

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 18, 2023 4:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Premier, Chair
Tom DeYampert, Vice Chair
David Hubbard, Member
Tiffany Secka, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT: Melinda Pletcher, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer McMahon, Chief Operating Officer
Matthew McConnell, City Attorney
Ginny Bodkin, Deputy City Clerk
Brandon Berry, Senior Planner

Chair Premier called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the Agenda –

Motion: Member Secka moved, and Member Hubbard seconded to approve the December 18, 2023 agenda as presented: the motion passed unanimously.

2. Audience Comments – None.

3. Approval of the Minutes

a. November 13, 2023 Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion: Member Hubbard moved, and Chair Premier seconded to approve the November 13, 2023 workshop and regular minutes as presented: the motion passed unanimously.

4. Action Items – None.

5. Discussion Items

a. Date for February Meeting

Member Hubbard will be out of town for the February meeting scheduled for the 18th. Senior Planner Brandon Berry explained that staff spoke internally, and he presented a potential meeting date of Monday, March 4th. Depending on pending business at that time, there may not be a need to meet until the regularly scheduled March 18th meeting.

Motion: Member Hubbard moved, and Chair Premier seconded to move the February meeting to March 4th; the motion passed unanimously.

b. Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) Update

Senior Planner Brandon Berry provided an update presentation to the Board on the Comprehensive Plan EAR Report as part of the seven-year update cycle. The first reading of the Report was passed by the City Commission on October 10th; it has been transmitted to the State for review by eight of

their agencies. The process takes about 3 months; feedback has been received from three agencies and staff anticipates comments from all in early 2024. After any necessary amendments, the Comprehensive Plan will be returned to the City Commission for a second read. Mr. Berry's presentation is part of the meeting record.

c. 2024 Comprehensive Plan Updates - Firm Selection

Mr. Berry continued his presentation and reported that following multiple workshops, the City Commission selected Calvin, Giordano & Associates to work with the City on its Comprehensive Plan review. The focus of the review has been narrowed to the Study Area (Gulf Boulevard and Corey Ave.), Development Standard focus (density, intensity, height), and Economic Analysis (advantages and disadvantages to the city/residents of reducing development standards).

At the request of Member Hubbard, Mr. Berry provided an update on Senate Bill 250. In November the Governor signed CS/HB 1-C, effective 11/14/23, which removed Pinellas County from the list of counties that could not propose or adopt more restrictive or burdensome amendments to its comprehensive plan.

Assistant City Attorney McConnell clarified that there had basically been a stay in place to allow people to recover from Hurricane Ian without more stringent land development codes or comp plans to abide by. However, the way that amendments to comp plans are approved and the rational relationship to government business have not changed. The only thing removed was the stay.

At Member Hubbard's request, Mr. Berry summarized the process of altering a comprehensive plan. The process is similar to the EAR Review; there is an expedited State and County review.

d. Pass-A-Grille Overlay District & Community Redevelopment District - Eighth Avenue Updates

Mr. Berry reported that staff has been working with the Historic Preservation Board for some time on proposing amendments to these two districts; there have been multiple review sessions, and these would be the first substantive changes to the Overlay since 2017. His presentation included a list of the major proposed amendments including all new development being subject to the Overlay vs. the underlying district, lot combination Board review, alleyway access, no new pools or accessory structures in front yards, visibility of roof-mounted equipment, and waste management plans for multi-family dwellings. Mr. McConnell added that there may be design guidelines; the Historic Preservation Board is very focused on character in the historic district.

The CRD-EA District/8th Avenue has not yet been reviewed by the Board, but some of the proposed amendments are to lot split and assembly review, adoption of minimum standards, maximum building length, and design review requirements. A workshop should be coming early next year. Mr. Berry answered questions throughout the presentation.

e. Division 26 - Sign Ordinance Updates

The City Commission held a workshop on October 10th. Mr. Berry's presentation reviewed the following four major topics of discussion:

- Electronic message board (EMB) signs – are currently limited to 32 SF and on Gulf Blvd. between 37th and 75th Avenues and can only be added to conforming sign structures

- Any noncompliant EMB must be brought into compliance or removed by 2027.
- There was limited interest in further amortization of EMBs
- Exploring limits on message changing (dwell time) and animation.

Mr. Berry showed some signage examples and answered questions. His presentation is part of the meeting record. Chief Operating Officer Jennifer McMahon asked for input and suggestions from the members as this will be going back to the Commission and later here again before the Local Planning Agency. No ordinance has been drafted yet. Chair Premier suggested electronic signs at both ends of City Hall and/or Horan Park to advertise events.

The presentation continued to murals and current standards. There is no limitation to non-commercial art. Staff treats commercial art as wall signage. He showed examples of existing murals. Some members of the Commission were interested in limiting total sides and area of murals and prohibiting logos or text identifying products or services offered on the premises was discussed. Ms. McMahon mentioned that a Mural Review Committee was also discussed. Staff currently asks to review murals.

Design guideline requirements were discussed; the Commission did not seem to have interest in the homogenization of signage across the City or substantial consistency between signage and building design.

Freestanding signs were reviewed. Current requirements are for all freestanding signs to be monument signs, mostly limited to 8-12 feet in height with a 0-10 foot setback from the street. The Commission had discussed allowing pole signs for single-tenant business and monuments for multi-tenant. There was a strong focus on consistency in the interpretation of requirements.

Chair Premier was in favor of having consistency with multi-tenant pole signs, be it color or similar. Member Secka voiced concern that although more visually appealing, monument signs are lower to the ground and may cause safety issues for visibility for drivers; she agreed with consistency for multi business pole signs and mentioned uniform directional arrows on one sign for multi-tenant businesses.

5. Adjournment – Next meeting January 22, 2024

There being no further business, Chair Premier adjourned the meeting at 4:45 pm.

These minutes will be considered for approval at the March 18, 2024 Planning Board meeting.