
**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
PLANNING BOARD ACTION ITEMS
OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2013**

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APPROVED

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD
WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2013
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Planning Board held May 22, 2013. Chairman Robin Boyle convened the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Present: Chairman Robin Boyle; Board Members Scott Clein, Carroll DeWeese, Bert Koseck, Gillian Lazar, Janelle Whipple-Boyce, Bryan Williams; Student Representative Arshon Afrakhteh

Absent: None

Administration: Matthew Baka, Sr. Planner
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

05-89-13

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING BOARD MEETING
HELD MAY 8, 2013**

Motion by Mr. Clein

Seconded by Mr. DeWeese to accept the Minutes of the Regular Planning Board Meeting of May 8, 2013 as presented.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Clein, DeWeese, Boyle, Koseck, Lazar, Whipple-Boyce, Williams

Nays: None

Absent: None

05-90-13

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

The chairman announced that everyone had just come from a charette revolving around the Complete Streets Plan along Woodward Ave. which is very relevant for tonight's agenda containing a presentation on Birmingham's multi-modal plan.

05-91-13

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Addition of an updated request from last time for proposed seating in the Beer Garden at Griffin Claw Brewery.

Mr. Roman Bonislawski and Mr. Ron Rea were present from Ron and Roman Architects. They proposed the same number of outdoor seats that were originally shown, but the approved 82 seats are configured differently now. The difference is they are adding two German-style tables to the west side. The bistro tables and chairs will be the same as those in Shain Park.

In response to a query from Ms. Whipple-Boyce, Mr. Bonislawski said they have chosen the lightweight tables and chairs because they seem to belong on the crushed granite surface in that space.

Board members were in favor of the revision. Chairman said it all comes down to how the staff operates and runs the establishment.

With respect to all approvals Mr. DeWeese said there should be a 5 ft. wide clear path for pedestrians.

05-92-13

DRAFT MULTI-MODAL PLAN Presentation by Norm Cox from Greenway Collaborative

Ms. Ecker recalled that on August 28, 2012 the City Commission approved a contract with The Greenway Collaborative to oversee the development of a City-wide Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan to improve walking, biking and transit conditions in the City. As decided at the May 7, 2012 City Commission meeting, this process is being overseen by a diverse Steering Committee representing different system users. The Greenway Collaborative has since initiated the project with guidance from staff and the Committee. Additional members representing various City departments, including Police, Public Services and the School District, were added to the Advisory Committee to improve internal communication on this issue.

Mr. Cox said that last year in October they did a web-based survey to help identify travel patterns, preferred types of improvements and desired outcomes. A visioning workshop was held in January.

The second public meeting was an Open House format designed to present draft recommendations for the City's road and multi-modal network for the community to review. The draft recommendations were based on community input gathered at the January meeting and the initial public survey, as well as analysis of the road data, which

defines the parameters of possible improvements. This session was held on February 28, 2013.

Earlier this month they submitted the draft plan to the Steering Committee and are seeking input from them as well as from Planning Board members. The plan vision is:

The City of Birmingham seeks to build upon its brand as a walkable community. The purpose of this plan is to provide a document that the Community may reference when contemplating future actions regarding infrastructure, policies and programs. It is envisioned that this plan will guide improvements designed to give people additional transportation choices, thereby enhancing the quality of life in the City of Birmingham.

The goals and objectives include:

- Completing the infrastructure
- Creating a more connected community
- Developing an inclusive transportation system.

Their approach looks at:

- Public policies that set the stage
- Physical environment – improvements that will be made
- Community programs to encourage more walking and bicycling
- How to measure success.

Mr. Cox went on to summarize the main points of the draft plan.

Mr. Williams asked him to describe what W. Maple Rd. between Southfield Rd. and Cranbrook would look like. Mr. Cox replied they propose a four to three lane conversion where the road will have a shared left turn lane along with a lane in each direction for traffic. That is a proven safety measure that will slow down the speed. The lane that is left over can be used for bikes. Additionally, crossing islands in the middle can be added.

Mr. Clein thought the consultants have done a great job and he is in favor of four to three lane conversions. With respect to Ms. Whipple-Boyce's inquiry as to whether they would recommend sidewalks for the neighborhoods, Mr. Cox said they could look at adding a process where it is a neighborhood led initiative to get sidewalks. Ms. Whipple-Boyce went on record to say she feels sidewalks are very important.

With respect to adding roundabouts to some of the neighborhoods, Mr. Cox explained roundabouts come in a whole range of sizes and there are some that could fit into existing right-of-ways. The options can easily be added to the report.

Mr. DeWeese commented he is very supportive of the draft plan. Maybe there are specific issues on Woodward Ave. because of the intersect timing.

Chairman Boyle asked that the plan be more specific about the crossing at Woodward Ave. and Oak because it is not safe to cross from west to east. Also, promote the idea that there are forms of transportation other than the car. Mr. Cox noted the plan tries to quickly get to the tipping point which changes the physical infrastructure and the culture where all of a sudden it is a natural choice to walk or bike.

The chairman invited comments from members of the public at 8:37 p.m.

Ms. Georgia Vitica, 667 N. Eton Rd., asked the board to consider narrowing N. Eton Rd. because it is extremely wide and the traffic is terrible. Mr. Cox replied they are looking at narrowing the travel part of the roadway for motor vehicles. Also there will be bike lanes, the parking will be consolidated on one side, and curb extensions will be added to improve crossings.

Next Steps

The week of May 27th, 2013, the Consultants will compile all comments received from both Planning Board and Steering Committee members and make revision to the draft plan. It is anticipated that the Planning Board will set a public hearing date later in June or July to formally begin the review process. After obtaining a recommendation of the Planning Board, the Multi-Modal Plan will also be presented to the City Commission at a formal public hearing for adoption. There will also be an opportunity for the Planning Board and the City Commission to discuss the draft plan at the joint meeting on June 17, 2013.

**Motion by Chairman Boyle
Seconded by Mr. Clein to set a public hearing for the Draft Multi-Modal Plan on
July 10, 2013.**

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Boyle, Clein, DeWeese, Koseck, Lazar, Whipple-Boyce, Williams

Nays: None

Absent: None

05-93-13

OAKLAND/PARK/WOODWARD SUB-AREA – OVERLAY ORDINANCE

Mr. Baka recalled that In accordance with the direction of the City Commission and Planning Board, the Planning Dept. presented information regarding the “Transition Areas” of Birmingham at the March 27th Planning Board meeting. These are the areas of town where commercial zones abut single-family residential. At the May 8th Planning Board meeting, Brad Strader of LSL Planning presented a draft report for the Oak/Park sub-area plan. The report contains analysis and recommendations for protecting the integrity of the sensitive residential areas that can be applied throughout Birmingham.

The Planning Dept. recently presented maps and data on the commercial areas that could be considered "Transition Areas." The maps focus on the main commercial areas in the city. Each of these has unique conditions that determine their relationship with the adjacent residential areas. In many instances the use of screening, landscaping and appropriate lighting methods are key to providing a buffer to the residential area:

- Downtown Overlay Zone
 - Oakland between Woodward Ave. and Ferndale
 - Willits at Chester
 - Purdy at Daines
- N. Old Woodward
- S. Old Woodward
- S. Woodward Ave. Corridor
- Triangle District

It was noted the City map system shows the zoning going to the center line of the street and it is very confusing. Mr. Baka agreed to mention that to the IT Dept.

Ms. Ecker went over the first draft of the Transition Overlay District Ordinance.

- A key point in the Purpose section is to encourage right-of-way design that calms traffic and creates a distinction between less intense residential areas and more intense commercial areas.
- The Applicability section indicates when the ordinance will kick in and when it does not. A Zoning Transition Overlay District Regulating Plan divides the District into two zones. Each zone prescribes requirements for building form, height, and use as follows:
 - ASF-3: Attached Single-Family 3
 - MU-3: Mixed Use 3
- Permitted Uses and Use Regulations section contains a land use matrix that tells what uses may or may not be acceptable and lists operating hours from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mr. DeWeese suggested including a process where the hours can be extended with public review.
- The section on Height and Placement Requirements contains district development standards for ASF-3 and for MU-3. Basically it is three story maximum, 35 ft. maximum height, and a two story minimum. Buildings must be oriented towards the street, and they are moved up to create a street wall. Parking has to be hidden in the back. Design requirements for commercial and residential properties ensure they are pedestrian scaled. A physical and visual buffer from adjoining single-family properties in the required setbacks is required. It could be a masonry wall or the Planning Board could approve a landscape buffer. No occupancy permit would be issued until the buffer is in place.
- The Commercial/Mixed-Use Architectural Requirements section includes:
 - Front façade requirements
 - Windows and doors
 - Roof design: Pitched roofs in keeping with typical residential style
 - Building materials

- Awnings
- Corner buildings
- In Streetscape and Right-of-Way Design Requirements the draft ordinance talks about ensuring sidewalks and street trees. Street design requires one or more of the following:
 - Curb extensions
 - Enhanced pedestrian crosswalks
 - Installation of a speed table
 - Installation of a pedestrian crossing island
 - Street furniture and bicycle facilities
 - Vias are permitted and shall be required where necessary for circulation

Mr. Williams was in favor of the overlay approach in concept. However, in terms of the MU classifications one size fits all will not work. More categories are needed and it is necessary to be specific about which category is appropriate for a particular location. It is key going forward to push the development forward to the street and away from adjoining neighbors.

Mr. DeWeese agreed with the need for more categories. Leave three stories as a maximum. He wanted more consideration in section 3.22 about the need to have steps on the front façade to ensure ADA compliance. In the S. Woodward Ave. Gateway a firm line may be needed that creates more depth. More flexibility in the categories may be desirable.

Under MU-3 District Development Standards it was determined the statement that an additional 24 ft. and/or two stories of building height can be allowed if certain requirements are met should be deleted.

Mr. Koseck thought this is the right approach, but is not sure that more zoning code conditions are needed. It is more about understanding relationships between the properties. Ms. Lazar liked the concepts but felt more emphasis is needed on rear design and Mr. DeWeese agreed.

Mr. Baka advised they focused on the areas where single-family abuts major commercial areas. Ms. Ecker noted it was intentional to have the City rather than the developer say what they required in what district. Chairman Boyle wanted to think about having the developer prepare the overlay within the context laid out and show how it is going to work in an area. That would minimize the imposition of very detailed regulations. Mr. Williams did not see any way to avoid many pages of Zoning Ordinance changes in the specific context of street blocks and neighborhood-by-neighborhood analysis if that approach was taken.

Mr. Williams suggested the approach should be to determine how many categories there are and based on the type of category, get some guidance for the drafting stage. Mr. Koseck was not convinced it would be so complicated. He thinks it is about setback, bulk, architecture and buffers.

At 9:34 p.m. no one from the audience came forward to speak.

Ms. Ecker said for the next meeting staff will present more broad categories and a sample trial map that can be seen on the big screen.

05-94-13

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (no one spoke)

05-95-13

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications (none)

b. Administrative Approvals

- 431 Martin – Brown Hill Townhomes – Brick gables cross gabled dormer at east elevation.
- 172 N. Old Woodward Ave., What Crepe – Minor change request to relocate existing patio (four seats, 2 tables) away from front of storefront to in front of platform patio deck.
- 250 Martin, Suite #502 – Request to add window on mezzanine level of fifth floor.
- 555 S. Woodward Ave. – Sprint is upgrading existing communication facility by replacing six existing antenna with six new antenna and corresponding equipment.
- 180 S. Old Woodward Ave. – Location of fresh air intake, exhaust, and condenser.
- 217 Pierce St. – Installation of two small condensing units on roof. Air handlers to be installed in attic and ducted to each office.

c. Draft Agenda for the Regular Planning Board Meeting on June 12, 2013

- Transitional zoning
- Woodward Complete Streets update

d. Other Business

Ms. Lazar thought a bistro should be up and operating within six months of approval. Further, it is unfair when someone gets selected for a bistro license, often times at the expense of someone who is ready, and then doesn't have financing.

It was noted that South and Max and Erma's are up for lease.

05-96-13

PLANNING DIVISION ACTION ITEMS

- a. Staff report on previous requests (none)
- b. Additional items from tonight's meeting (none)

05-97-13

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, board members motioned to adjourn at 9:48 p.m.

Jana Ecker
Planning Director