

**CITY OF MILWAUKIE  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
Milwaukie City Hall  
10722 SE Main Street  
TUESDAY, June 24, 2014  
6:30 PM**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Wilda Parks, Vice Chair  
Shannah Anderson  
Greg Hemer  
Shaun Lowcock

**STAFF PRESENT**

Denny Egner, Planning Director  
Li Alligood, Senior Planner  
Steve Butler, Community Development  
Director

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Sine Bone, Chair  
Scott Barbur  
Gabe Storm

**1.0 Call to Order – Procedural Matters\***

**Vice Chair Parks** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and read the conduct of meeting format into the record.

*Note: The information presented constitutes summarized minutes only. The meeting video is available by clicking the Video link at <http://www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/meetings>.*

**2.0 Planning Commission Minutes**

**3.0 Information Items**

There were no information items.

**4.0 Audience Participation** –This is an opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda. There was none.

**5.0 Public Hearings**

**6.0 Worksession Items**

- 6.1 Summary: Moving Forward Milwaukie Draft Action & Implementation Plan  
Staff: Li Alligood

**Li Alligood, Associate Planner**, presented the staff report via PowerPoint. She noted that staff had brought the Action and Implementation Matrix before the Commission on May 27 which included a list of strategies and actions. She said tonight was for discussion of the Action and Implementation Plan which included key recommendations with more background and explanation behind the strategies and actions. Staff had key questions for the Commission and wanted the focus to be on the plan and code amendments that would come before the Commission for adoption.

**Ms. Alligood** reviewed the project's timeline. She noted the Downtown Vision and why it was important to Milwaukie; and described the purpose of the Action and Implementation Plan to identify steps the City could take to propose new development and redevelopment. She gave an

overview of the Plan's strategies and called out those that would trigger amendments that would come before the Commission, which included updating the Comprehensive Plan and ancillary documents, providing more flexibility on allowed development, expanding urban design and pedestrian-oriented standards, and lowering cost barriers to development.

**Ms. Alligood** noted specific proposed policies and issues where staff was seeking feedback and direction from the Commission. These included:

- Reduce the number of zones in the downtown as the current zoning and regulations were very prescription and confusing:
  - Collapsing the zones would streamline regulations and be easier to understand.
  - Downtown residential north of Scott St, where retail or commercial uses were not ideal, could be retained.
  - Generally, the downtown office, retail, and commercial zones would be collapsed into one downtown mixed use zone with some overlays.
  - Staff noted that Oregon City has been successful with having much mixed use and allowing ground floor retail and office.
  - The Commission agreed that downtown had too many zones and collapsing zones would be beneficial.
  - It was important that residential be incorporated into zones. However, **Mr. Egner** noted that with the residential zoning in north downtown there hadn't been much development because it's restrictive; opening it up to mixed-use would expand redevelopment options.
  
- Allowed uses on the ground floor:
  - The current policy was to support a vibrant and pedestrian-oriented Main St corridor. However, the current zoning was restrictive and created barriers to new businesses, development, and adaptive use. There were different standards for different parts of downtown.
  - **Ms. Alligood** noted the existing regulations for the different areas and explained why those were restrictive.
  - Potential approaches, along with reducing the number of zones, included streamlining the permitting process and loosening restrictions on Main St and other streets – let the market dictate the ground floor uses.
  - Were there uses that should or should not be required?
    - Commercial was permitted in downtown and permissive, and included offices and retail and personal services;
    - An issue for downtown retail storefront requirements was open windows which was an awkward enforcement issue;
    - Some requirements could influence what types of businesses were in downtown.
  
- Development and design standards for buildings:
  - Although standards applied to Main St, no standards applied to the rest of downtown.
    - **Ms. Alligood** noted the regulations for Main St, including building setbacks, window percentage, design review, etc. Requirements for other streets in downtown did not include build-to lines, requirements to interact with street, or percentages for windows or doors, and had less design review standards.

- Examples of pedestrian-oriented standards included ground floor transparency, street-facing orientation, and parking in the back.
  - Should similar standards apply to other downtown streets but with different options with regard to percentages, or should the full Main St standards be applied throughout downtown?
  - She noted that currently there were no requirements for buildings along McLoughlin Blvd to be inviting or pedestrian-friendly.
    - **Vice Chair Parks** noted that the City should be encouraging standards to interact with Riverfront Park.
    - **Mr. Egner** noted that the intersections and cross streets that connect to Riverfront Park should be pedestrian-friendly and should be designed to connect the downtown to the riverfront.
    - There were no setback requirements, other than clear vision standards, for McLoughlin Blvd.
  - She reviewed benefits to the potential approaches.
- **Public Area Requirements (PARs):**
  - Although PARs were intended to implement a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented commercial corridor, the cost burden on the private sector was detrimental and perhaps called for more than was necessary to attain the vision.
  - **Ms. Alligood** explained what triggered PARs, what improvements were involved with examples, and the existing regulations. She added that the PARs were different for each street and gave examples of streets built with and without the improvements. She noted examples from Oregon City and Lake Oswego as well.
  - Potential approaches included incentives for construction and removing high-cost or unnecessary components of the PARs.
  - **Mr. Egner** noted that the City's requirements were in the middle for similar municipalities but unique in that the City provided no assistance for them.
  - Since improvements have been done one property at a time, it was difficult to be consistent; but to create the continuity the sidewalk width would need to be maintained, although expensive.
  - **Mr. Egner** noted the Action and Implementation Plan included financial tools for seeking other funding sources to help defray the cost of these improvements.
  - **Ms. Alligood** noted the next discussion about the PARs would come if it was decided to keep the PARs as is; the next step would be for Council to address how to pay for them. The intent was to not result in the same situation where a high level of improvements was required with no financial support.
  - Staff confirmed that the Commission agreed that sidewalks, street trees, and street lights were standard requirements with development, and so what needed to be looked at were the requirements beyond those.
- **Downtown Design Review:**
  - The design guidelines and design review process were difficult and could create disincentive.
  - The review process involved meetings with the Design and Landmarks Committee and the Planning Commission, which came with significant cost and created uncertainty.
  - Approaches included a clear and objective administrative review option or the current discretionary track through the DLC and PC review.

- Benefits would be a streamlined process option with more certainty and less cost; opportunity for public comment depending on the review type; and allowed more flexibility for developers.
- However, clearer development and design standards were needed.
- **The Commission** agreed that there were development situations that should not trigger Type III review; an alternative below certain triggers seemed reasonable.
- **Commissioner Hemer** noted that the "Milwaukie character" was unclear and open to interpretation.
- **Ms. Alligood** clarified that the review options would involve either a developer that would be willing to meet all requirements to avoid discretionary review (clear and objective administrative review); or a developer that can't or doesn't want to meet requirements and therefore would opt for discretionary review (Type III review).

**Ms. Alligood** reviewed the next steps and project's schedule going into the summer.

#### **7.0 Planning Department Other Business/Updates**

#### **8.0 Planning Commission Discussion Items**

**Commissioner Hemer** noted that the public television channel was off and Milwaukie was misspelled recently.

#### **9.0 Forecast for Future Meetings:**

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| July 8, 2014  | 1. TBD <i>It was moved by Commissioner Hemer and seconded by Commissioner Lowcock to cancel the July 8, 2014 meeting.</i> |
| July 22, 2014 | 1. TBD  |

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Martin, Administrative Specialist II

  
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Sine Bone, Chair