if commissioners notice something that should be removed or added to alert him. Chair Mann noted a geothermal study was a very specific requirement that was unusual. Mr. Failor said perhaps environmental improvements could be added as compensating benefits. Chair Mann asked if the Environment and Energy Commission should weigh in on this. Ms. Strungys suggested drafting some standards and bringing those to the commissions for feedback. Chair Mann said he supported getting away from LEED certification, but wanted to ensure that planned developments still had some teeth to encourage sustainability, like through using Green Globes or another certification process. Ms. Strungys agreed. Commissioner Marsey asked if certification would be a bargaining tool or a requirement. Mr. Failor said he believed it would be a requirement to have either a certification or a third-party that can investigate if a building is doing environmental requirements without the formal certification.

Commissioner Marsey asked if they would keep economic benefits as a bargaining tool in planned developments. Ms. Strungys said they could look at that. Commissioner Marsey suggested removing it. Commissioner Gartland agreed. Commissioner Gartland suggested improving the compensating benefits

in planned developments. Ms. Strungys cautioned that including a list of benefits can sometimes box in commissions when it comes to planned developments, but she said she would look at better defining the amenities.

Commissioner Marsey suggested modifying the process of redevelopment agreements so that the agreement would occur after the planned development process. Mr. Failor said the redevelopment agreement process was not part of the zoning code and the Village Board would decide whether to modify or not to modify. Attorney Karaca said it was site-specific and only for village property. Commissioner Marsey suggested it would be reasonable not to sign a redevelopment agreement until it's gone through the planned development process. Mr. Failor said redevelopment agreements shouldn't deter commissioners from making recommendations as they can be modified. Commissioner Eakin agreed.

Mr. Failor said there was a website for the zoning revision process: oakparkzoning.com.

Other Business

Mr. Failor said the application for Highland Place development would come to the Plan Commission on November 5, 2015. Staff will be reviewing the South and Harlem application and that was tentatively scheduled to come to the Plan Commission on December 3, 2015. Mr. Failor noted that meetings were planned for November 5 and 19 and December 3 and 17. Chair Mann welcomed new commissioner Kristin Nordman.

Adjournment

Commissioner Eakin moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Angela Schell,
Recording Secretary