

The New Castle City's Planning Commission Meeting took place on June 23, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.

Members Present: Dr. Jack Norsworthy, Chair
Jim Steele, Co-Chair
Joe DiAngelo
David Bird
Bill Simpson
Dorsey Fiske
George Freebery
Christine Masiello

Member Absent: Elliott Tatum

Staff Present: Marian Hull, URS, City Planner

City Personnel: The Honorable John Klingmeyer, Mayor
Cathie Thomas, City Administrator
Jeff Bergstrom, Building Inspector

City Council: William Blest, City Council President
Jan Churchill, Councilperson
Don Reese, Councilperson
Teel Petty, Councilperson
Joe Gaworski, Councilperson

Mr. Steele called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Approval of Minutes – It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the 5/19/08 meeting be approved. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Immanuel Episcopal Church Glebe Lane Subdivision – Mr. Hunter Fickey, Junior Warden, Immanuel Episcopal Church, presented the church's plans to pursue opportunities to preserve in perpetuity approximately 50 acres of open space on their property. It is a combination of woods and marshlands. *(The plan and a plot plan detailing the three parcels subject to subdivision were distributed to Commission members and audience members.)* They are also exploring selling the Glebe House and the surrounding approximate 6.2 acres to someone who will restore the house and live there and to limit development on those 6.2 acres to that single property or one other out building. The intention is to put a deed restriction on the property not allowing it to be subdivided for more than the one residential unit that already exists. The church has ensured there is a buffer around the cemetery. Funds realized from the sale of this property could be used in support of the mission of Immanuel Church. They have met with the Trustees of New Castle Common Open Space Committee who is in support of the church's interest in preserving the woods and marshland; however, it does not appear that the Trustees wish to purchase the property. The church wishes to define what role, if any, the City might like to have in this process. Potential roles for the

City might be co-sponsoring with the Trustees discussions around preservation of this property with governmental or non-governmental organizations or managing the property long-term and developing it for walking paths, park area, etc. If the property is preserved under a conservation easement, that easement would be written in a way that the City and Trustees' interests for the City are understood and reflected. No change in zoning is being requested; they are defining the three parcels (cemetery, house and adjoining land across the street, and remainder of property for preservation). (*Discussion about zoning followed.*) Ms. Hull has looked at the plan and found it to be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Planning Commission members have not seen the church's subdivision plans or housekeeping comments made by URS. Discussion concluded and this item will be on the July agenda.

Budget Review – Dr. Norsworthy reported that several paid-service bills have been paid. (*Each bill was itemized.*) There are now four outstanding engineering-service bills.

Rezoning of Hermitage, 901 Delaware Street – William Rhodunda of Wolf Block LLP and representing the Ferrante family provided an update on plans for the Deemer property (2 acres) located at 900 Delaware Street. (*Copies of pertinent documentation were distributed to Commission members.*) The Ferrantes are equitable owners of this property. Current plans are for 14 high-quality town homes to be built on the property. A recent engineering study was done on the Hermitage structure and found it to be in poor and deteriorating condition due to a major fire. As a result the home has been demolished. The neighboring DiMondi parcel (4.36 acres) is moving forward to rezone and it is the hope of the Deemers and DiMondis to coordinate rezoning efforts from low density residential/open space to a residential zoning classification that permits town homes. The Colonial School District, which has a school behind the Hermitage site, has no objection to the Hermitage plan. Access issues will be addressed via a meeting with Mr. Roger Akin, City Solicitor, and Mr. Andy Taylor, counsel for The Trustees. Jeff Williams of Kercher Engineering then presented a conceptual plan drawing to Commission members for the DiMondi property. (*He referenced the deeds [school district-16+ acres; City-approx. 2.75 acres; Deemers-2 acres] of the properties which are available through Mr. Bergstrom.*) He is unsure how many town homes might be planned for this site; however, additional engineering needs to take place before a decision can be made on this. (*Discussion followed about the right-of-way, traffic impact and recreation in the area.*) Dr. Norsworthy expressed concern about the impact on the Comprehensive Plan and how it affects zoning. Commission members are hesitant to approve any change in zoning until the Comprehensive Plan process is completed. They will listen to requests but hold off on any zoning changes until this process is completed. Upon completion of his presentation Mr. Williams showed the presentation drawing to audience members and addressed questions. Bill DiMondi spoke to the body as a representative of the DiMondi tract. With regards to the potential commercialization of their property, they would relinquish the opportunity to the commercialization in favor of a strictly residential use in coordination with the Ferrantes.

General Discussion

Mr. Bird distributed copies to Commission members of an article from the Indianapolis Star newspaper concerning roundabouts. The article claims that roundabouts can reduce accidents and also save on gas.

Comprehensive Plan Update – Marian Hull thanked Commission members for its input during last month's meeting. City Council is supportive of the issues we have chosen to focus on. She encouraged scheduling a community workshop tonight to address issues such as major development opportunities in the area of Seventh and South Streets, Gateway design, parks and recreation, and rezoning and/or annexation. (*Lengthy discussion about these areas followed.*) Concern was expressed about the timeline for getting the plan completed. Ms. Thomas informed that there will be no sanctions placed against us by the State as long as we continue to show that we are making progress on our plan. Discussion about dates to schedule a community workshop for plan input took place. The Commission decided to schedule a community workshop for 9/16/08 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Senior Center. (*A number of notification means were discussed by the group.*) Alternate locations were discussed and will be published if necessary. The Planning Commission will consider community input from this workshop and request a meeting with City Council on 10/20/08 at 7 p.m.

Adjournment – **It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.**
The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Next Meeting -- Our next meeting is scheduled for 7/28/08.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Turner
Stenographer