

New Castle City Planning Commission Meeting
January 28, 2013 -- 6:30 p.m.
City of New Castle's Town Hall

Members Present: David Bird, Chair
Joe DiAngelo
Dorsey Fiske
Jonathan Justice
Josephine Moore
Florence Smith
Vera Worthy

Members Absent: Susan Marinelli
William Simpson, Co-Chair

Also Present: Marian Hull, City Planner

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bird at 6:35 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared.

Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the 1/14/13 Special Planning Commission meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried. A motion was made and seconded to approve the 12/17/12 minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

Report on Parking Study

Mr. Justice reported the Parking Subcommittee met on 1/22/13. A summary of the meeting was distributed and reviewed. Parking survey data collection is ongoing and the sub-committee plans to have preliminary analysis available in time for the March Planning Commission meeting. Signage issues (clarity, size, costs) discussed by Commissioners will be provided to the Way-Finding Committee. Mr. Justice complimented Subcommittee Chair Joanne Viola as doing an outstanding job keeping the subcommittee moving forward.

Work Session on Neighborhood Plan – Ms. Hull distributed, and reviewed, the scope of work for the neighborhood plan. The ultimate goal of the plan is for each neighborhood to prepare a map and document outlining issues and opportunities to be reviewed during the 2014 Comprehensive Plan update process. This is the first work group meeting.

A basic, aerial City map showing key assets like municipal buildings, parks, library, and schools was reviewed by the group to help determine what and where neighborhoods are in the City. There will be several work group meetings to refine the map. It will then be presented at a public forum for the community's input.

Old Business – At the 12/17/12 meeting the Planning Commission approved a motion to ask City Council to request a meeting with DelDOT with Council and/or the Planning Commission to address large truck issues in the downtown area and get an update on what DelDOT has been doing in the area. Mr. Bird will follow up with Ms. Thomas.

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Ms. Fiske suggested this group work with City officials and the Trustees to look into innovative ways to combat sea level saying areas of the town are not protected by the dikes. Ms. Moore said the Charter Change Committee shared concerns with the dikes.

New Business – Ms. Hull and Ms. Thomas collaborated on an application for technical assistance for small cities and rural areas available through the EPA. The application process was intense and the City has been informed its application was successful. The assistance will be used to help prepare for the 2014 Comprehensive Plan update and with zoning issues (extension of both Gateways), the storm water ordinance, and environmental protection overlay. Ms. Hull detailed the process that will be followed and the Planning Commission will be involved in that process.

Ms. Fiske would like to see vacant property penalties addressed. She does not believe fines are severe enough to prompt property owners to clean up their properties. Discussion followed about an owner's ability to pay steep fines and when that does not happen what other measures (ex.-demolition) are in place.

Budget – No report. Subscriptions for Commissioners who wish to receive American Planning Association materials have been submitted.

Next Meeting & Adjournment – The next meeting is scheduled for 2/25/13 at 6:30 p.m. There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Turner
Stenographer