

New Castle City Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
August 25, 2014 -- 6:30 p.m.
City of New Castle's Town Hall

Members Present: David Bird, Chair
David Baldini
Daniel Bungy
Joe DiAngelo
Jonathan Justice
Josephine Moore
Mike Quaranta
Florence Smith*
Vera Worthy**

*joined meeting at 6:35 p.m.

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Also present: Debbie Turner, Stenographer

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes – An amendment was noted on page 2 of the 6/23/14 minutes. A motion was then made and seconded to approve the 6/23/14 minutes as amended. Motion approved.

(May 2014 meeting minutes to be addressed at September meeting.)

Budget Status – Copy of budget distributed to commissioners and reviewed. A discussion followed about professional fees assessed by the planning consultant going into the City's budget rather than to the Planning Commission's budget. Mr. Bird will speak with City administration about this process.

Other Business – News Journal article (dated 8/20/14) concerning the pier workshop on 8/19/14 circulated to the group. Mr. Baldini provided the group with a summary of the presentation and City and public comments. Mr. Bungy asked what involvement the Planning Commission has had with the pier proposal. Mr. Bird explained the proposal stems from the Comprehensive Plan's reference to how best to utilize the river to benefit the City. City Council referred a proposal for a pier to this body for review. The Planning Commission conducted public hearings to discuss the project and made a recommendation to City Council to go forward with a more in depth study and to get funding for that study. City Council will determine whether to go forward with the pier project.

Commissioners Comments – Mr. Bird informed of a conference sponsored by the joint Delaware-Maryland Planning Association in Newark, Delaware on October 28-29, 2014. Planning Commission members receive a reduced rate through their APA membership. There are monies in the budget to pay for commissioners who want to attend.

The Institute for Public Administration (at UD) sponsors informational sessions for public officials in Dover. Mr. Bird will circulate information on those sessions to commissioners.

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Mr. Quaranta asked for a status update on the Comprehensive Plan from Debbie Pfeil, Planning Consultant.

Mr. Baldini is concerned with using demographics based on 2006 for the Comprehensive Plan update process. There have been a number of changes in the City. He would be more comfortable updating those demographics for use as a starting point.

Mr. Baldini spoke about two projects the Planning Commission has reviewed that have been presented to City Council as “informative” presentations without any recommendation from this body. He wants to ensure the Planning Commission remains relevant to the process and given every opportunity to make or not make recommendations to City Council. Lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Bird will get clarification on the role of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is an advisory body to City Council.

The next Planning Commission meeting is 9/22/14. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.