

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Colby, Tracy Davis, Jim Herreid, Alice Thomas, Suzie Nakasian, Steve Rholl, and Paul Miller

ALSO PRESENT: Steve Engler, Betsey Buckheit, Rhonda Pownell, Leif Knecht, Bruce Morlan, Kathryn Summa, George Kinney, Rick Estenson, Steve Albers, City Engineer Katy Gehler, Community Development Director Brian O’Connell, City Planner Dan Olson, Recording Secretary Sandra Bremer and other interested citizens

1) Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

Chair Colby called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Miller and seconded by Rholl to approve the agenda of December 15, 2009, as amended to remove the December 1, 2009, minutes from the agenda and place them on the next meeting for discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

2) Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Nakasian to approve the minutes for the work session of November 17, 2009, as amended on page 3 to remove “Funeral Homes” from the R4-B district permitted uses. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Herreid to approve the minutes for the regular meeting of November 24, 2009. All in favor. Motion carried.

3) Unfinished Business Action Items:

a) Discussion of Annexation of Properties in Bridgewater Township

Olson gave a summary of his Staff report.

Gehler gave an update on the status of the stormwater management ordinance. She has been talking with the City of Dundas and the four township officials regarding partnering in this effort and a meeting is set for December 17, 2009, to discuss this issue.

Thomas questioned how the Stormwater ordinance relates to the Stream Protection ordinance and Gehler noted that the stream protection is a part of the stormwater management ordinance.

Thomas questioned if a stream protection ordinance could be developed independently of the stormwater management Plan and then incorporated into the ordinance at a later time.

Gehler noted that it is important that all of the pieces mesh together so she felt it should be done all at one time. She noted that the DNR has a model ordinance that the City will

start with. She anticipated that this process would take from 6-8 months. They will be hiring a consultant to work through this process. She noted they are looking at putting together a technical steering committee to help work through this process.

Miller questioned if there would be a watershed management district created and Gehler-Hess noted this would be a discussion that the elected officials would have to undertake.

Bruce Morlan, Dundas Planning Commission, noted he has spoken to the Cannon River Watershed Partnership about creating a water management district. The problem is that it would take so many government units to agree to do this. They talked about a local district, but the State did not like the idea.

Thomas did not know how she could make an informed recommendation without understanding the implications of how much land is there, how much is developable, the costs that would be included in monitoring the streams, etc. The question of how much land does the City need has to be answered.

Davis questioned if the Planning Commission recommended proceeding with the annexation and the Council took the same action, what is the timeline that would lapse between the annexation occurring and the new ordinance being completed. There may not be a lot of difference in the processes timelines.

It was noted that the annexation agreement for the NW area took about 6-7 months from the time the Council gave agreement that the City should proceed.

Thomas noted it might be better to change the process sequence to have some discussion about the annexation before it is agreed to. Would it not be wise to have a stream protection ordinance in place before the annexation is agreed to?

O'Connell noted that an ordinance is established to guide property when something changes on that property. It does not usually force a property owner to change something when they are not asking for any changes themselves.

Nakasian noted she could not envision what this land would produce until she knows what the stream protection ordinance would state or require.

O'Connell noted that the Council is the body that needs to decide whether the process should be changed or not.

Miller asked Staff to summarize the implications of annexation. What changes if the property is annexed into the City?

Olson noted if the property were annexed, it would be subject to the City's Comprehensive Plan and the LDC and would not be subject to Bridgewater Township's regulations.

O'Connell noted the property would remain zoned AG until a request is made to rezone it to another zone.

Davis questioned if this area is annexed, will it be zoned AG even if the new LDC does not contain an AG district?

O'Connell indicated that the current ordinance and the current proposed language for the LDC has a statement that when land is annexed it will be zoned agricultural which would mean whatever district is assigned to allow for agricultural land.

Nakasian noted she was uncomfortable having a master planning process plan this land with streams going through that need protection with no ordinance in place to protect them. She needs to have information on the protection of the streams before she could make a decision on annexation and questioned how the master planning process move could move forward without this as well.

O'Connell noted that part of the charrette process indicated that a lot of this area could be kept protected and only a portion would be developed into a business campus of some type. The consultant is not going much further with this area until the City decides to include this area into the master planning process.

Thomas questioned how much more planning could be done without a developer with a proposal.

O'Connell noted that with the area west of the hospital they plan to come up with a high level of development detail. If the City desires to see the Praver/Gill area annexed into the City, this level of detail would be the same for this area. The detail for this area would only be different because of the different characteristics of the land.

Miller noted that once the buffers are established on the creeks this would be a form generator and would establish what the master plan would be based on. The public meeting brought up the concerns about stream protection. The new LDC will only improve the stream conditions. He felt confident that the public message regarding their concern for the streams came through.

O'Connell explained how the concept plan done by McGhie & Betts was done and noted that it was done in the last 12-15 months. It was done to start thinking about the annexation process.

Nakasian would like to see the information that came from the charrette be made available to the Planning Commission.

Thomas felt that there would need to be some type of incentive such as waiving SAC and WAC fees to bring development into these areas. There is a cost to the City. Are these costs being built into the provided projections or at least identify the categories that need to be considered?

Bruce Morlan noted the City of Dundas has an agreement with the City of Northfield for partial usage of the wastewater treatment plant. They need to know what the capacity of this facility is as this has a bearing on their agreement with the City to be provided with a certain amount of capacity.

Lief Knecht noted that even if this annexation would move forward, a significant portion of the creeks would still lie outside of the City limits and border of Bridgewater Township. The City may want to partner with Bridgewater Township as the Township has this as an item of great interest to them.

Nakasian felt the Planning Commission needs to send the message to the Council that they need to talk to the townships and the City of Dundas. She noted the issue of cost is what is important to her. How much will it cost to run sewer and water to the site? If the land is being reserved for potential development, what is the potential development going to be?

Gehler indicated that the Praver/Gill site has water currently in place to the Praver property line.

O'Connell summarized the information that has been requested of Staff: a) What are the regulations in Bridgewater Township and what might the affects of annexation be? b) Information on the results of the charrette process; c) Cost analysis on what it might cost to manage the streams and extending utilities. d) Identify the impact on the WWTP; e) Compile the costs of the infrastructure extension to the Praver/Gill property. He noted this information would be brought to the first meeting in January.

Steve Albers noted he believes that the Bridgewater Township supervisors are reluctant to annex this land until the stream protection ordinance is in place.

- 4) New Business Action Items:
 - a) Set 2010 Planning Commission Goals

Staff asked the members to review the goals noted in the Staff report and revise them if necessary.

Thomas noted that she did not believe that goal #1 would ever be finished and should not be noted it was achieved. It was agreed that the response would be to revise the statement the goal was achieved.

Goal #2: No changes were made.

Goal #3: Nakasion noted that it was a public meeting and she felt this effort failed because the public was not aware of the charrette public meeting. She would like to see a system worked out regarding annexation as the current system is not working. It is important for the EDA and the Planning Commission to be informed of each other's meetings. No changes were suggested to the language.

Goal #4: Thomas felt it would be important to know that the balance is for residential versus commercial/industrial uses in the City. No changes were made.

Goal #5: The members agreed that a statement needed to be added that the Planning Commission did not recommend to the City Council to annex 530 acres of land; they recommended only a portion of that land be annexed.

Goal #6: Leave as is.

Goal #7: The members revised the language to read: “This goal has not been achieved. It is expected that this issue...”

Thomas felt that an additional goal would be to add LU10.1. This would be done once the LDC has been approved.

O’Connell noted it could be that this goal could run in tandem with the review of the LDC.

Nakasian questioned what goals should be done once the LDC is completed and how will the public be involved.

Rholl left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Davis felt a goal should be added regarding achieving better communication between the Planning Commission and other boards and commissions about things that are occurring. The Council should be aware that this is a problem and needs to be addressed.

The members agreed to add the goal to read: “The Planning Commission will take a proactive role in the community in private and public visioning processes.”

Colby left the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

- 5) Reports and Discussion Items:
 - a) Discussion of 2010 Planning Commission Meeting Date

Olson gave a review of the information for the changes being made by the City Council in regards to their meeting dates and how this affects the Planning Commission meeting dates.

Miller left the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

The members agreed that if the City Council officially changes their meeting date to the 1st and 3rd Tuesday with a work session on the 2nd Tuesday, the Planning Commission will change their meeting dates to the 1st and 3rd Thursday.

It was agreed that the Planning Commission will not meet again until after the first of the year.

6) Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Submitted by:

Sandra Bremer
Recording Secretary