

City Planning Commission

Erie, Pennsylvania

September 19, 2017

-Minutes-

MEMBERS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION:

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, August 15, 2017 at **1:00 pm** in Room 500, Municipal Building, 626 State Street.

1. *Roll Call*

Members Present: Armand Chimenti, Thomas Dworzanski, Mark Kloecker,
Don Marinelli, and Richard Speicher

Members Absent: None

2. On a motion by **Mr. Kloecker**, seconded by **Mr. Marinelli**, the September 19, 2017 meeting minutes were approved unanimously as received.

3. *The Erie Redevelopment Authority submitted a request to declare seven properties blighted in order to proceed with the Eminent Domain process*

The property are:

725 West 4th Street

645 East 9th Street

749 East 9th Street

1945 Fairmount Parkway

210 Liberty Street

652 Park Avenue

1708 Sassafras Street

Scott Henry, from the Erie Redevelopment Authority (ERA), presented the findings of blight for the properties to the Planning Commission. Mr. Henry stated that to move forward with the eminent domain process, the Planning Commission needed to certify the properties blighted. The Blighted Property Review Committee has declared the properties blighted. Mr. Henry added that the ERA has more funding this year and has been able to take more blighted properties this year.

On a motion by **Mr. Speicher**, and seconded by **Mr. Kloecker**, the Planning Commission voted 5-0, to declare the seven properties blighted in order to proceed with the eminent domain process.

4. *The Commission reviewed an application for a six-story professional office building (patient care tower) located at 104 East 2nd Street (tax parcel ID 1050-127) submitted by UPMC Hamot. The property is located in the WC-2 Waterfront Commercial 2 district.*

Dave Brennan and Dan Polak, representing the architecture firm for the project Bostwick Design Partnership, and Ray Moluski, representing UPMC Hamot, were present to explain the project. Mr. Polak stated that the proposed building will be located where the existing professional building is located. The new building will have a larger footprint but also be shorter than the existing building. The exterior of the building is designed to match the surrounding buildings on the UPMC Hamot campus. There will be approximately four feet of landscaping in front of the building with a five-foot sidewalk and a five-foot verge for trees. The trees are to match the existing trees on the street. There is a secondary entrance on the east side of the building with the main entrance being through the main hospital.

The Planning Commission had several questions. Mr. Kloecker asked if the east entrance was open to the public. Mr. Polak stated that it would be for patient drop off. Mr. Chimenti asked if additional parking would be required. Mr. Brennan replied that a parking study was conducted and there was sufficient existing parking for the new building. Mr. Dworzanski asked how far north the proposed building would go. Mr. Polak replied that it would be about the existing building to the north. Mr. Chimenti asked if there were any Design Review Committee recommendations. Mr. Brennan replied that there were no exterior recommendations but they required a landscaping update that showed all of the required trees.

On a motion by **Mr. Kloecker**, and seconded by **Mr. Chimenti**, the Planning Commission voted 4-0, with **Mr. Speicher** abstaining, to recommend approval of the project as presented.

5. *The Commission reviewed an application for an eight-story hotel located at parcel 1046-101 and a temporary off-street parking lot located at parcel 1046-136 submitted by Weber Murphy Fox. The properties are located in the WC Waterfront Commercial district.*

Brian Weber, an architect with Weber Murphy Fox, was present to explain the project. Mr. Weber stated that the hotel and temporary off-street parking lot is the first phase of the Harbor Place development. The overall vision for the site is to create a 12-acre mixed-use development with Front Street running through it. Front Street will have retail centered around two hotels with two parking garages. There is currently a parking study being conducted. The hotel, a Hampton Inn & Suites, is 94' feet high with 94 rooms. A total of 133 parking spaces are required; 136 will be provided. There will also be improvements to Front Street. Since there are several properties involved with the development as well as improvements to Front Street, the property will be replotted.

The hotel has an entry drive with a canopy for guests. Sidewalks will be improved. The vision of Harbor Place is to create a dense urban solution by creating an extension of downtown. The hotel has a series of outdoor patios connected with sidewalks. Front Street will be realigned for the entry drive. The Design Review Committee wanted the off-street parking lot to be completely screened which was added.

Mr. Weber also stated that a variance was granted for the height of the development. Any usable square footage over 50' must be given back to the public as dedicated public space. A

network of community space was created. The required open space for the project is approximately 30,900 square feet; 32,821 square feet is provided.

Several members of the public commented on the project. Ed Kissell asked if there would be public parking provided on Front Street. Kevin Pastewka what the developer is giving back to the public since a public grant is being used for the hotel. Kathleen Schaaf asked about current occupancy rates for the existing hotels.

On a motion by **Mr. Kloecker**, and seconded by **Mr. Marinelli**, the Planning Commission voted 4-0, with **Mr. Speicher** abstaining, to recommend approval of phase 1 of the project as presented.

6. *City Council respectfully requests the City Planning Commission to review regulations, or lack thereof, within the City concerning mobile/manufactured homes, and to make a recommendation to City Council for any appropriate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to permit such residential dwelling types with proper safeguards and restrictions.*

The Planning Commission continued their review of the ordinance regarding mobile/manufactured homes. Their review is to investigate the following amendments:

1. Make 'Mobile Home Park' a special exception in the R-3 District.
2. Remove 'Mobile Home Park' from the RLB District.
3. Split the definition of 'Mobile/Manufactured Homes' into two separate definitions.
4. Add the definition of 'Mobile Home Park' to the Zoning Ordinance.
5. Add additional safeguards and restrictions for the special exception use.

On a motion by **Mr. Speicher**, and seconded by **Mr. Kloecker**, the item was tabled until next month so that more research could be conducted on the proposed amendments.

7. *City Council respectfully requests the City Planning Commission to review existing regulations and proposed amendments to Section 306 – Condition Uses – Waterfront Districts and 306.10 – Public Access – Waterfront Districts, of the City of Erie Zoning Ordinance, and to make recommendations to City Council for appropriate amendments. The goal of the proposed amendments is to clarify the existing ordinance language in order to provide clear and concise regulations for future waterfront development and free public access.*

The Planning Commission was made aware that the Port Authority was updating their Master Plan. Part of the update is to make recommendations to Section 306 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Port Authority should receive the recommendations by the middle of October.

On a motion by **Mr. Kloecker**, and seconded by **Mr. Speicher**, the item was tabled until next month.

8. *With all business completed, the Commission adjourned at 2:30 PM.*