

Date: April 21, 2025

To: City of New Castle City Council

From: Margo Reign, Chair Planning Commission

Re: Annual Report for the period 5/24 to 3/25

1. Please provide highlights of the Board/ Commission's 2024 activity and efforts.

- Buttonwood – Two lots approved by City Council in February.
- • Gray Street – One lot approved by City Council in June.
- • Crozier Fine Arts – Site Plan for 16,000 square feet of additional space approved by City Council in June.
- • 12 Arbutus Drive I- Three lots approved by City Council in April.
- • Markell Trail – Site Plan approved by City Council in August
- 428, 430, 432, 434, 438,440 and 442 West 7th Street – approved special exception for religious institution.
- Reviewed proposed ordinances from the City Council regarding lot frontage and wetlands and a proposed moratorium on building large apartment buildings.
- We are currently in the process of discussing possible changes to the City Code regarding short term rental units.
- We adopted Rules and Procedures for the Planning Commission

2. Would you like to request additional education for your Board/ Commission? Have all of your members taken the FOIA class through University of Delaware? If so when and if not please provide the names of individuals who need training. FOIA training for all the commissioners is needed. There are some commissioners who have not taken any of the classes for the Certificate for Planning Education. We should make them aware of the classes and encourage them to take them next spring when they are again offered.

3. Do you feel you need more training or guidance on how to better deliberate and or be more effective? If so please elaborate. Not at this time.

4. What additional logistical support and guidance can the City's Administration provide you to better support your Board/ Commission? At this point I am unaware of any additional logistical support, the staff at the city has been great in providing admirative support.

5. Does your Commission or Board interact with a professional advisor? If so, who is the advisor and how does s/he work with (or guide or help) the board/committee. Chris Rogers is our professional advisor. He is the primarily contact with attorneys and engineers for projects that need to come before the planning commission. We work closely with Max Walton, the City Solicitor regarding ordinances and ensuring we are in compliance with any local, state and federal laws. We also work closely with Antonina Tantillo, the City Manager and her staff.

6. Do you have any current openings on your Committee/Commission or Board? Yes, we currently have one opening.

7. Does the board/ commission receive complaints directly? If so, how do you respond to them? If you receive complaints directly, please share them with the City Administrator. We rarely receive any direct complaints or comments and if we do, they are sent directly to the City Administrator.

8. What are the plans and goals of the Board/ Commission for 2025?

- For this year we need to complete the 5-year review of the Compressive Plan. We hope to use this as a way to prepare for and plan for the 10-year review.

9. Do you have any grant funding requests for outside grants and/or budget needs? If so please opine.

10. Please share your Fiscal Year 2026 Budget request.

Funds to cover the cost of classes to be taken by commissioners for education. Money will be needed for the 2030 Comprehensive Plan – do we begin to put money aside for that now?

11. Is there anything that you would like to share not captured in the above? No.