

MINUTES OF A REGULAR VOTING MEETING OF THE

FAIRFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION

November 11, 2009

Jerry Dailey, Chairman, called the Regular Voting Meeting of the Fairfield Planning Commission to order.

Members present: Jerry Dailey, Deborah Rhees, Terry Senger, Don Hassler and Scott Lepsky.

Deborah Rhees, seconded by Scott Lepsky, made a motion to excuse Jeff Holtegel and Dan Murray. Motion was approved.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

The minutes of the previous meeting, held October 28, 2009, were approved as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Conditional Use Application – Bakery – 10 Cinchris Drive

Applicants, Jennifer Haag, 5785 Squire Hill, and Leslie Sumner, 90 Stone Ridge, stated they are starting their own business and liked the Cinchris Drive space. Their consultant told them to start the business first as a commercial venture. They need a commercial space in order to get the proper licenses they need to be able to sell to restaurants. Orders will be taken through their website or over the phone. Customers can go to the store to place or pick up orders. Baked goods will not be sold over the counter so it won't be a retail facility. They did a lot of research and there is not much competition in the area and they liked this location until they found out it wasn't zoned correctly. Their ultimate goal is to grow into a retail establishment and remain in Fairfield. The start up business however will be dessert cakes, wedding, birthday and gourmet cheese cakes. They anticipate standard hours and by appointment only hours on Saturdays. Tim Bachman informed the applicants they will need to contact the City's building department to obtain the appropriate permits.

Deborah Rhees, seconded by Don Hassler, made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Application for a bakery at 10 Cinchris Drive located in a M-2 zoning district with the stipulation that there be no retail. Tim Bachman added they would need to have this approval amended should they desire retail sales in the future.

Motion carried 5 – 0.

20 Year Comprehensive Plan Recommendation

Erin Donovan, Planning Manager, stated two chapters of the current Comprehensive Plan have been updated during the past few years. This document is a guide for the City for the next 20 years. Ms. Donovan's presentation covered the following components of the plan:

Land Use:

The Land Use Plan was updated in 2004. The long range plan is for the desirable use of land in the City. It serves as a guide regarding the distribution and intensity of development. Currently, 85% of the land in Fairfield has been developed or designated as open space or park use; 2,070 remain undeveloped. Approximately 5,000 acres has been developed as residential which contains 18,150 single and multi-family units. There are 1,200 acres of parks and open space with another 115 acres proposed for Black Bottom and the expansion of Marsh Lake. The goals and objectives of the Land Use Plan are:

- To have a land use pattern that promotes fiscal stability of the City by setting aside land for commercial and industrial development to ensure a sound tax base. The area north of Route 4 is designated for industrial development; areas along Route 4 are designated commercial. There are currently 1,400 acres available for industrial, office and commercial development.
- To have a land use pattern that is sensitive to environmental factors. In 2004 and 2006, the City used FEMA grants to purchase property along Crystal and Banker Drives. This area is now open space used for flood control.
- Ensure that infill projects are of the same density as surrounding properties. This was discussed in detail during the proposed Creekside Manor rezoning request.
- Provide areas for office park type development with good access and visibility to the interstate. The designated area is the Mack/South Gilmore Road area.

Thoroughfare Plan

The purpose of the Thoroughfare Plan is to establish future right-of-ways and to guide public and elected officials in the development of future roadway improvements. The majority of Fairfield's thoroughfares are already constructed. There are 3 proposed thoroughfare extensions; Nilles Road west extension across the river, Nilles Road east extension to Symmes Road and Bobmeyer Road extension (in the City of Hamilton) to By-Pass 4. The Bobmeyer Road project will be completed by another entity but will have a positive affect for Fairfield. Mr. Hassler asked whether the City had all of the right of way needed for road improvements and Ms. Donovan explained additional right of way is acquired as property develops. Ms. Donovan stated the Plan is meant only to be a guide and may be adjusted to meet prevailing conditions. Emerald Lake and Muskopf Farms are two examples that the Thoroughfare Plan called for roadway extensions and connections but did not occur due to public opposition.

Future roadway improvements include widening all of By-Pass 4 from 2 to 4 lanes. Fairfield will be upgrading the portion from Route 4 to Symmes Road. This is scheduled to start next year. Seward Road was just widened from 2 to 3 lanes from Symmes Road north to the railroad crossing. The remaining portion to Tylersvilles Road will depend on future development. The portion of Seward Road from Symmes Road to Port Union is scheduled to be upgraded in 2012. The last major improvement is South Gilmore Road to the I-275 interchange. Work on this started with the construction of an additional lane on Gilmore Road from Mack to Kolb Drive. Grant money was obtained to cover half of the \$25,000,000 project cost. Other aspects of this project include improvements to the off/on ramps and widening of the bridge with additional lanes.

Housing

The Housing chapter relates to several other chapters of the plan:

- The Land Use chapter recommends where housing should be located (west and south of Route 4).
- Utilities chapter is designed to guide where and how public utilities will be provided to support residential developments.
- Sustainability chapter encourages houses to be built using sustainable practices.
- Thoroughfare chapter states platting of local roads will occur during the subdivision process.

Forty-four percent of development in Fairfield is residential with 37% of that being single family. There are still 110 acres of undeveloped residential land and 545 acres of undeveloped agricultural land. The agricultural property is mainly in the Gray Road area. One objective in the Housing chapter states there is a need for empty nester housing, upscale housing and new housing should be single family. The Land Use Plan has an objective which calls for a housing mix ratio of 70% single family and 30% multi-family. This came about in the late 1980's when a lot of multi-family development was occurring. We are currently at 62% single family and 38% multi-family. This objective should be close to being met due to the amount of vacant land zoned residential or agriculture. Multi-family undeveloped land consists of 6 acres, which front Route 4 and will likely develop as a commercial use. The only multi-family on the horizon is the senior housing proposed on Patterson Drive. The rezoning application should be submitted in the near future.

The majority of Fairfield's housing stock was constructed in the 1970's and 1980's. These are now higher maintenance properties and one of the reasons why property maintenance has become such a high priority. The numbers shown on the slide include both single and multi-family housing units.

Economic Development

Of Fairfield's developed land, 13.7% is industrial. There are 1,060 acres remaining for future development which is over half of Fairfield's vacant land. Ms. Donovan reviewed several recent industrial projects including the GE offices in West Chester. The City entered into a Joint Economic Development District agreement for that project. Redevelopment projects reviewed included First Highland, Cornerstone Plaza and Fair Plaza. Future redevelopment projects such as these are critical to Fairfield's long term success. Undeveloped land for large projects is becoming scarce so the City is looking at different ways to offer grants, tax incentives and JEDD agreements. Demographics are also becoming more diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and income. The business community will need to evolve in order to respond to this diversity.

Public Utilities

This covers three areas; water, wastewater and storm water management. For water, there are no major expansions required at the plant. A re-rating study will be done, however so capacity can be expanded to 12 million gallons per day. It is currently designed for 9 million gallons. The City needs to remain focused on maintaining, repairing and replacing older waterlines. Waterlines in the Hicks Manor subdivision were replaced this year. They initially were installed in the 1950's.

The wastewater plant currently operates at 50% capacity which does increase during rain events. Fairfield has worked on decreasing this infiltration of rainwater and no major improvements need to be done to accommodate future development. Like the water mains, maintaining, repairing and replacing sewer lines will need to occur. Improvements to the Lake Manor pump station will also need to occur as the Gray Road corridor develops. This corridor contains approximately 400 acres of undeveloped land and water or sewer services are not available. A study was commissioned in 2008 to determine how many homes could be built. There are currently about 16 homes and two approved subdivisions – Bluffs at Harbin Park and Springbrook Farms. The developer of Springbrook installed their own force main system to serve the five lots. The public sewer for the Bluffs at Harbin runs down the hill and ties in down at Muskopf. The study determined 617 homes could be built based on A-1 zoning and 726 based on R-0 zoning. It was also determined that the Lake Manor pump station would exceed capacity based on total build out of either A-1 or R-0 projections. Once development is proposed in this corridor, determination will have to be made as to who will pay for the pump station improvements.

Facilities, Schools and City Services

This chapter reviews Police, Fire, Municipal Court, solid and green waste collections and the schools.

Parks, Leisure Facilities and Services

Future and existing parks, future and existing bike paths, leisure activities and park land are covered in this chapter. The City maintains over 20 parks and open space areas that range in size from ¼ acre to 200+ acres. There are very small parks such as Veterans Park, neighborhood parks which serve the surrounding residential areas, community parks which are destination type parks and regional parks, which are intended to serve multi-jurisdictional areas such as Joyce Park. There are over 150 acres of land dedicated as permanent open space (hillside of the bluffs, Gilmore Ponds and Memorial Park being constructed in the Banker/Crystal area). There are 6 miles of existing bike trails with 3 – 4 more proposed. Recommendations for parks and recreation include preservation of existing parks. Also, additional land needs to be acquired to convert to parks or open space as those parcels become available (continuation of hillside acquisition and connection to Marsh Lake from Water Works Park and River Road).

Sustainability

Sustainability is about being a good steward so future Fairfield residents can have the same opportunity and experiences that we have. Key sustainability factors include air quality, community health, energy conservation, green buildings and recycling. Some of the sustainable things Fairfield's Public Works Department and Community Arts Center are trying include lighting upgrades which save money and energy. Traffic signals and school flashing lights are being converted to LED bulbs. The City received \$187,000 from an energy block grant which is paying for a portion of these improvements. The Water Plant is using a generator during summer months which allows the system to come off grid and send the power back to Duke. The money saved is then used toward maintenance of the water plant.

Last year, the City began benchmarking the ecological impact of greenhouse gas emissions in relation to City operations. These figures will be compared to future figures so we can track our energy conservation efforts.

Ms. Donovan stated the staff would like the memo that was handed out Monday to be included in the 20 Year Comprehensive Plan as an Executive Summary.

Deborah Rhees, seconded by Scott Lepsky, made a motion to approve the 20 Year Comprehensive Plan as detailed with the recommendation that the executive summary also be incorporated into the beginning of the document.

Terry Senger asked if the input he had given would be included. Ms. Donovan stated that it would

Motion carried 5 – 0.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Tim Bachman reminded the Commissioners that we will not be meeting on November 25th. Also, a Joint Public Hearing will be held on December 7th regarding a rezoning application submitted by Neyer for the property on Patterson Drive. The application is for concept approval only of their proposed Patterson Place Planned Unit Development.

Being no further business, Don Hassler, seconded by Scott Lepsky, made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Jerry L. Dailey, Chairman

Peggy Flaig, Clerk