



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BOWLING GREEN

Planning Commission Minutes – March 2, 2022

The Planning Commission met on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the Administrative Services Building, 304 North Church Street, Bowling Green, Ohio.

Members Present: Will Airhart, Abhishek Bhati, Judy Ennis, Bob McOmber, Joe Phillips, Mark Remeis, Erica Sleek (ZOOM), Nate Spitler and Tom Stalter.

Members Absent: None

Minutes: Minutes from the January 5, 2022 Planning Commission meeting were approved as read.

LOBBY VISITATION

Mr. McOmber asked if anyone wished to come forward and speak to the Planning Commission. Lobby visitation was closed due to no comments.

MASTER PLAN – Parks and Recreation Section

Mr. McOmber advised that they are reviewing the update to the Parks and Recreation Section of the Master Plan covering the years of 2022-2026. He introduced Kristin Otley, Parks and Recreation Director, and she gave the commission an overview of the plan. A copy of the plan and her presentation are attached to these minutes.

Mr. McOmber asked if some of the federal funding, not yet designated by the City, would be used by the Parks and Recreation Department to supplement some of their income. Ms. Otley advised she is unsure, but she does know City Council has already approved ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to be used for paving a walking trail around City Park, which would also include some security lighting and cameras.

Mr. Bhati asked if raised bed community gardens was a topic covered in the survey that was generated. Ms. Otley explained she does not think there was much mention of the gardens in their focus groups or in the survey, but it is something talked about over the years. She advised there are a few churches in town that have them, along with Bowling Green State University, so they have not done any but it is something that could be looked into.

Mr. Remeis asked if Ms. Otley could guesstimate what the percentage of the items in the plan could be designated as preventative maintenance versus



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new projects, and is it considerably different from this master plan and the previous master plan. Ms. Otley explained with the old plan there were a lot of new things built, but the plan was also very maintenance focused so that they did not fall behind. She estimated the percentage to be 80/20.

Mr. McOmber moved, and Ms. Ennis seconded, to recommend to City Council to approve the draft of the Parks and Recreation plan as approved in its current form. Yes votes were made by Will Airhart, Abhishek Bhati, Bob McOmber, Joe Phillips, Mark Remeis, Erica Sleek, Nate Spitler and Tom Stalter.

MASTER PLAN – Economic Development Section

Mr. McOmber advised there were provided an update to the Economic Development Section of the Master Plan to review. He introduced, Kati Thompson, Executive Director of Bowling Green Economic Development, and she gave the commission an overview of the plan. A copy of the Economic Development plan is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Remeis suggested adding an additional bullet point to the plan due to things changing quickly in today's environment. Mr. Airhart suggested the bullet point be "Identify Opportunities for Re-Development". Mrs. Thompson agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Bhati asked Mrs. Thompson if she felt the four strategic goals could attract BGSU students to stay here. Mrs. Thompson feels those issues are reflected in the document and also addressed through "Encouraging Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Improving Quality of Life." There are more specific strategic goals within those activities working on how to create a pipeline of innovation and entrepreneurship starting with university students, along with building the infrastructure that encourages them to want to stay in the community.

Mr. McOmber moved, and Ms. Ennis seconded, to recommend to City Council to approve the draft of the Economic Development Section of the Master Plan with the addition of "Identify Opportunities for Re-Development." Yes votes were made by Will Airhart, Abhishek Bhati, Judy Ennis, Bob McOmber, Joe Phillips, Mark Remeis, Erica Sleek, Nate Spitler and Tom Stalter.

REPORTS

Ms. Ennis, the commission's representative to the Zoning Board of Appeals, read the following requests from the March 9, 2022 meeting:



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Wayne Barbour, 608 West Wooster Street, requested a variance to allow the construction of a 6 foot tall fence in the 25 foot front yard setback (corner lot – fence would be in the front yard that faces Meeker Street), which would be 2 feet taller than the 4 foot maximum allowed (*Tabled from last meeting on 2/9/2022*).

Lee Liebetreu, 909 North Main Street, requested a variance to allow the construction of an accessory structure (gazebo, already constructed) that is 10 feet in diameter, which would encroach 3 feet into the 5 foot required side yard setback to the north and 8 feet into the 10 foot required setback from the primary structure. A variance is also requested for a 10 foot x 10 foot concrete pad (under the gazebo, already constructed), which would encroach 1 foot into the 3 foot required setback from the side property line to the north.

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Heather Saylor, Planning Director, advised that the Zoning Code update is still on-going. She asked the commission to continue to review the document and contact her with any questions or comments. Additionally, the Zoning Code update webpage is a helpful tool and another means to submit comments.

Ms. Saylor said the questionnaire for the community to fill out in regards to the use of ARPA funds is still available to be completed and has a deadline of March 11, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.



Chairperson

Secretary

