

Minutes of the New Bern Planning & Zoning Board February 5, 2013

The regularly scheduled meeting of the New Bern Planning & Zoning Board was held in the City Hall Courtroom, 300 Pollock Street, on Wednesday, January 2, 2013 at 6:30 PM, preceded by a 5:30 PM workshop on “Modular 4. Zoning”.

Members present: Mr. Tim Tabak, Chair
Mr. Patrick McCullough
Ms. Velda Whitfield
Mr. Bill Stamm
Ms. Tiffany Dove
Mr. Jimmy Dillahunt
Ms. Dorothea White

Members absent:

Members Excused: Mr. Kenneth Peregoy, Vice-Chair
Ms. Stevie Bennett
Mr. Paul Yaeger

Staff present: Mr. Bernard George, AICP
Planning Division Manager

Mr. Kevin Robinson, AICP
City Planner

Chairman Tabak called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared.

Prayer: A prayer for guidance was given by Mr. George.

Minutes: Minutes from the January 2, 2013 meeting were discussed. Member Ms. Dorothea White noted a miss-spelling on page two, line number 85. Member Jimmy Dillahunt motioned for the minutes to be approved, with one change. Motion was seconded. Minutes were approved.

New Business

A. Consideration of a request by the City of New Bern to amend Article II “Definitions” and Article XIV “Streets and Sidewalks” so as to define improved street and to require undeveloped lots to have access to an improved street prior to development.

Staff Comments: Mr. George advised this is a request to continue consideration of the amendment originally discussed during the January 2013 meeting. There were concerns regarding definitions presented at that meeting. The revised amendment better defines the requirement for undeveloped lots to have access to improved streets prior to development. In areas where there are ‘paper streets’ as indicated on a plat, in order to build on the proposed lots, the streets must be improved. The city is required to provide services to the residents of these streets at the time of development.

Board Discussion: Member Jimmy Dillahunt commented on Wards 3 and 5, noting the last paragraph addressing land-locked properties. Mr. Dillahunt questioned if a study had been done of the land-locked lots. Mr. George advised this does not impact land-locked properties.

Chair Tim Tabak questioned if there was a minimum specification for a one-lot subdivision, or a split in property. Mr. George advised a street would follow a designated line. Chair Tabak confirmed with Mr. George that a utility easement next to the paved portion of the street would be required. Curb development requirements were defined.

Chair Tim Tabak pointed out multiple reasons this proposal could be effective in helping property values and assisting the city in paving roads. Mr. George agreed, noting that the requirement is policy and will now be a written ordinance requirement.

Board member Dorothea White questioned the access to a lot that may hold two homes per family and if there is one paved drive accessing the lot, would an additional drive be required? Mr. George advised no additional paved drive would be required, noting every residence must have direct access to a public street, including subdivided lots. In addition, Mr. George confirmed with Ms. Dove that the situation she was describing was not within the city limits.

Board member Patrick McCullough inquired as to whether or not the number of lots affected has been established. Mr. George advised not at this time, as there isn’t a great demand currently. He noted the Pembroke area has the most unpaved streets in the city.

Public Comments: None

Public hearing was closed.

Motion: Board member Patrick McCullough motioned to approve request as written. Board member Bill Stamm seconded the motion. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

B. City Planner, Kevin Robinson and Community & Economic Development Manager, Clarence Hulse, provided a presentation on the New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan.

Board Comments: Chair Tabak recommended consideration is given to clean water grant projects.

Board member Patrick McCullough noted the area being discussed was a lower-income area, and questioned what had been put in place for potential displacement. Kevin Robinson advised Julian Marsh, Director of the Housing Authority would be better suited to respond, but added he believed there would be vouchers potentially available to those being displaced.

Board member Dorothea White noted the potential for displacement creates a concern for transportation for those effected individuals. She also has concern for the continued historical preservation of the buildings in the area. Kevin Robinson advised he has been working with John Wood, and would like to see a National Historic area created there, using available tax credits to assist homeowners.

Board member White voice additional concerns for the lack of a plan for her issues. Clarence Hulse advised the MPO that is being established will assist with the transportation issue. Kevin Robinson reiterated this is a long term plan in the initial stages with much growth potential to come.

Ms. White questioned the current Days Inn property, and what can be expected in the future. Kevin stated the Community Empowerment Center is what the majority feel would be most beneficial on that site, but again noted the plans are still developing.

Board member Jimmy Dillahunt wondered how the project developers would be decided. Clarence Hulse advised the projects will be bid out and discussion to take place prior to a bid process decision.

Mr. Dillahunt inquired as to the type of housing that would be built on Third Avenue, Habitat type housing or something more upscale. Clarence Hulse explained the type of housing to be built is still under consideration as they want to be sure to find housing that is congruous with the community. He noted that he did not feel Habitat housing would be chosen.

Chair Tabak questioned the funding and where it would come from, city, tax payers or other private development corporation. Clarence Hulse explained he felt it would depend on the project. For housing, he felt city money and block grants would be available.

Board member Dorothea White questioned what other city models are they considering, and will the models being considered be brought before their board. Clarence Hulse advised the plan is available for viewing on the City of New Bern's website. Chair Tabak encouraged those watching to go to the website, look at the plans and attend future meetings to interject public comment.

Bernard George thanked Mr. Robinson and Mr. Hulse for their presentation on the Gateway Plan. He also pointed out some core projects listed within the packet, noting these are major projects and will take time to implement. He also pointed out key initiatives with the packet that Mr. Hulse is working on in preparation for these projects, attempting to establish tax-increment financing and ways to induce businesses owners to this area.

Chair Tabak complimented the changes in the Development Services Department and the new directions being taken within.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Tim Tabak, Chairman

Bernard George, AICP, Secretary