

New Castle City Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
September 24, 2018 -- 6:30 p.m.
City of New Castle Town Hall

Members Present: David Baldini, Chair
Jonathan Justice, Vice Chair
Brenda Antonio
Gail Seitz
Russ Smith
William Walters
Peter Toner

Members Absent: Marco Boyce
Vera Worthy

Guests: David Bird

Mr. Baldini called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum was declared.

Minutes

The following edits were made to the August 27, 2018, minutes:

- p. 1 – strike “*the Survey that was submitted from WILMAPCO,* “ from the 2nd paragraph under 2019 Comprehensive Plan
- p. 4 – strike the first two sentences of paragraph 2
- p. 9 – strike paragraph 5
- pp. 1-5 – correct the spelling of Debbie Pfeil’s name

Mr. Walters referenced Ms. Antonio’s comments from the last meeting about obtaining survey data from non-residents, and questioned if non-resident input was required. During discussion, it was noted that visitor’s reaction to the City and their input regarding parking, traffic, etc., could be helpful. Also there are questions in the survey that ask if the respondent lives, works, lives and works, or visits the City of New Castle. Ms. Antonio noted that the Minutes accurately reflect the discussions.

Mr. Baldini recounted a conversation he had with a vendor at Art on the Green, and the vendor gave Mr. Baldini a snapshot of his perception of the town to an out-of-town millennial that there are not enough things to do but that it historically beautiful. Further discussion was held about encouraging new, younger homebuyers to the City.

After discussion, it was agreed that the survey should be available to non-residents.

Ms. Antonio asked for clarification on the Strategies and Goals that are referenced on page 6 of the August 27, 2018, Minutes.

A Motion to approve the Minutes of the August 27, 2018, Planning Commission meeting as amended was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

2019 Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Baldini noted that there was still some homework that needed to be completed and reviewed the items he had received and those that were still outstanding from each of the Commissioners.

Mr. Baldini noted that there might be zoning issues that will come before the Commission in October regarding zoning for the Police Station and the Pizza Shop in Dobbinsville. Mr. Justice added that if the Commission will be reviewing a zoning issue in October it would be very helpful to have an adequate Zoning Map, both for the Commission and any interested members of the public. During discussion, Mr. Justice noted that Mr. Bergstrom stated the County Maps are accurate, but those maps are only available electronically. Mr. Walters noted that the County Zoning Map is electronic and can't be reproduced, but thought the City could pay for copies of the maps. After discussion, it was agreed that if Mr. Bergstrom is not able to provide more up-to-date Zoning Maps, the City Administrator will be asked to purchase copies of the County Zoning Map.

Survey

Mr. Baldini asked if the Commissioners had seen the note about the survey on the Electric Bill and advised it is live on October 1, and will come down on November 30. Ms. Antonio noted the down-date in the Minutes is November 15, unless the Commission wanted to leave it up longer. Mr. Baldini noted that would give the Commission roughly 60 days.

Ms. Seitz added that WILMAPCO has been wonderful in putting the online survey together and responding to changes, and that Heather Dunnigan formatted it. She added they will provide as many copies the Commission wants and will enter data from hard-copy surveys and analyze it. She also noted that the survey can be taken on a phone and WILMAPCO is willing to develop a quick response barcode (QR Code). Mr. Justice added that Debbie Pfeil had good results with a QR Code. It was agreed to have WILMAPCO proceed with development of a QR Code.

Mr. Baldini noted that Ms. Dunnigan suggested the Commission have a table at River Town that runs from noon-5 pm on November 6th. He added that they will have paper surveys, but having the QR Code for phone surveys would be very helpful.

Mr. Baldini asked Mr. Smith if he had talked with Kim Burgmuller at the City regarding promotion of the survey. Mr. Smith advised she will send out the press release to The Weekly, Cobblestones and The News Journal. He also asked her to send it out to any other publications to which she would normally send a press release. He added the press release can also be sent to organization contacts and posted at various organization locations. Ms. Seitz mentioned the organizations might be willing to forward the press release to their members via email. Mr. Baldini added that flyers will be available at the Library. Ms. Seitz suggested the Chair of community groups and organizations outside the Historic District be contacted as well. Mr. Baldini asked if WILMAPCO can notify the Commissioners what kind of responses are coming in and where they are coming from as the surveys are received.

Other methods of promoting the Survey included lawn signs, publishing the QR Code in The Weekly, and a vanity URL.

Mr. Justice questioned whether WILMAPCO would be able to advise where responses are coming from and noted that location identifiers were removed from the Survey. He also noted that the survey is set to prevent repeat responses from the same IP address, but there is no way to prevent repeat paper surveys being submitted. The questions of neighborhood identification in the survey, whether to reinsert the city map into the survey, and whether online surveys should be restricted to one per IP address were explored.

After discussion, it was agreed that:

- the launch date will be October 1 and the end date will be November 30;
- the survey will be open to everyone with no restriction on the number of surveys that are accepted per IP address;
- the map will be reinserted into the survey; and
- neighborhood identification will be added back into the survey.

Ms. Seitz will check to see if Mr. Bergstrom can provide a Zoning Map in time for the October 1 launch, and if not, she will contact WILMAPCO and request that they edit the survey to include a checklist of neighborhoods starting with the northern-most neighborhood, using the 2009 neighborhood map that Mr. Justice previously distributed to the Commissioners. She will also ask WILMAPCO to add the neighborhood map to the survey. It was noted that only respondents of the online survey who check "I live in New Castle" or "I live and work in New Castle" will be presented with the neighborhood checklist and map. It was also agreed that the hard copy of the survey will mirror the online survey.

Outreach

Mr. Smith displayed promotional pieces for and distribution. The Commissioners all agreed to help with flyer distribution and Mr. Toner stated that if the promotional pieces are in black and white he will make as many copies as are needed to distribute throughout the City. Mr. Toner asked if the Commission was going to have a table at River Town and Mr. Baldini stated there would be a table with copies of the survey from noon-5 pm on November 6th. He added that he will be there the entire time. Mr. Justice and Ms. Seitz are unavailable, but Mr. Toner and Mr. Smith will help and Ms. Antonio will help if her schedule permits. A number of upcoming local events were identified where promotional pieces could be distributed or made available.

Goal Review

Mr. Baldini asked if the Commissioners had any thoughts on the Goal Review sheet.

Infrastructure - Mr. Walters noted that Infrastructure talks about the relocation of aerial utilities to underground. He stated the power company would not do that in the City and suggested it be removed from Goal Review. Mr. Justice noted that at the September 2018 City Council Meeting MSC explained that the neighborhood of Van Dyke will be burying the electrical supply. He also noted that the language in the Goal Review is that utility

relocation is “encouraged”, and Mr. Baldini added that there has been talk of running wires under the sidewalk when they re-do Delaware Street and that pulling the bricks would be less disruptive.

Annexation - Mr. Walters suggested that Annexation be dropped and that resources should be focused to areas within the City limits. Mr. Baldini noted there has been conversation of cleaning up the lines around town where one side of the street is in the City limits and the other side is not. Mr. Justice asked if Mr. Walters was suggesting that “Identify possible areas for future annexation” be dropped and asked if that implied the Commission should not have clear criteria for annexation. He added that they could establish criteria and have it available in the event the question came up, without aggressively looking to annex. Mr. Walters noted that he felt it was more important to do what we have than it is to annex, which will likely be a tax burden. After discussion, it was noted that more conversation on the topic of establishing criteria is necessary.

Mr. Toner suggested that another recommendation column should be added to the Goal Review since many of the Goals were established by the 2009 or 1999 Comprehensive Plans.

Grants – The Commissioners had a discussion on the benefits of seeking grants to fund projects.

Housing Plan – Mr. Toner asked if “Increase affordable opportunities for home ownership” was relevant. Mr. Baldini asked what needs to be done to attract and retain single family homeowners and combat segmenting houses into apartments.

Mr. Bird had several suggestions regarding survey signage, goal accomplishment and zoning maps. He suggested putting survey posters at key areas of the City, similar to where political posters are typically placed. He also noted the City should have documentation of Goals that have been accomplished that would be available to review. With regard to the Zoning Map, he suggested that it might be possible to add zoning maps to the City website that could be accessed by inputting an address.

Economic Development Plan – Mr. Walters suggested “Redesign portions of Route 9 and the Ferry Cut-off as a pedestrian-oriented commercial district” be removed from Goal Review. Mr. Smith noted that he thought there was a plan on the books to at least improve the appearance of Rt. 9 from 6th Street to the intersection ... the Gateway. Mr. Toner noted that the last time they tried it the plan was too broad; however he understood that now they are trying to pull back the scope of the original plan.

There being no further business, a Motion to adjourn the Meeting was made and seconded. The Motion was carried and the Meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Kathy Weirich
Stenographer