

MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

6:30 p.m.

January 9, 2020

Council Chambers

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Peter DeMasters, Tim Stranko, William Blosser, Michael Shuman, Ron Dulaney, and AJ Hammond

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bill Petros, Carol Pyles and Sam Loretta

STAFF PRESENT: Christopher M. Fletcher, AICP

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** DeMasters called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and read the standard explanation of the how the Planning Commission conducts business and rules for public comments.
- II. **ELECTION OF LEADERSHIP:** Stranko nominated the Peter DeMasters as President and Carol Pyles as Vice-President for another term; seconded by Dulaney. There being no other nominations, the nominations were closed. The motion carried unanimously.
- III. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
- IV. **MATTERS OF BUSINESS:**
Approval of the December 12, 2019 meeting minutes were postponed.
- V. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. **RZ20-01 / Administrative / Overlay Zoning Districts:** Administratively requested realignment of Overlay Zoning Districts on the "Official Zoning Map" to reflect Monongalia County Assessor's digitized tax parcel mapping and to remedy cartographic errors in the current overlay district boundaries

Fletcher presented the Staff Report.

Stranko asked Fletcher to take a minute to remind the Planning Commission of the purpose and importance of overlay districts and why our citizens may be interested in these designations.

Fletcher explained that overlay districts are a tool that is used to either make the development standards and/or the land uses slightly different than the base zoning district underneath of it. Additional development standards can be included, which is very much the case in the Sunnyside overlay districts from architectural standards, the types of permitted land uses, development performance standards, etc. They also can be used to provide greater flexibility. For instance, in Sunnyside the base zoning districts require a larger front setback, or larger rear setback. If

higher density is desired, which is there, then those setbacks are decreased so development can be pursued at a more intense pattern. Sometimes the question arises about changing the base zoning district, a lot of the areas where we use overlay districts it is usually covering multiple base zoning districts. We want to continue to observe these base zoning districts, to regulate and manage, but just add either incentives or greater restrictions to achieve what the comprehensive plan is desiring for those particular areas.

Dulaney asked how the revised boundary was decided for the Sunnyside Central Overlay District. Fletcher replied that at the intersection of Beverly Avenue and 6th Street, there is one building down there, possibly a duplex. Looking at the existing overlay district, it is not clear whether the intention was to include that property or not. The properties to the north of that wrap around 6th Street extension, the overlay district did not include any structures north of the one previously mentioned. What we did, was just pulled the boundary south to include properties that face Beverly on both sides of the street. From a physical standpoint, it makes sense to include the way it was done to emulate what was around it.

Dulaney suggested that landowners impacted by this boundary adjustment should be notified. Fletcher noted the Planning Commission can decide to include these parcels in the Sunnyside Central Overlay District as a part of its recommendation to City Council.

DeMasters asked if anyone was present to speak in favor of or in opposition to the petition. There being none, DeMasters closed the public hearing and asked for staff's recommendation, which was read by Fletcher.

DeMasters asked for a motion to submit a recommendation to amend the overlay district boundaries to City Council with the modification to include the parcels noted by Dulaney in the Sunnyside Central Overlay District. Stranko made a motion and seconded by Dulaney. Motion carried unanimously.

- B. TX20-01 / Administrative / Sidewalk Requirements:** Administratively requested zoning text amendments to remove sidewalk development standards from the Morgantown Planning and Zoning Code and placing related standards in Article 913 "Sidewalks" of Morgantown City Code. Planning and Zoning Code Sections included are 1333.07(E), 1335.07(E), 1337.07(E), 1339.07(E), 1341.07(I), 1343.07(G), 1345.07(F), 1347.07(F), 1353.07(E), and 1361.03(L).

Fletcher presented the Staff Report.

DeMasters wanted to clarify that what the Planning Commission is being asked to do is recommend to City Council that all sidewalk related development requirements and standards be removed from the Planning and Zoning Code and placed in another section of City Code, Article 913, which is outside the scope of the Planning Commission. Whatever City Council decides to do with the sidewalks would be out of the Planning Commission's hands. That being said, when the Planning Commission reviews site plans, how will the provision of sidewalks be addressed. Fletcher stated the development of sidewalk could be addressed through conditions included in site plan approvals. The rules and regulations that will development under Article 913 for sidewalks will require the developer to address these facility as a part of the site plans presented to the Planning Commission.

Fletcher clarified that under the Planning and Zoning code, the City only requires sidewalks to be constructed when there is a new development, construction, or significant redevelopment. This has proven to be a reactive means of developing sidewalks. Earl Core Road is a perfect example. We have a lot of new sidewalks along this corridor, but you walk on a new segment of sidewalk, then on a berm, or have no pedestrian path to walk on. A proactive approach would be to plan for and construct sidewalks as a comprehensive network, which is the intention of removing the sidewalk development requirements and standards from the Planning and Zoning Code and placing them in Article 913 of City Code. The City Attorney is still working on Article 913 revisions and the City Engineer and Planning staff are working on a classification system for sidewalks similar to a roadway classification.

Fletcher noted Staff is working to tie all these City Code modifications together to ensure there is no time gap between the current requirements and the new requirements. If City Council decides not to pursue the comprehensive changes, then the current Planning and Zoning Code requirements would stay in place.

There being no further comments or questions by the Planning Commission, DeMasters asked if anyone was present to speak in favor of or in opposition to the petition. There being none, DeMasters closed the public hearing and asked for staff's recommendation, which was read by Fletcher.

DeMasters asked for a motion to approve. Stranko motioned to approve; seconded by Hammond. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

- Traffic Commission Report: No report.
- Other Committees: No reports.
- Staff Comments:

Fletcher asked if he could give a demonstration of the online zoning map that should be live in a couple of weeks. The City's GIS Analyst Marvin Davis is developing this new tool following the Planning Commission's and City Council's recent updates to the City's Official Zoning Map. A link will be placed on the City's website. Zoning district, and some Planning and Zoning Code elements, like the permitted land use table, will be available through the online mapping tool. The only spatial data we are unable to incorporate presently is the County's tax parcel mapping. The City is working with the County to integrate this data in the future.

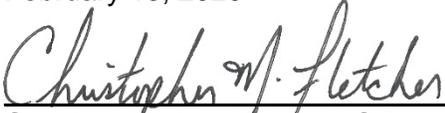
VIII. FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMISSION:

IX. ADJOURNMENT: 7:27 PM

MINUTES APPROVED:

February 13, 2020

COMMISSION SECRETARY:


Christopher M. Fletcher, AICP