

City of Springboro
320 West Central Avenue, Springboro, Ohio 45066

Planning Commission Work Session
Wednesday, July 8, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Marie Belpulsi called the Springboro Planning Commission Work Session to order at the temporary Springboro Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 425 South Pioneer Boulevard, Springboro, Ohio.

Present: Marie Belpulsi, Chairperson, Jim Chmiel, Chris Papakirk, Hans Landefeld
Absent: Janie Ridd, Barb Gibson, Becky Hartle

Staff: Chris Thompson, City Manager; Dan Boron, Planning Consultant; Raj Sharma, City Engineer; Elmer Dudas, Assistant City Engineer, Lois Boytim, Planning Commission Secretary

II. Agenda Items

A. Discussion, Exterior Lighting

Mr. Boron asked Planning Commission for feedback from the presentation by Bain Enterprises at the June 10th Planning Commission work session.

Mr. Landefeld commented that while there may have been conjecture that high pressure sodium would be obsolete, after the presentation, it did not sound like it. He was reassured that the preferred type of lighting by the City would still be around.

Mr. Landefeld asked Mr. Boron what his concerns were regarding the current ordinances.

Mr. Boron answered that enforcement has been very difficult, that can be fixed internally now that staff has a clear direction. Architectural lighting that had been interpreted by contractors to be exempt from the Planning Commission process has been stated to not be exempt. Feedback from vendors and applicants has asked for exemptions for architectural lighting that is not high pressure sodium. Another issue is the idea of dark sky which is the basis for part of the guidelines but never got into the issue of what type of lighting it was. Staff wanted Planning Commission to review whether the issue should be the intensity of the light or whether color should be a factor.

Mr. Chmiel asked whether the induction or LED lighting was an alternative to the architectural lighting that builders are trying to incorporate. He asked whether an alternative could be adopted that would offer a cleaner light.

Ms. Thompson answered that looking ahead, high pressure sodium might still be available, but induction lighting offers the choice of higher quality; fewer lights with longer lives that make them more efficient.

Mr. Papakirk added something he liked about induction lighting was the adjustable controls for the warmer and cooler side of light. Since high pressure sodium is the warmer, soft light, he felt that extreme contrast would not be good, but it sounds like it can be done.

Mr. Landefeld added that one concern was that they mix lighting type on the same project. He would be in favor of some uniformity on the site.

Ms. Belpulsi stated that she felt they needed to look at the new types of lighting due to the energy efficiency and giving developers options. She agreed that on a project lighting has to be consistent. She stated that she was impressed with the induction lighting and suggested a study on how many of the street light poles could be eliminated should the City switch to induction lighting and what any possible cost savings could be.

Mr. Chmiel asked whether there were any grant monies available for these energy initiatives.

Mr. Boron answered that the green light representatives proposed to exchange a light as an example. He stated that that could be an option at the new City site.

Mr. Landefeld asked about the limited night time lighting with step down lighting with motion sensitivity. He asked whether the Police Department would have a preference about that.

Ms. Thompson answered that they would always ask for more lighting.

Ms. Belpulsi commented that the studies that she has read indicate that the lighting does not have anything to do with crime.

Mr. Papakirk asked whether the ordinance would be amended to make it more inclusive of other kinds of light; including high pressure sodium but adding other options as long as they are dark sky compliant.

Mr. Boron answered that the change could be simple; striking out a couple of provisions in the code and looking at others to address on-site consistency.

Ms. Belpulsi asked whether it would be something that Planning Commission would want to encourage developers to use because of energy efficiency; offering incentives for businesses to comply.

Mr. Chmiel cautioned that the products that they are promoting do not have a track record and may not be the deal that they say it is.

Ms. Belpulsi stated that she would like to see the City offer more incentives to builders to use more energy efficient lighting whether it is induction or LED.

Mr. Landefeld asked what the incentives would be.

Mr. Papakirk commented that the Planning Commission could simply educate them about the alternatives and possible savings.

Mr. Landefeld suggested encouraging the controlled - motion sensor lighting.

Mr. Chmiel proposed providing a DVD with options from companies.

Ms. Belpulsi suggested that at staff review, staff provide websites or information from dark sky companies.

Mr. Papakirk suggested a green sheet with ways to make the whole site sustainable; lighting, parking and the heat island effect.

B. Discussion, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Mr. Boron reviewed the advisory committee proposed mission, vision, structure and goals.

Mr. Chmiel asked about the number of staff liaisons.

Ms. Thompson commented that at one point it was discussed that engineering and police participate. She suggested that initially one staff member participate with input from other departments as needed.

Mr. Chmiel asked about membership being open to citizens or business owners in Springboro.

Ms. Thompson answered that it was suggested that business owners participate to allow for the participation of a bicycle company in Springboro.

Mr. Landefeld stated that he felt that it was a good idea to have a representative from the business community involved or if not a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He added that in the case of bike racks, it is good to have the chamber involved so that businesses would have bike racks.

Ms. Belpulsi commented that that should be a goal of the committee, to get the Chamber involved, not necessarily on the committee.

Mr. Chmiel asked about the amount of use of bike racks, the number needed.

Mr. Landefeld answered that people are incentivized to ride if they see a bike rack.

Ms. Belpulsi asked for comments about the number of people on the committee.

Mr. Landefeld answered that the number was arbitrary, set as a starting point for discussion.

Mr. Papakirk commented that it seemed like a lot, whether it would slow the committee down.

Mr. Chmiel commented that it would give more people a chance to participate.

Ms. Thompson added that eleven or twelve people have applied to participate. She added that there is not a lot of turnover in the other various committees and that the number can always be changed.

Mr. Boron commented that certain things were left open so that the committee can form itself as needs arise. He added that the committee would meet regularly at first and then less frequently.

Mr. Chmiel asked with the committee being subordinate to the Planning Commission, how the communication would work.

Ms. Belpulsi answered that that needs to be discussed; she stated that they are an arm of the Planning Commission, making recommendations.

Ms. Belpulsi suggested that as a new committee, the members be given training with the law director to explain how committees work, their level of responsibility and what to expect.

Mr. Papakirk commented that they should also be familiar with planning and zoning and parks and how it ties into the greater plan for the community.

Ms. Belpulsi agreed and added that that could be part of the training process. She asked for comments about Planning Commission recommending the candidates to Council. She stated that she felt uncomfortable having the commission make the recommendations. She felt that the recommendations should come out of Council to Planning Commission.

Mr. Landefeld stated that he did not have a problem with Council making the recommendations, as long as there are a variety of different kinds of people and perspectives.

Ms. Belpulsi agreed and added that should Council make the recommendations then that recommendation has to go along to Council.

Ms. Belpulsi asked about the timeline for the appointments. She wants to allow for more discussion with the absent Planning Commission members.

Ms. Thompson answered that there is no timeline but out of courtesy to the applicants the recommendations should be made in some time frame.

Ms. Belpulsi asked that the discussion be continued at the next Planning Commission meeting after the formal meeting. She suggested that should Council be making the recommendations, they be given the resumes to look at for appointments by the end of August. She asked that the applicants be sent letters thanking them for applying and letting them know that the decision should be made by the end of August.

Ms. Thompson asked whether a Planning Commission member would be on the committee.

Mr. Papakirk and Ms. Belpulsi agreed that a member should serve on the committee.

Mr. Papakirk asked whether a member of the park board should serve on the committee.

Ms. Thompson suggested a subcommittee to review the applications and make recommendations. She suggested three or four people possibly including a Planning Commission or Park Board member to review and rate the applications. She confirmed that one of the seven committee members be a member of Planning Commission.

Mr. Papakirk expressed his concern that the bicycle committee not lose interest due to frustration with not receiving immediate results and not understanding easements and zoning. He agreed that a training session should be held for the new committee members.

Ms. Thompson commented that the staff liaison should help the committee with their questions by sharing financial implications and explaining the Council process. She will put together a subcommittee to review the applications.

Members for the subcommittee were discussed.

Ms. Thompson asked the Planning Commission whether they would like another discussion to be placed on the July 29th Planning Commission meeting.

Ms. Belpulsi stated that yes; it should be on the agenda. She asked that the minutes be provided to the absent Planning Commission members so that they can review them before the next discussion.

III. Guest Comments

There were no guest comments.

IV. Planning Commission and Staff Comments

Mr. Boron reminded the Planning Commission that the next Planning Commission meeting would be the July 29th regular meeting. In addition to a continuation of the discussions of lighting and the bicycle committee, the agenda may include one or two additional items.

V. Adjournment

Ms. Belpulsi adjourned the Wednesday, July 8, 2009 Work Session at 7:48 P.M.

Marie Belpulsi, Planning Commission Chair

Dan Boron, Planning Consultant

Lois Boytim, Planning Commission Secretary