

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Planning Board
Wednesday, November 10, 2021
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Planning Board held on November 10, 2021. Chair Clein convened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Present: Chair Scott Clein; Board Members Robin Boyle, Stuart Jeffares, Bert Koseck, Daniel Share, Janelle Whipple-Boyce, Bryan Williams; Alternate Board Members Jason Emerine, Nasseem Ramin; Student Representative Daniel Murphy

Absent: Board Member Robin Boyle; Student Representative Jane Wineman

Administration:

Nick Dupuis, Planning Director
Brooks Cowan, Senior Planner
Jana Ecker, Assistant City Manager
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

Master Planning Team:

Matt Lambert, DPZ

11-175-21

B. Approval Of The Minutes Of The Regular Planning Board Meeting of October 27, 2021

Mr. Share said on page two, in sixth paragraph from the top, it should read "makes Pierce seem dark"; on page four, in the fifth paragraph from the bottom, "effected" should be changed to "affected"; and, on page seven, in the second paragraph under Other Business, "Board" should be added after "said the".

Motion by Mr. Share

Seconded by Mr. Williams to approve the minutes of the Regular Planning Board Meeting of October 27, 2021 as amended.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Share, Williams, Whipple-Boyce, Jeffares, Clein, Koseck

Nays: None

Abstain: Emerine

11-176-21

C. Chair's Comments

Chair Clein welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the meeting's procedures.

11-177-21

D. Review Of The Agenda

11-178-21

E. Unfinished Business

None.

11-179-21

F. Rezoning Applications

None.

11-180-21

G. Community Impact Studies

None.

11-181-21

H. Special Land Use Permits

11-182-21

I. Site Plan & Design Reviews

11-183-21

J. Study Session

1. The Birmingham Plan 2040 – Review of the Introduction, Future Land Use & Chapter One (Connect the City)

PD Dupuis introduced the item. Mr. Lambert presented the item.

Mr. Lambert confirmed for Chair Clein that any lots described as 'low-intensity seams' were not being recommended for a change in land use. The only changes recommended are multi-modal and pedestrian improvements.

Chair Clein invited public comment. Seeing no immediate public comment, Chair Clein opened the topic to the Board for discussion.

Mr. Williams said the revisions captured the essence of the Board's comments over the last year. He said he found the paragraph on page six of the draft beginning "All of these other aspects" incendiary and recommended it be removed. He said the draft should recommend that the southwest area of the City be slated for the addition of sidewalks and multi-modal improvements. He noted that coming up the hill on Northlawn near the Birmingham Country Club was particularly perilous.

Mr. Share said it would be helpful to briefly describe lot sizes and/or density allowances for zoning districts so the public better understands the proposals. He opined that the draft still retained too much of a focus on social engineering, citing specificity in tasks and committees or the recommendation for a community foundation as two examples. He said those suggestions could possibly be better used in an appendix at the end of the draft. He asked whether residents living near parks with potential commercial destinations had been surveyed regarding their interest. He said he was not sure that every neighborhood planning district needed a commercial area. He said he was unsure of the demand for a public circulator. He asked why metered parking was being recommended for Lincoln. He said he did not believe that all of the civic buildings needed to be in the Tudor style, citing the new fire station on Adams as an attractive building not in the Tudor style. He said the draft could retain its recommendations that certain ideas be explored, but that it need not specify which committee look at those ideas.

Messrs. Share and Emerine and Ms. Whipple-Boyce said they did not believe that Glenhurst at Lincoln was an optimal location for a small commercial destination.

Mr. Jeffares said two-way cycling is a bane for fellow cyclists, citing Eton Street's current experiment with it, and recommended the draft find safer ways to promote cycling. He said Detroit and Ferndale both have good examples of safer cycling options. He said he liked the idea of the traffic oval on Woodward from the first draft. He recommended that the draft not specify where complete streets and social districts be located. Instead, he said the draft should just encourage exploration of the concepts and the bringing in of an expert to make location recommendations. He suggested the Multi-Modal Transportation Board explore electric golf cart type options for residents to use on 25 m.p.h. streets that could be parked two-to-a-spot to reduce demand on parking and increase accessibility. He said the draft should recommend that development projects include consideration of the integration of a senior and community center. He said the draft should recommend the creation of public transit options to get from downtown Birmingham to the Troy Transit Center. He said he thought a public circulator was worth further exploration. Regarding the paragraph from page six mentioned by Mr. Williams, Mr. Jeffares said he felt that the point was that diversified tools for surveying the public allowed the master planning team to access more diverse opinions. He noted that there are routes cyclists already prefer to use, and recommended the draft seek to improve the safety of those instead of creating new ones. He

noted that the area of Northlawn described by Mr. Williams is safer for cyclists than using Lincoln. He recommended the City try having a cafe food truck at Booth Park before deciding whether to add a brick and mortar location. He said the neighborhood loop could be more useful if it added ways to get into the City from neighboring municipalities, saying the addition of 'spokes' would be beneficial.

Mr. Lambert confirmed that Mr. Jeffares' interpretation of the paragraph on page six aligned with Mr. Lambert's intent.

Ms. Whipple-Boyce stated that the future land use planning map on pages eight and nine seemed to have mis-labelled Greenwood Cemetery as a recreational option. She said that instead of recommending the specific locations of commercial destinations in parks the draft could just more broadly suggest the idea be explored. She noted that an overlap of grey and red on the land use map seemed to be resulting in purple, and asked that those areas be corrected. She said she was not sure of the utility of either the neighborhood loop or the public circulator, but was willing to hear why they might be useful.

Mr. Emerine recommended that any references to this being the second draft, or similar statements that would have to be revised out of the final draft, just be removed now. He asked Staff to update Mr. Lambert on the ongoing study of a two-way cycling path on Eton. He said that Booth Park could be an ideal location for a 30 to 40 sq. ft. cafe, citing a similar cafe in Mariano Park in Chicago that is very popular with park visitors.

Chair Clein commended Mr. Lambert on the revisions made to the draft. He said he agreed with many of his colleagues' comments. He said that, unlike Mr. Jeffares, he did not like the proposal for a redesigned median at Woodward and Maple and said that he was not sure people would want to spend time in the middle of Woodward. He said he prefers to shrink intersections, while acknowledging that was a philosophical preference. He said that the recommended scale could be clarified for the commercial destinations, stating that kiosks would be appropriate where larger cafes would not, like at Glenhurst and Lincoln. He disagreed with Mr. Share's contention that programming options need not be considered, stating that if they are not considered then the City would be more likely to design spaces that cannot be used effectively at all. He said that while he liked the idea of a neighborhood loop that could be restricted to pedestrian use on certain days, he agreed with Ms. Whipple-Boyce that he was no longer sure of the utility of the neighborhood loop as it was being proposed. He said he thought the concept needed more clarification, or may need to be removed from the plan.

Mr. Share concurred that kiosk-sized cafes might be more appropriate than larger commercial destinations in parks. He said that the discussion of the neighborhood loop could be as broad as recommending that the City explore 'citywide interconnection'.

Mr. Lambert said the intent of the neighborhood loop was to provide a throughline in the City where multi-modal development, including sidewalks, benches, wayfinding, and other options are especially prioritized.

Given that description, Chair Clein said that instead of including the neighborhood loop the draft should recommend that all areas be ADA-compliant and have a variety of multi-modal improvements.

Mr. Koseck said he agreed with many of his colleagues' comments and said the revisions to the draft were good. He reminded Mr. Lambert to continue writing at the public's, and not the planning professional's, level. He said the neighborhood loop could be useful for exercise and to define a major pedestrian option.

Mr. Lambert was asked to outline criteria that would help the City decide where to implement recommendations from the draft, instead of making specific location recommendations.

Public Comment

Since there was no initial public comment, Chair Clein opened the discussion again to public comment.

Paul Reagan stated there is a covenant on Booth Park that would cause the park to revert to the Booth Family Trust if it is used for anything other than a park. He added that the land use map might be easier to read if only the areas to have zoning changes are highlighted. He re-proposed his idea from previous meetings of a pedestrian bridge for crossing Woodward. He recommended that concepts that have been scaled back in the plan, like accessory dwelling units, just be considered for removal instead, noting that the City could always pursue such an idea in the future even if it is not mentioned in the master plan.

Kevin Kozlowski recommended that more contrasting colors be used for the maps.

In reply to Mr. Kozlowski, Mr. Lambert clarified that some of the lots around Poppleton Park were being recommended for reduced density in comparison with the draft one recommendations as part of the direction to reduce the extent of the seams.

Chair Clein thanked Mr. Lambert, the Board, and the public.

Mr. Lambert noted that it would be useful to remind the public that the master plan does not zone or re-zone property.

Mr. Koseck recommended that the changes made to the second draft be redlined.

Mr. Williams said he did not believe that was necessary.

Ms. Whipple-Boyce said that if there was a way to show the future land use map and the current zoning for those same areas that would be useful.

SP Cowan said it would be possible to create hyperlinks between the online future land use map and the current zoning ordinance and the draft master plan and the zoning ordinance.

Chair Clein said that while that was a great idea, it would probably have limited public use. He said the colors and a brief explanation of the zoning districts would likely be sufficient.

SP Cowan updated the Planning Board on the Multi-Modal Transportation Board's ongoing study of the Eton St. bicycle lane, sidewalks in the southwest portion of the City, and the Neighborhood Loop.

In response to a point raised by Ms. Whipple-Boyce, Chair Clein asked Mr. Lambert to create maps to show all changes proposed to land use, not just changes to seams and commercial destinations.

2. Outdoor Dining

PD Dupuis presented the item.

Mr. Share noted that the word 'enclosed' in Article 4, Section 4.44(A)(7)(e) on page 81 might lead to confusion since the Board did not want to allow enclosed spaces.

Mr. Williams recommended that 'enclosed' be omitted from the aforementioned section in response to Mr. Share's comment.

In reply to Ms. Whipple-Boyce, ACM Ecker confirmed that snow removal is already required of business operators.

Mr. Koseck said the implementation of this temporary policy would be a good opportunity for Board members to observe the winter outdoor dining options and to integrate those observations into the Board's more general discussion of the outdoor dining standards.

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Koseck to set a public hearing on December 8, 2021 to amend Article 4, Section 4.44 Outdoor Dining Standards of the zoning ordinance to remove temporal restrictions on outdoor dining patios in the public right-of-way and to allow outdoor dining fixtures and furnishings to stay outside.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Share, Williams, Whipple-Boyce, Jeffares, Clein, Koseck, Emerine

Nays: None

11-184-21

K. Miscellaneous Business and Communications

a. Communications

b. Administrative Approval Correspondence

c. Draft Agenda for next meeting

d. Other Business

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Share to schedule a special meeting for Thursday, December 16, 2021 in the City Commission room.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Williams, Share, Whipple-Boyce, Jeffares, Clein, Koseck, Emerine

Nays: None

PD Dupuis stated he had spoken with BO Johnson about Ms. Whipple-Boyce's request from the October 13, 2021 meeting regarding the average setbacks of homes. PD Dupuis said he and the Building Department would work on a proposal to clarify that section of the ordinance and that it could be brought for Board review at the Board's discretion after the new year.

11-185-21

L. Planning Division Action Items

a. Staff Report on Previous Requests

b. Additional Items from tonight's meeting

11-186-21

M. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m.

Nick Dupuis
Planning Director