

City of Trotwood

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Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, December 16, 2024

6:30 PM

Special Meeting - Workshop

**Trotwood Community and Cultural Arts Center
4000 Lake Center Drive, Trotwood, Ohio 45426**

City Council

*Mayor Yvette F. Page
Vice Mayor Tyna R. Brown, Ward 4
Council Member Bettye L. Gales, Ward 1
Council Member Martha H. Clark, Ward 2
Council Member Charles Ron Vaughn, Ward 3
Council Member Rhonda C. Finley, At Large
Council Member Denise Moore, At Large
Clerk of Council Kara B. Landis*

I. Call to Order

Mayor Page called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Page led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Clerk Landis took Roll.

Council Member Gales arrived at 6:35 p.m.

Clerk Landis announced that Council Member Vaughn advised that he would not be attending the meeting. Further, Council Member Vaughn did not provide a qualifying reason pursuant to Council Rule 4.5; therefore, his absence is unexcused.

Present: 6 - Council Member Gales, Council Member Moore, Council Member Clark, Council Member Finley, Vice Mayor Brown and Mayor Page

Absent: 1 - Council Member Vaughn

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: City Manager Quincy Pope, Clerk of Council Kara Landis, Deputy City Manager Stephanie Kellum, Fire Chief Rick Haacke, Police Chief Erik Wilson, and Planning and Zoning Administrator Tyler Hauck.

VISITORS PRESENT: Teresa Wendell and Larry Bryant.

IV. Approve the Agenda

Mayor Page requested a Motion to approve the Agenda. A Motion was made by Vice Mayor Brown, seconded by Council Member Finley, and the Motion CARRIED by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Council Member Gales, Council Member Moore, Council Member Clark, Council Member Finley, Vice Mayor Brown and Mayor Page

V. Special Presentation

[PR36-24](#)

Future Land Use Plan - Overview of Proposed Principles and Elements
Presented by Wendy Moeller, Project Manager
Compass Point Planning

Attachments: [PR36-24 Attachment](#)

Planning and Zoning Administrator Hauck introduced Wendy Moeller, owner of Compass Point Planning and Project Manager for the City's future land use plan project. He stated that Ms. Moeller would be providing an update on the project and review some draft parts of the plan. He added that the steering committee, which is made of a cross-section of the community, has been meeting monthly and they have been providing some good feedback. Further, he announced that there is a survey available to complete so to capture further feedback from the community.

Administrator Hauck reminded Council that the land use plan is a guiding document that doesn't automatically change the City's zoning code, but rather guides policy and decisions in order to update the code.

Ms. Moeller announced that Pete Bales with Local Gov Consultants has been working with her on this project. She shared that while they knew housing was a big issue, they also wanted to listen to any other issues or ideas brought forward.

Ms. Moeller commented that the vast majority of the big ideas were about land use; more restaurants, affordable housing, gathering spaces, and open spaces. She added that there were some ideas not related to land use such as the City having their own water service. Ms. Moeller touched on the idea of changing the narrative for the City and taking control over telling the City's story to the outside world.

Ms. Moeller then reviewed the nine guiding principles drafted for the plan and explained the purpose is to have a starting point whenever referring back to the plan. Next, Ms. Moeller shared the color-coded map, which was the core of the presentation, and she discussed the recommendations for each category.

Council Member Finley asked if they considered solar and wind farms as an option in the "Rural Conservation" category. Ms. Moeller stated that they do believe commercial solar farms might be a good fit; however, wind farms would not be a viable option because Trotwood is not in an area with high wind speeds.

Ms. Moeller reiterated that the difference between this plan and the zoning code is that the code controls what is allowed; therefore, if the code doesn't change, the allowable uses won't change simply by adopting this plan. Council Member Finley asked if that stands true for those who are wanting to subdivide their land. Ms. Moeller explained that it all depends on the zoning allowed in the area in question and if you are doing something that is more restrictive or less restrictive. She stated that a good example of this is in the areas referred to on the map as "Core Neighborhoods" which are the older neighborhoods. Ms. Moeller explained that currently zoning requires lots be 10,000 square feet in size; however, most of the lots are only 7,000 square feet, meaning almost all of them are non-conforming. She added that one of the suggested

regulatory changes is to right size zoning districts to accommodate the typical lot size. She stated that this would make it easier for those wanting to invest in the area by not having to go through the Board of Zoning Appeals, and there would be fewer non-conforming properties.

Council Member Finley asked about farmers who have animals and if there was any consideration to require a certain property size to maintain animals. Ms. Moeller advised that technically the City's code prohibits all animals and that this would be a regulatory change outside of zoning. She added that the steering committee discussed adding provisions for true farms in the rural areas to have animals, and that no livestock would be permissible in the built-up areas of the City. Council Member Finley asked if there are restrictions on how much land is required per animal. Mayor Page asked what the required acreage is per animal. Ms. Moeller stated that the rule-of-thumb in other communities is two acres per large animal.

Council Member Finley then asked about considerations regarding cannabis in rural areas. Ms. Moeller stated that they did not ask about cannabis within specific areas but that it did come up in the public meetings. She explained that they separated dispensing, manufacturing, and processing as other communities have done. She added that a question regarding cannabis is on the survey, but that they most likely will not include it in the plan, they may simply reference that it was mentioned for consideration.

Ms. Moeller moved on to discuss the two main categories regarding neighborhoods that are being recommended. One category is made up of the older neighborhoods with a more historic character, which include grid streets and smaller lots, and the other category is the newer suburban style developments further west, referred to as "Traditional Neighborhoods" with a slightly lower density than the "Core Neighborhoods." She added that both neighborhoods are similar in activity with primarily residential uses, just slightly different approaches to the concept.

Ms. Moeller stated that they are suggesting some moderate density housing around corridor areas to include housing such as attached town homes, condominiums, senior housing, etc. in areas that are transitional in nature and they would phase into single family dwellings. She stated that the idea is not to go above the densities that are already reflected in those areas. Ms. Moeller moved on to the north area of the City (Shiloh Springs Road and Salem Avenue) and mentioned that the "Low-Intensity Multi-Family" areas reflect the type of development already in place.

Ms. Moeller moved on to the different commercial uses explaining that "Neighborhood Mixed Use" includes small-scale commercial and office uses that are already prevalent in those areas. She stated that they do not recommend any large-scale developments in this area. She added that they broke out "Olde Town Trotwood" because there is such a variety of uses already in that area, which is acceptable, and that it already represents a certain character.

Mayor Page asked for clarification regarding the "Neighborhood Mixed Use" category. Ms. Moeller explained that this use surrounds areas that are small-scale commercial and office use corridors. She stated that they believe these areas should continue to reflect these types of uses, but that they are

also recommending it be expanded to allow mixed-use buildings so people could possibly live above their business. Ms. Moeller added that they are not talking about major apartment buildings.

Council Member Finley commented that it appears from the map that a large percentage of the community is rural. Ms. Moeller agreed and stated that much of the area is well outside of the area for the potential of sewer lines. She added that a good portion of the "Traditional Neighborhoods" area does not have sewer, but knowing this plan is looking out 10 years it may eventually be accessible to sewer, unlike the designated rural area. She reminded Council that most of the rural area was Madison Township and a lot of the townships are still very rural, it just happens that this area is now part of the City. She added that sewer access is probably the biggest controller of these considerations.

Ms. Moeller then focused on the recommendation that she considers to be the biggest policy shift, which is the "Mixed-Used Core" category. She explained that she is aware of discussions regarding this unique area and if apartments would be an appropriate use. However, she stated that if there is to be any density of housing in the City, this is where the most dense housing would be developed. She added that most of the input regarding this area was tied to mixed-use. She added that they are recommending if there is to be development at the highest allowable density, it would have to be connected to commercial properties. Ms. Moeller said that they are suggesting 30 units per acre with only two or three floors, similar to The Greene, not high-rise buildings.

Council Member Finley commented that one of the City's goals is more home ownership and she believes condominiums and town homes that people would buy should be considered, rather than apartments. She added that she believes the community has enough apartments and she would like to see more focus on generational wealth and home ownership. Ms. Moeller explained that there is only so much that can be done regulatorily to mandate that a residence be owner occupied. She added that you have to have a lot of roof tops if you want restaurants and other amenities. She then mentioned zero lot line developments in the "Core Neighborhoods" because they are smaller lots. She explained that these types of developments look like a two-family duplex with the party wall on the lot line, but they give the opportunity for ownership on both sides. She added that the CIC thought this might be a great opportunity for more home ownership while creating a cost-effective way to build housing in those neighborhoods.

Council Member Finley added that when you talk about attracting restaurants and retail the City's average income must be at a certain level. Ms. Moeller agreed and added that they also look at the number of households. She explained that they are trying to drive an opportunity to get density where you want commercial so they feed each other. She stated that the new industry coming in will help to increase the average income and having housing around that job growth will allow people to live near their work.

Ms. Moeller then discussed industrial land uses and shared that small-scale interior-work industrial uses might work in the "Business and Commerce Flex" areas. She stated that these types of businesses are meant to be more cautious than industrial parks around surrounding neighborhoods.

Ms. Moeller reviewed the designated "Special Areas" and determined that these areas could be a lot of different things so they thought it best to give the City the flexibility to determine the best use in each area. Ms. Moeller mentioned the Turner Road Redevelopment Plan and some possible suggestions based on that study, but reiterated their suggestion not to dictate one land use because there are several appropriate uses.

Mayor Page asked for further information about the "Mixed-Use Core" and if that might include hotels because the area is a main thoroughfare of the City. Ms. Moeller clarified that it could continue to be a commercial core and it would not have to have a residential component; they are simply saying that if a developer wanted to come in and do a mixed-use development, this would be the location for such use.

Ms. Moeller discussed suggested regulatory considerations listed on her slides and reviewed ways to change the City's code to bring zoning in alignment with the tools and principals in this plan.

Council Member Finley asked about AirBNBs. Ms. Moeller suggested that AirBNBs and short-term rentals should be addressed as a separate ordinance or as a type of use. Council Member Finley then mentioned the Flyght Academy and other activities coming to the City. She shared that she believes these activities might attract visitors looking for that type of lodging.

Ms. Moeller then discussed ways to expand allowances for housing options in order to increase the potential for home ownership. She mentioned adjusting the City's architectural requirements, which currently are some of the most restrictive requirements in Ohio. She also discussed adjusting the dwelling size requirements as the City's current baseline is high when compared to affordability in the community, which creates an ownership barrier. Ms. Moeller addressed removing the City's two-car attached garage mandate and added that the market will most likely dictate building two-car garages; however, this would create some flexibility in the older neighborhoods with smaller lots.

Ms. Moeller advised Council to use Planned Unit Developments as a tool to be more prescriptive and provide clarity on expectations for developers.

Council Member Gales asked if removing the two-car garage mandate would create issues with street parking. Ms. Moeller explained that removing the mandate for garages to be attached may simply mean that there is still a two-car garage, it just might be detached and behind the dwelling, as opposed to being attached to the dwelling. She added that most homes require enough set-back to allow for a car to park in the driveway and she mentioned the idea of having provisions for off-street parking.

Council Member Finley asked about differentiating areas of the City and implementing specific requirements. Ms. Moeller advised that each zoning district should dictate the specific requirements. Council Member Finley commented that some of the regulatory changes should depend on the area in order to be consistent. Ms. Moeller explained that the purpose of this plan is to give guidance on adjustment considerations, not to dictate the exact changes to be made.

Ms. Moeller concluded her presentation by stating that they plan to finish the narrative and expand the recommendations in order to present the plan for adoption after the new year.

Council Member Finley asked about the future of charging stations. Ms. Moeller stated that more often she is seeing these stations located on private property or at large chain stores. She explained that they are typically not part of a policy unless the City wants to specifically address them and then it would be more about regulations on how they are used on the property.

Council Member Finley suggested that reviewing the plan every ten years seems like a long time. Ms. Moeller recommended referring to the plan at the beginning of every year to look for any necessary policy shifts.

Council Member Finley asked about improved communications and how other communities are achieving this without additional staff. Ms. Moeller suggested distributing the work throughout various departments so there is a variety of news reported. She also suggested using HyperReach and social media to spread good news. Council Member Finley mentioned DATV as a possible medium.

Mayor Page asked for clarification on certain lot sizes and the City's current requirements. Deputy City Manager Kellum explained that these areas are primarily in what was Madison Township and when the Township merged with the City, the code was not updated to align with the actual lot sizes and that now is the opportunity to make sure the text reflects actuality. Ms. Moeller added that the current zoning is somewhat tied to the previous Township areas and agreed that there was most likely no consideration as to what was platted in relation to what the code stated, which means the current properties are considered non-conforming, but grandfathered. She went on to explain that the problem is when someone wants to build on to the back or side of the existing dwelling, they have to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals, which creates another step for a homeowner who want to make improvements. Ms. Moeller explained that by aligning the lot size for that particular zoning district, more homes would then be conforming and further, it makes it easier for people to invest in their property.

Mayor Page expressed that she would like to think beyond that point and asked how Council can improve those specific areas, not just maintain. Deputy City Manager Kellum suggested one way would be to implement the zero lot line concept or to decrease the setbacks. Ms. Moeller clarified that if the City keeps the current lot size requirements in those specific zoning districts, someone would have to purchase two lots in order to build under the current zoning code. Mayor Page stated that the point she is trying to make is that she simply wants to help elevate those areas, not increase the density. Ms. Moeller said that this specific change to the code would simply "right-size" current lots.

City Manager Pope shared that the City's median income has increased to \$46,000 from \$32,000 and he is excited to see that it is on the right trajectory.

VI. Adjourn

Mayor Page adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.