

City Planning Commission

Erie, Pennsylvania

November 15, 2016

-Minutes-

MEMBERS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION:

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at **1:00 pm** in Room 500, Municipal Building, 626 State Street.

1. *Roll Call*

Members Present: Mark Kloecker, Gary Antalek, Thomas Dworzanski, and Richard Speicher

Members Absent: Don Marinelli

2. On a motion by **Mr. Speicher**, seconded by **Mr. Kloecker**, the October 18, 2016, meeting minutes were approved unanimously as received.
3. *The Planning Commission reviewed a replot submitted by Erie Insurance Exchange. The replot created an 8,152 square foot lot at 1004-217 and a 46,898 square foot lot at 1004-219. A letter of modification was submitted for the lot size of lot 1004-217 since it does not meet the provisions of Section 805.7 of the Erie City Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The properties are located in the C-3 district.*

Tim Polaski, an engineer with Urban Engineers, was present to explain the replot request. Mr. Polaski stated that the current owner would like to subdivide the property to put the two parcels under different ownership. The letter of modification that was submitted with the subdivision stated lot 1004-217 did not meet the requirements that new lots are to be at least 60'X100'. The lot does exceed the 6,000 square foot requirement of Section 805.7 of the Erie City Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO).

On a motion by **Mr. Kloecker** and seconded by **Mr. Antalek**, the Planning Commission voted 4-0 to approve the replot since the letter of modification addressed Section 805.7 of the Erie City SALDO and all other provisions of the SALDO were met.

4. *The Erie Redevelopment Authority submitted a request to declare two properties blighted in order to proceed with the Eminent Domain process.
The properties are:*

419 West 2nd Street

435 West 4th Street

Scott Henry, executive director of the Erie Redevelopment Authority (ERA), was present to explain the blighted property request. Mr. Henry stated that two properties were declared blighted by the Blighted Property Review Committee. The properties had multiple code violations, delinquent taxes, and the utilities were disconnected. Both properties were appraised at a negative value. Mr. Henry stated that the repurposing plan for the property on West 2nd Street involved Housing and Neighborhood Development Services (HANDS) to construct an ultra-energy efficient home on the lot and a house constructed to current energy standards to compare the energy savings over time. The development is consistent with the Our West Bayfront neighborhood plan, Mr. Henry added.

The designation from the Planning Commission is the final step before the ERA can take the properties through the eminent domain process. The Planning Commission members were given packets with the information that was used to declare the properties blighted.

On a motion by **Mr. Speicher**, and seconded by **Mr. Kloecker**, the Planning Commission voted 4-0, to declare the two properties blighted in order to proceed with the eminent domain process.

5. *The Planning Commission continued their review of regulations, or the lack thereof, within the City concerning urban agriculture or crop farming, and to make a recommendation to City Council for any appropriate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to permit such land uses with proper safeguards and restrictions.*

The Planning Commission investigated the possibility of having an urban agriculture overlay district or text amendments to the current zoning ordinance. It was the opinion of the Planning Commission that a text amendment would effectively address urban agriculture. The targeted planning areas from Erie Refocused are East Bayfront, Trinity Park, West Bayfront, Little Italy, and Pulaski-Lighthouse. These planning areas fall into the R-2 Medium Density Residential, the R-3 High Density Residential, and the RLB Residential Limited Business districts. Amending these districts to include provisions for urban agriculture would be the most efficient way to address this.

The Planning Commission voiced their concerns regarding vegetable stands, signage, off-street parking, fences, and accessory structures.

At this time, the Planning Commission did not make a motion regarding the proposed ordinance. It was agreed upon that a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance was a more practical method for addressing urban agriculture. All agreed that additional research was needed.

6. *With all business completed, the Commission adjourned at 1:52 PM.*