



PLANNING BOARD WORK SESSION

Monday, September 25, 2017 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall

MINUTES

Approved 10/23/2017

I. Call to Order

Mr. Wahrlich called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

II. Roll Call

Present: Marilyn Harris, Charlene Lovett (arrived at 6:50 PM), Marlene Jordan, David Putnam, Richard Wahrlich, James Short, Bruce Kolenda

Absent: William Greenrose, Nicholas Koloski,

City Staff: Michael McCrory, City Planner

Mr. Wahrlich welcomed Allen Damren to the board.

Review of Minutes – August 28, 2017 Work Session

Motion: To accept the minutes of August 28th as presented.

Made by: Mr. Putnam **Second:** Mr. Short

Vote: Mr. Kolenda and Mr. Damren abstained; all others voted in favor

III. Master Plan Update

a. *Public Health* chapter

The *Public Health* chapter was reviewed at the last Planning Board meeting and was subsequently returned to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has completed their review, made some changes and has returned it to the Planning Board for a second review.

The Steering Committee amended the chapter to recommend that the Health Committee be responsible for reviewing the administrative codes that would be supervising their role as a committee. The consensus of the Steering Committee was to recommend formation of the Health Committee first, and then to have the Committee review the code and make recommendations to the Council and support the development of necessary changes. The chapter acknowledges that the City Code needs to be updated for a modern purpose.

Goal 4, objective 1 states: ***Review and amend the City code relating to community health, and the healthy homes initiative.***

There are follow-up bullets, the second of which reads: *Establish a Public Health and Wellness Committee (in place of the current Board of Health described in the City Code) whose*

efforts are linked to community and regional health organizations; ensure that one member of the committee also serves on the Executive Committee of the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Advisory Council. The Public Health and Wellness Committee will have a mission to fulfill the vision of this public health chapter.

These were the only substantive changes to the chapter.

The addenda to the chapter will provide the groundwork for the Health Committee to understand what work has already been done in the county and in Claremont.

The Steering Committee found the chapter to be complete.

Mr. Wahrlich called for a motion on the chapter.

Motion: Approve the *Public Health* chapter as presented

Made by: Mr. Putnam **Second:** Ms. Jordan

Vote: Unanimous in favor

b. *Economic Development* chapter

Where the *Public Health* chapter is deliberately general (because of it being the first of its kind), the *Economic Development* chapter is quite detailed with lots of action items. The subcommittee was quite large and contained a broad array of interests in the City.

Mr. McCrory walked through the chapter with the Board and summarized some of the key findings.

There are 8 pages of goals and objectives that are fairly detailed. There is supplemental information at the end of the chapter.

Mr. McCrory invited comments from members of the steering committee.

Mr. Putnam: The Steering committee discussed at length the need for a trained work force and education; how to create partnerships with the business and manufacturing communities; the relationship between what the industries are expecting and what the school system can help with; helping younger children develop an IQ for learning so that they can be working within a trained work force. There have been several opportunities for businesses to come here – they have not because they have realized the number of employees they wish to hire aren't here; we don't have the trained work force. Ruger built elsewhere where there is a higher population density and a trained workforce. With a low unemployment rate (half the national average), there is a lack of workers. This is addressed in Goal #2. This chapter is better laid out and more focused than its predecessor.

Claremont's unemployment rate is comparable to the rest of state and half of the national average. There is no ready workforce for a new employer to come in. A third of Claremont's unemployed are elderly or disabled. Preparing a ready

workforce for the next employer to come to the City is critical to Claremont's future economic success. Education and training are paramount.

Mr. Damren felt there is a lot of data in the chapter to get through. He suggested perhaps rearranging the layout of the chapter. He asked how realistic are the goals. There are a great many tasks for a small staff to accomplish.

Ms. Harris said she thought the tasks are doable as this plan extends for 10 years. It provides a basis for the community to be involved. The goals are not prioritized which allows for maximum flexibility in implementation.

(Mayor Lovett joined the meeting.)

Partnering will help get this done within the timeline

Mr. Damren asked what Claremont's brand is. Ms. Harris said it is touched on in Goal 5 (page 28). Mr. Putnam said the visioning chapter and the land use chapter help identify our brand. Our land is our #1 asset.

Mayor Lovett asked where the City should put its time and energy. She expressed doubt that this chapter could be implemented in five years.

Mr. Wahrlich called for a motion on the chapter.

Motion: To accept as complete

Made by: Mr. Short Second: Mr. Putnam

Vote: Mayor Lovett and Mr. Damren voted against; all others voted in favor.

Motion passes. (5 yes, 2 no)

IV. Other

V. Adjournment

The session ended at 7:00 PM. Board took a short break.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse
Resource Coordinator