

**New Castle City Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
August 22, 2016 -- 6:30 p.m.
City of New Castle Town Hall**

Members Present: Michael Quaranta, Chair
David Baldini, Vice Chair
Joseph DiAngelo
Jonathan Justice
Josephine Moore
Gail Seitz
Florence Smith
Vera Worthy

Members Absent: David Bird

Also present: Debbie Turner, Stenographer

Mr. Quaranta called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call followed.

Minutes – A correction was made on page 1. **Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes of the 7/25/16 meeting were approved as amended.**

Appointment of Planning Commission representative to the Historic Area Commission HAC – Mr. Quaranta is the current Planning Commission representative to the HAC. Upon expiration of his term in October he will not seek reappointment. It is a three-year term. **Mr. Justice made a motion to recommend to City Council that Mr. Baldini be appointed as the Planning Commission representative to the HAC upon the end of Mr. Quaranta's term. (Mr. Baldini consented to the nomination.) The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.**

Public Comments – None.

Commissioners Comments

Mr. Quaranta – *(Referenced a memo from AECOM dated 8/15/16 about the 10-year update of the Comprehensive Plan.)* In 2019 we must complete the update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. We are uncertain if it is due in January or December. AECOM has been asked to determine if the deadline for submission is January or December of 2019. Mr. Quaranta has requested AECOM to share key benchmarks the Planning Commission must meet. Some work will begin in spring 2017 and continue through 2019. *(Referenced a memo from AECOM dated 8/17/16 about the 5-year review of the Comprehensive Plan.)* Mr. Quaranta informed that the City had not officially submitted an update to the State Planning Office. This memo provides an update to the City of New Castle Comprehensive Plan. AECOM feels the Plan is still relevant and that no updates are needed at this time. New issues will need to be considered, i.e., floodplain and sea level vulnerabilities, and the 2013 Neighborhood Planning Process that was initiated by the State Planning Office. The Neighborhood Plan will be included in the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. Attachments to the document include all the action items from the current Comprehensive Plan and the status of each as of July 2016. Mr. Quaranta reported the

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Planning Commission has completed most of what we have been tasked to do. He asked commissioners to review the documents and be prepared to discuss at a future meeting.

Mr. Baldini – He noted that some Commissioners’ names were missing from the memo concerning the 5-year review. Mr. Quaranta will inform AECOM.

Ms. Seitz – She inquired if the PLUS review applies to the entire Comprehensive Plan or the land use portion only. Mr. Quaranta was not certain and suggested following up with Chris Rogers of AECOM at a future meeting. Ms. Seitz reported the City did not receive the Downtown Development District (DDD) designation. She asked if we have received any feedback on areas where improvement is needed or where we were strong. Mr. Quaranta will speak with Council President Linda Ratchford about getting the feedback adding that it will be helpful when preparing the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update. Mr. Quaranta reminded that the DDD was instituted by Governor Jack Markell. The State is facing financial hardships and there is no guarantee the program will continue under the next administration. He suggested waiting until after the election to learn if funding will continue.

Mr. Baldini said the Comprehensive Plan, the DDD and the Downtown Gateway should be looked at in harmony. They will be source documents for the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. We should also include the pier and its economic impact on the City, ADA issues the City is facing, and the tourist trade associated with the National Park.

Mr. DiAngelo – He asked about an email Mr. Baldini provided to commissioners outlining a flowchart/plan he would like to see developed showing the steps for submissions (subdivisions, zoning) to the Planning Commission before they reach the Planning Commission and the process after this body approves or denies the submission. It would help to ensure the submission is in compliance and that all steps have been addressed.

Mr. Quaranta would like to speak with Mr. Rogers of AECOM about the time involved with preparing such a flowchart/plan. This topic will be discussed further at a future meeting.

The Planning Commission’s next meeting is 9/26/16. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.