

# **City of Trotwood**

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## **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

**Tuesday, January 20, 2026**

**6:30 PM**

**Workshop**

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

## **City Council**

*Mayor Yvette F. Page*

*Vice Mayor Tyna Brown, Ward 4*

*Council Member Robert L. Kelley, Jr., Ward 1*

*Council Member Martha H. Clark, Ward 2*

*Council Member Milton J. Pearson, 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 Call and announced that Council Member Moore was unable to attend the meeting. Further, Council Member Moore provided proper notice of her qualifying reason pursuant to Council Rule 4.5; therefore, her absence is excused.

**Present:** 6 - Council Member Kelley Jr., Council Member Clark, Council Member Pearson, Council Member Finley, Vice Mayor Brown and Mayor Page

**Excused:** 1 - Council Member Moore

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Deputy City Manager Kellum, Law Director Chris Conard, Clerk of Council Kara Landis, Police Chief Erik Wilson, Police Captain Mark Ecton, Planning and Development Director Tyler Hauck, and Assistant to City Manager Jamaica White.

**VISITORS PRESENT:** None.

**IV. Approve the Agenda**

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

**Aye:** 6 - Council Member Kelley Jr., Council Member Clark, Council Member Pearson, Council Member Finley, Vice Mayor Brown and Mayor Page

**Excused:** 1 - Council Member Moore

**V. Special Presentation**PR01-26

Zoning Code Rewrite - Recommended Focus Areas

*Presented by Wendy Moeller, Project Manager*

*Compass Point Planning*

Attachments: [PR01-26 Code Rewrite - Memo](#)

[PR01-26 Code Rewrite - Audit and Focus Areas](#)

Planning and Development Director Tyler Hauck introduced Wendy Moeller of Compass Point Planning, who is serving as the Project Manager for the City's Zoning Code rewrite project. He stated Ms. Moeller will review with Council, the forthcoming process to update the City's Zoning Code, but she needs input from Council as it relates to improving the overall Code, modernizing

regulations, and implementing the recently adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Director Hauck explained that the Zoning Code is what governs land use regulations, such as what kind of uses can go in what districts and the height of a fence. He stated tonight, Ms. Moeller will talk about the Code Audit, which raises questions and solicits general direction from Council.

Ms. Moeller came forward and explained the Code Audit is like a blueprint; it is not something that is adopted, but rather a starting point to ask questions and discuss big policy changes. She stated they will use the existing Code as their base; however, there are some substantial changes that need to be discussed. She shared after receiving direction from Council, they plan to hold public meetings to discuss the suggested revisions from a broad perspective. She added they also plan to conduct online surveys to address very specific questions.

Ms. Moeller explained they will present their recommended revisions to the Zoning Code using four themes. Ms. Moeller presented Theme 1, which included recommendations to consolidate regulations into a single category; relocating Chapter 1105 (Urban Renewal) to another part of the Code; and improving references and graphics. Ms. Moeller explained these changes will make the Code easier for residents to use and more effective for administration. She added they also want to eliminate the list of submittal requirements within the Code and make them into a checklist to be part of the application. She commented this would allow technical changes to be done more efficiently, rather than by ordinance.

Mayor Page asked for clarification regarding eliminating the list of submittal requirements. Ms. Moeller explained that with an application for a zoning permit, one must submit a site plan showing things like where the buildings will be and where the setbacks are, provide a certain number of copies, etc. She stated with this change, those requirements would not change, they would simply be documented with the application, not in the Code.

Council Member Finley asked if their recommendations will also include Part One through Part Ten of the Code. Ms. Moeller explained this project is only about the Planning and Zoning Code, which is Part Eleven. She went on to say they will be looking at other parts of the Code to make sure there aren't any conflicts, but only in relation to Part Eleven.

Council Member Finley asked if submitting plans is mandatory per the Code. Ms. Moeller shared they will be recommending to include in the Code, common review requirements – items that apply to all applications. She explained an example of this would be the concept that an applicant must submit a complete application with all requirements as established by staff, including the fee, as well as a complete application determination, before their case is placed on the Agenda. Mayor Page advised that she is OK with this approach; no objections by Council were brought forward.

Moving on to Theme 2, Ms. Moeller discussed transitional regulations to clarify when an applicant applies the day before the new Code goes into effect, they must abide by the Code that was active when they submitted their complete application. She went on to say should someone want to have their application reviewed using the new regulations, they can. She confirmed anything previously approved is still approved, and any previous violations would still

be violations. Ms. Moeller shared in the first year, this is a very handy set of regulations when staff is trying to figure out which Code applies. No objections from Council were voiced.

Ms. Moeller suggested the next issue to discuss was most likely from Madison Township zoning; having the Board of Zoning Appeals approve conditional uses. She recommends changing this to have the Planning Commission review conditional uses, and stated most municipalities have their Planning Commission perform such review from the standpoint of land use planning and adjacent uses, and compatibility. She said this would only be a procedural change; the review requirements would be the same.

Council Member Pearson asked if someone had a violation and owed a fine, but the regulations changed and now the issue was no longer a violation, do they still owe the fine. Ms. Moeller stated yes, and explained that fines accrued under the previous regulations would still be owed, unless the City would choose to waive those fees, which they have the authority to do. Council Member Finley commented that she did not agree, stating if the City "fixed" a regulation that was broken in the first place, residents should not be fined for something the City fixed. Ms. Moeller explained residents can appeal fines, and added how issues that deal with fines for a violation are most likely not going to be addressed by this project.

Council Member Finley commented she frequently hears how difficult it is to do business in the City of Trotwood, so she is very happy with these suggested changes. She then mentioned the recommendation to move some things to the Planning Commission, and she would like to know the pros and cons associated with that recommendation. Ms. Moeller explained in Ohio, townships do not have the authority to assign who reviews what because the Ohio Revised Code says that as a township, conditional uses will be reviewed by their Board of Zoning Appeals; the equivalent to a Planning Commission is a township's Board of Zoning Appeals. She stated the reason a lot of municipalities have their Planning Commission look at conditional uses is because the Board of Zoning Appeals looks at things like variances and appeals; they are a quasi-judicial board that acts like a court. She said conditional uses are more about land use planning, and went on to say that the Planning Commission looks at the overall impact of land use based on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. She advised it is more about the approach, not so much the pros or cons.

Council Member Kelley asked what is the typical process a resident needs to go through to get something addressed from a public improvement standpoint. Ms. Moeller explained the importance of clarifying procedures and shared most of what residents want to do will only require administrative approvals. She went on to explain conditional uses are uses not meant to be like most of the uses in a particular district so they would have a public hearing through the Planning Commission. Ms. Moeller stated public improvements like streets and lighting typically are addressed during the subdivision process.

Council Member Kelley clarified that residents don't know who to call when there is a street light out. Deputy City Manager Kellum stated on the City's website and in the newsletter is information on who to call; she will make sure the information is circulated again.

Mayor Page asked about timing issues if going through the Planning Commission rather than the Board of Zoning Appeals. Ms. Moeller answered, stating the timing for review should be similar - the time to notice the public hearing and the time to hold the public hearing. As far as frequency of meetings, Deputy City Manager Kellum stated both Boards meet monthly, then added she recommends making this change because it is more compatible with the purpose of the Planning Commission.

Council Member Pearson mentioned Council Member Finley's comment about people saying Trotwood is hard to do business with. He shared that he believes some people think Trotwood is desperate and they can just skip steps. Ms. Moeller said the revised Zoning Code will be written to comply with known State law; however, laws change. Ms. Moeller went on to say while the Code will comply with certain State laws and case law, as a Charter municipality, the City has a lot of say in most everything else. She gave the example of having to update the City's sign regulations in order to align with recent federal case law regarding freedom of speech. She pointed out they will also be highlighting areas such as these, for discussion with the law director. Mayor Page asked if Council was OK with changing the review of conditional uses from the Board of Zoning Appeals to the Planning Commission. No opposition from Council was voiced.

Moving on, Mayor Page asked if the Design Review Board is doing the same job as another board, and that is why they are recommending the Board be eliminated. Ms. Moeller suggested this Board may have been lost in the shuffle in the current Code, and added the description of this Board is what she has seen in other communities as a Historic Preservation Board. She shared the Board's role per the Code is somewhat confusing as it indicates they are involved with the Salem Avenue Redevelopment Area overlay district; however, there aren't design regulations requiring them to be involved. Ms. Moeller believes whatever the Board's role was intended to be, the Planning Commission could do, and has probably been doing. Mayor Page asked who serves on the Design Review Board. Director Hauck advised the Board has not been seated since he's been with the City. The Mayor commented that we are doing OK without such a Board. Deputy City Manager Kellum advised that this is simply cleaning up the language in the Code. Mayor Page reiterated that Director Hauck deals with these issues every day; she reiterated how they trust his expertise.

Ms. Moeller went on to the next recommendation, which is to add an administrative waiver procedure where staff can give approval on minor/limited requests such as setbacks and height. She explained when someone can demonstrate they have a practical difficulty, staff would have the ability to approve their request within certain parameters rather than to make them go to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Ms. Moeller shared this would be most beneficial to residents and would be used in limited instances. Council indicated verbally and non-verbally they agree with this recommendation.

Another recommendation Ms. Moeller explained is the alternative equivalency review procedure, which would allow for positive variances. She stated when someone has an idea on how to meet certain requirements, but by different means than the Code requires, it allows for a way to approve such ideas when no practical difficulty or hardship exists, allowing people to be creative. She added their application would go to the Planning Commission where there

would be a public hearing, and the Planning Commission would make a finding based on if what the applicant is proposing meets or exceeds the original standard established in the Code.

Mayor Page expressed concerns. Council Member Finley commented this procedure seems subjective. Ms. Moeller agreed, but reiterated the approval would come from the Planning Commission, not one individual. She added it would be limited to things like landscaping and lighting, not every standard. Mayor Page asked if this would apply to residential and commercial. Ms. Moeller stated this would most likely be used in a non-residential setting, suggesting something like regulations on residential fencing is more about the height, not about the materials.

Council Member Finley stated residents have expressed interest to her about planting in the grass area on the other side of the sidewalk between the road, similar to the Oregon District. Ms. Moeller explained something like that would most likely be in the right-of-way ordinance because such area is not typically regulated by zoning, possibly in Part Nine of the Code.

Mayor Page again shared her concerns with the variation possibilities, using colored fencing as an example. Ms. Moeller pointed out how that concern would be an issue now because the current Code doesn't regulate the color of fences.

Council Member Clark clarified these requests would still need to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. Ms. Moeller confirmed that to be correct, and added while it would be a discretionary review, it would be done by a Board charged with making the best decisions for the City, not just one person. Ms. Moeller added these applications would still require a public hearing so neighbors and others could voice their opinion. After hearing this information and receiving confirmation of the review process, Mayor Page commented that she changed her mind. Ms. Moeller added that this would most likely come into play when regulations stipulate a certain type of material, maybe in regards to historical preservation or design standards related to commercial development, but an alternative material that may be better than what is stated in the Code is being suggested.

Ms. Moeller moved on to Theme 3. Ms. Moeller stated these suggested changes are being made to simplify things. She added they plan to conduct a comprehensive review of the land use table. Ms. Moeller said they are suggesting to consolidate a few categories and using more form-based zoning language, to include consolidating the R-TF and R-FF districts. She discussed row houses - those attached with their own separate exterior entrances, and zero lot lines where they own separate lots, but the homes are attached. She said with the current land use plan, there are not a lot of areas where this could be used outside of what is existing, so this would just be a simplification of two districts that are similar in nature. She explained another recommendation is to consolidate the B-I and B-P districts because the intent of both districts is the same. Ms. Moeller advised there is nothing in the Zoning Code about the MHP district, so she is suggesting to have certain restrictions in the zoning text, and to add discontinuing text that protects existing mobile home parks, but does not entertain any new districts. Ms. Moeller followed-up by stating this would make it easier to improve existing mobile home parks while not making them non-conforming, but it also says that it's not a district

they want to see elsewhere.

Council Member Pearson asked about tiny homes. Ms. Moeller stated Council would have to determine if they want to allow these types of structures, then mentioned she has also seen mobile homes being replaced with recreational vehicles that are not HUD approved manufactured housing. She said adding language about this district would address these types of issues; currently there is no language, they are not even acknowledged, yet visible on the Zoning Map.

Council Member Finley asked if the proposed zoning districts will align with the zoning districts of neighboring jurisdictions. Ms. Moeller said they are looking at what is currently in place and making sure there are zoning tools to accommodate the land use plan. Deputy City Manager Kellum stated such changes would be almost impossible as it would have the City jumping through multiple hoops with the different communities Trotwood shares a border - Harrison Township, Jefferson Township, Dayton, and Perry Township, and we would always be the ones trying to conform to other external entities. Council Member Finley asked how issues are addressed when there is a combined area, for example the Hara Arena site; part of the site is in the City of Trotwood, the other part is in Harrison Township. Council Member Finley suggested a joint economic development environment. Ms. Moeller said with a site that size, a planned unit development may be an option because neither jurisdiction has authority over what the other jurisdiction approves. Deputy City Manager Kellum shared this was something discussed during the Turner Road study; however as seen with recent developments at the Hara Arena site, the City is the only jurisdiction that held to that alignment. She added the City will continue to try to collaborate with their neighboring jurisdictions and continue to pursue those options as opportunities arise.

Mayor Page shared that she likes those recommendations. Ms. Moeller stated they are also recommending to broadening the Park/Open Space District to be called the Community and Public Facilities District because it also allows for government buildings. She added this is more about renaming the district to reflect what is allowed. Council Member Kelley stated he is OK with the recommendations.

Ms. Moeller moved on to discuss agricultural districts and questions about lot sizes. She explained currently, an agricultural district allows for agricultural uses and similar activities on five acres; however, if you want to have a single-family home, you have to have 20 acres. Her understanding is the township wanted emphasis on agriculture and not a bunch of houses. She gave an example of having 7-10 acres where you could have an orchard, but you cannot live on the property. She gave another example of a farmer who is retiring and wants to stay in their home, but sell the agricultural portion of his property. She explained this would require the farmer to do a lot split, and because it wouldn't meet the zoning, they would have to then request a variance just to remain in their home. She commented she understands the intent of trying to encourage big agricultural operations, but the reality of the situation isn't functioning like so. Ms. Moeller said in other communities that have agricultural districts, typically what she has seen when they don't have the necessary infrastructure, is the land along the street may be divided into smaller lots, but the mile squares remain farms. She stated this recommendation would make it simple by saying 5 acres for everything.

Council Member Finley gave a scenario of someone having 20 acres and the family wants to give each of their eight children a piece of land so they can build a home and remain together; can they simply change the zoning since they are no longer agricultural. Ms. Moeller stated that is the question, then added you can't approve lot splits for just family, and asked what happens when a family member says they are changing jobs and plans to sell their land. Ms. Moeller asked what the smallest size lot Council is willing to approve. Director Hauck clarified with Council Member Finley if she is asking if properties could be rezoned. Council Member Finley confirmed that was her question, to which Director Hauck replied this would create spot zoning, which staff does not recommend because you would have little islands of residential property surrounded by agricultural.

Mayor Page asked if the lot sizes were reduced to 5 acres, how does that work with the density of residential homes being built on those 5 acres. Ms. Moeller explained that in theory, your 20-acre lot could be split into four lots. She then restated the minimum lot size for everything in the agricultural district is 5 acres, except for single-family homes, then you have to have 20 acres.

Council Member Clark suggested in the scenario of a farmer retiring and wanting to stay in their home, they could ask for a variance. Ms. Moeller shared that it has been approved as a variance; however, what's the practical difficulty that you have to justify for a variance; what's the hardship. Deputy City Manager Kellum suggested Council do some homework and come back to discuss this issue. Council Member Clark suggested this should have some community input. Mayor Page agreed and added the community is 70% rural and expansion will have to happen somewhere. She pointed out that the City cannot build anywhere else because there isn't anywhere else to building unless the City does infill housing. Mayor Page asked Deputy City Manager Kellum to confirm her statements. She went on to say if they would do something like this, it will open the door for having additional housing in rural areas, so it is something to be discussed.

Director Hauck made two clarifying points; with 5 acres you are allowed to have a farm, but you cannot live there; you need at least 20 acres to live on the property if you want to farm it. He shared that what he sees most frequently is someone wants to buy, for example a 16-acre piece of property and they want to farm it and have animals, but they also want to live on the property - he has to tell them they cannot live on the property since it is less than 20 acres.

Deputy City Manager Kellum suggested coming up with a compromise. Ms. Moeller agrees the community is 70% rural, but pointed out there are multiple kinds of rural residential districts, and the agricultural district is only about half of the rural area. Mayor Page explained she is trying to equalize this with what the City predominantly wants to do based on the land use plan, which is to create housing. Ms. Moeller noted this issue would be revisited.

Ms. Moeller shared that housing was one of the predominant subjects discussed with the comprehensive land use plan. She added how discussions were about more housing in areas that already have the infrastructure and services, such as residential single-family high-density districts like Drexel and Townview. She shared these are areas where there is a significant number of non-conforming properties because they don't meet the 10,000 square foot lot

size. She explained this means if someone wants to build on a vacant lot, they would have to acquire the lot next to it or apply for a variance; it makes it harder to invest. She stated they recommend, as discussed during the land use plan, to "right size" the zoning district to look like what is already existing, and by doing so, it would eliminate a lot of non-conformities, making it easier for people to invest in their property without having to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a variance, or having to do other steps.

Ms. Moeller then shared their other recommendation for this district is to allow zero lot line developments, which can look like a normal subdivision with single-family homes even though they are on one lot line. She added when you look at it, it would look like a two-family unit, but in reality, they are separate sellable units on their own individual lots. She commented they have talked about these with the CIC and they like the approach in hopes of getting people to invest in these neighborhoods. No objections were voiced by Council, and Ms. Moeller reiterated how they received general approval for these when working on the land use plan.

Ms. Moeller went on to discuss planned unit developments and stated they want to rewrite this category so that it works better for the City. She added the current procedure is somewhat difficult to navigate and they want to focus more on getting answers to major questions, like density and land use, during the zoning amendment process. She said the second phase would only require the Planning Commission's review because it is more like a site plan. In addition, they want to incorporate some of the recommendations that came from the comprehensive land use plan. She confirmed the Planning Commission and Council would still have a say in authorizing PUDs, as well as the public through public hearings; they simply want to make it more predictable for the City to know what they're going to get.

Council Member Finley asked Director Hauck to explain where PUD districts are currently located. Director Hauck stated there are a variety of PUDs throughout the City. Director Hauck stated PUDs are supposed to be their own Zoning Code, but in a lot of cases, that is not what they've found. He went on to say there are a lot of older PUDs in Trotwood that he hasn't been able to find any documentation on, which makes it difficult to say what they are supposed to be, what they are to be used for, and what regulations are guiding them. Ms. Moeller added revisions would also establish thresholds for PUDs, and stated they are a great tool for big complicated development as they allow for back-and-forth negotiations about what the City wants and what they are willing to give and take. She said PUDs are also good for large-scale residential developments where different products are offered so they don't have to subdivide into different districts; it can be viewed as one development. Ms. Moeller stated they want to establish some basic guidelines, such as minimum thresholds by which they are to be used, since they are meant to give a comprehensive look at complicated developments. She explained PUDs are not meant to circumvent the City's Zoning Code when someone is doing single-family homes.

Council Member Finley asked if it would be beneficial to specifically designate PUD areas, rather than to have them all over the City. Ms. Moeller explained there are areas on the Zoning Map identified as mixed residential opportunities, which would be great opportunities for PUDs. She stated the reason communities don't tend to preemptively zone properties PUDs is

because that takes the zoning amendment step out of the process and lessons the transparency. She added there is a lot of authority to say no to PUDs because the areas have base zoning districts. She commented their recommendations would make things a little more predictable and cleaner, while still being transparent. Deputy City Manager Kellum believes part of the reason there are so many PUDs is because time was not taken to do what Council is doing now; several Council Members verbally agreed.

Ms. Moeller then spoke about the Salem Avenue Redevelopment District, which is an overlay district, meaning the district has base zoning with boundaries that apply design rules. She shared they recommend, because it is so unique, changing this into a base zoning district with clearly established design rules for the area and thresholds for design review by the Planning Commission.

Mayor Page asked where exactly is the overlay district. Director Hauck offered to provide a map in the future, then commented he believes the SARA begins at Grismer and goes down to Consumer Square, which he does not believe is in the SARA. Ms. Moeller stated she is planning to go ahead and write this as a base zoning district, but it would be easy to change to an overlay, if that is Council's decision.

Mayor Page wants to be sure existing businesses are protected. Ms. Moeller confirmed that all businesses that currently exist are protected; and if anything, it may be expanded to allow almost all types of commercial activity. She reiterated she still recommends changing this to a base zoning district, rather than keeping it as an overlay, which is not necessary. Ms. Moeller believes they would have the ability to do more things than what they have now.

Ms. Moeller described the next issue as one of the biggest policy changes to be discussed. She explained how the City has one of the highest minimum dwelling size requirements she has seen across Ohio, and most communities she has worked with, from the standpoint that we require 3,000 square foot homes in the RE district. She clarified this means if you don't build a house that size, technically you cannot build in that district, which is a big portion of the City. She expressed that she understands why communities want to have this, so she is trying to find the balance. Ms. Moeller shared they recommend reducing the minimum square footage requirement for single family homes to 1,200 square feet because current housing products are anywhere from 1,200 to 1,400 square feet and cost \$250,000 to \$350,000 in Dayton and Cincinnati. She shared this would also allow for patio homes, yet it still requires a reasonably sized house; these would be three-bedroom homes at the minimum. She reiterated the biggest change would be in single-family districts, but she believes this change would encourage investment and allow for more affordability. She stated a lot of communities have moved away from large square footage requirements and have established minimums that are just above the size of a tiny home, around 1,200 square feet.

Council Member Pearson asked Deputy City Manager Kellum if, when Townview was developed, it was part of Madison Township. Deputy City Manager Kellum confirmed it was Madison Township, as was Drexel. Ms. Moeller reiterated there are a lot of non-conforming houses in those areas.

Council Member Finley expressed her biggest concern with reducing the

minimum square footage is the type of homes that would be built. She pointed out in the rural districts, when looking at 20 acres or more, a 3,000 square foot home is not a large home. Ms. Moeller restated the question and asked from a zoning standpoint, what is the minimum expectation you have; are you really going to tell someone they have to build a 3,000 square foot home knowing they could still do so even if the minimum square footage is lowered. Council Member Finley asked if that is happening now. Ms. Moeller confirmed that yes, you must build a house that has no less than 3,000 square feet of livable space in an RE district. Council Member Finley mentioned she thought the whole issue is not to focus on homes in the rural areas because they already exist and are mostly 3,000 square feet and above. Ms. Moeller stated the other part of this is concern for problems with fair housing's federal requirements. She commented with a 3,000 square foot minimum size requirement, you're basically telling people that if you don't build a quarter million-dollar house, you aren't allowed to live in a rural district.

Council Member Finley asked about homes that are already built. Ms. Moeller reiterated this doesn't impact existing homes, this would mean someone can build whatever size home they want in such districts, so long as it meets the minimum square footage, which she recommends changing from 3,000 square feet to 1,200 square feet. Council Member Finley mentioned Moss Creek, to which Ms. Moeller said she believes is in a PUD with its own set of rules. Deputy City Manager Kellum reminded Council these are only suggestions.

Mayor Page suggested taking an average of some of the existing requirements, which would be approximately 2,000 square feet. Ms. Moeller stated the City will need to be prepared to address a lot of variances because a lot of new construction are homes that are 1,700 square foot, and further, a higher minimum says you don't want that in Trotwood.

Council Member Pearson asked if this is an issue for the City. Deputy City Manager Kellum confirmed it is an issue and it discourages development today, although not historically, and costs have soared since COVID and more recently, due to tariffs. She went on to explain the starting number she is seeing is 1,400, but she has seen some minimums of 1,200, which is why she reminded Council they do not have to adopt all of what Ms. Moeller is proposing, but the status quo is going to discourage development because it is cost prohibitive. She commented if Council wants to spur development, they will have to look at lowering some of these thresholds so developers are even interested in coming to Trotwood.

Ms. Moeller clarified it is not just about encouraging development, it's allowing for affordable development so people can own a home. She said big developments are not going to come to the City's rural areas because of the cost to subdivide the land and provide infrastructure.

Mayor Page expressed concern with the term "affordable housing." Ms. Moeller stated "affordability" is what used to be called "workforce housing;" housing that is affordable for those with basic skilled jobs; middle class.

Director Hauck gave as an example of affordable housing, Hunter's Path in Clayton on Westbrook Road. He shared their most basic model is a three

bedroom, two bath, 1,200 square foot home, priced at \$245,000.

Ms. Moeller shared part of this is not about encouraging development in the rural areas, but rather the areas with infrastructure for housing and subdivisions where workers, such as those who will be working at the new companies in Trotwood, could live.

Council Member Finley commented there are already great homes in Trotwood, and most of them are ranch style, older homes. She stated her home is around 3,000 square feet and it is affordable, and it is brick. She believes there is still an inventory of nice homes that will attract those wanting to move into this community. She went on to say as far as new construction, she is hoping to see more upscale housing for those who, like herself, would like to get into a gated retirement or senior community; there are no products like that in Trotwood. Ms. Moeller stated patio homes in a gated community or senior housing are smaller than what the City requires. Council Member Finley suggested she has found some that are not. She stated she has a problem with that reduction and does not believe it is the direction the City should go based on their vision. Ms. Moeller asked about the higher density districts like RSF-H in Drexel where the current requirement is 1,200 square feet, but the existing pattern is predominantly 800 square feet. Council Member Finley commented she could see a reduction in that area. Ms. Moeller then suggested they look at reducing the higher density areas, and look at keeping the lower density areas somewhat higher. Council Member Finley stated that would be a Council decision, but she believes it is a good suggestion.

Council Member Pearson shared he spoke with the contractor in the Twin Creek area, who stated his biggest cost is labor. Ms. Moeller explained there is so much that goes into the cost of housing i.e. land, insurance, materials, labor, etc., which is why older homes tend to be more affordable than new construction. She commented there is only so much the City can control from the standpoint of affordability; it's a balance. Mayor Page asked if the RSF-H district, which is recommended to be reduced from 1,200 to 750 square feet, is Townview. Ms. Moeller confirmed that to be correct, and explained she spot-checked those homes and the majority of them are 750-800. Mayor Page suggested changing the recommended minimum from 750 to 800 square feet. Mayor Page then asked about the R-TF district, and the per unit notation. Ms. Moeller explained that these are units, like a condo, where the building would look bigger, but the individual units would be 750 square feet per unit, or 1,500 per building. Mayor Page is fine with changing these smaller districts, but she is unsure about changes to the larger home requirements. Ms. Moeller stated she highly recommends reducing the 3,000 square foot minimum requirement, which is an extremely large home. She said if someone comes to ask for a variance to build a 2,500 square foot home, are they really going to tell them no, yet they can't tell them yes because there's not a hardship per se.

Vice Mayor Brown clarified the numbers in the chart are the minimum square footage requirements. Ms. Moeller confirmed that to be correct. Vice Mayor Brown then pointed out that someone could still build a larger home. Ms. Moeller stated someone could build as big of a home as their lot setbacks would allow. Vice Mayor Brown confirmed the minimums are so developers know the least amount of livable space required.

Council Member Finley stated if developers only have to build 1,200 square

foot homes, they will only build those size home. Ms. Moeller explained most of the communities in Dayton don't have any minimums, or their minimums are much smaller than Trotwood's. She shared it is her understanding the main reason this is done is to prevent mobile homes, not so much patio homes versus two-story homes. She added a lot of it comes down to the market.

Ms. Moeller posed another question to Council about requiring new builds to have a two-car attached garage, which is an unusual requirement in most of Ohio. She believes the market should dictate such requirements, and developers should be able to do what the market demands. She added she hasn't seen developers build homes without a two-car attached garage except on older, smaller lots where it isn't feasible to do.

Ms. Moeller went back to Council Member Finley's concern and stated that developers are going to build 1,200 square foot homes only if they know they can sell those homes because they don't want to keep the inventory. Council Member Finley discussed Oakview Estates where Council Member Kelley lives. She stated she understands we are looking to build in that area and she does not want to lower the values of the existing homes by building homes that are smaller than what's already there. Council Member Finley suggested those homes have one-car garages; however, several corrected her saying the houses have two-car garages. Council Member Finley pointed out those homes are brick. Council Member Kelley shared his experience with building his home and how he understands the issues being discussed, which is why he doesn't have many questions.

Vice Mayor Brown asked Director Hauck what the current square footage is for homes in Hunter's Path in Clayton. Director Hauck shared the square footage seems to vary between 1,300 and 1,700 square feet. She then asked what is the square footage of the Twin Creek homes. Deputy City Manager Kellum stated those homes are 1,600 square feet.

Council Member Finley suggested that such decisions are also predicated on the developer's return on investment, and they look at other aspects such as school districts. She then stated in regards to Moss Creek, she would have preferred a different type of new housing development because of the values of the existing homes; she believes the new development has negatively impacted those homes.

Deputy City Manager Kellum stated new development will spur higher property values. Council Member Finley disagreed, and stated she has spoken with the owner of a \$1 million home in Moss Creek. Deputy City Manager Kellum clarified that amount was their replacement cost, which was post COVID, and why the costs were higher; she described it as an anomaly and stated the new development has helped the other homes. She went on to say for other housing developments, the way to get more appreciation is with new development, and the longer the City goes without development, things will remain stagnant.

Council Member Finley shared others have called her personally because their home values have gone down and that is what she doesn't want to see at Oakview Estates. She believes that by reducing the minimum square footage to 1,200, the values of those homes will go down. Council Member Finley asked if this matter could be tabled. Ms. Moeller advised her plan is to begin

drafting language; however, they will seek more public input and include a comment on their draft to revisit this topic.

Mayor Page mentioned the last few lines of the chart suggesting reductions to the square footage requirements for multi-family housing and stated she does not want to reduce those requirements. Ms. Moeller acknowledged her statement.

Ms. Moeller presented another part to Theme 3, restructuring districts and their use regulations. She explained they plan to take a comprehensive look at the current use table and add in more housing options with special criteria, or form-based options. She then asked for thoughts on data centers and industrial activities in agricultural districts, with data centers being a possibility because of the proximity to high pressure gas, water, and electric.

Council Member Finley commented it seems like there is a lot of interest in the aquifers. She stated data centers could bring in a lot of jobs, but only as long as there would be no impact on the City's water supply. Ms. Moeller suggested part of the expressed interest is not needing the aquifer water. Director Hauck confirmed certain data centers don't use much water. Ms. Moeller believes the ones that have approached Trotwood is more because of access to piped water and gas, not aquifers.

Mayor Page clarified she is talking about infrastructure that is already in place. Ms. Moeller confirmed that to be correct. She went on to explain that Trotwood is in a unique position because it is not too far from high-pressure gas and high capacity electric, as well as significant water sources, which are all prime needs of data centers. She stated they are asking now about any preliminary concerns when looking at allowable uses. Ms. Moeller clarified they do not need an answer at this time, she is simply asking if there are any immediate concerns to be considered. Mayor Page expressed she is good with the discussion.

Moving on, Ms. Moeller shared they plan to revise the accessory use regulations, not from a standpoint of big policy changes, just making it easier to understand what is allowed where. She mentioned one item that came out of the comprehensive land use plan is accessory dwelling units. She stated a lot of regulations can be put into place so they are not everywhere, and reminded Council they are costly to put in. She explained from a common-sense standpoint, most people who are using these are doing so for family members. She then reiterated the Zoning Code cannot say it is only for family, but there are other restrictions that can be put into place to establish limits. She gave one example of requiring the owner to live on site in one of the dwellings. Mayor Page suggested being open, but having some limitations. Council Members agreed verbally and non-verbally. Ms. Moeller suggested some limitations might relate to lot size and parking. Mayor Page reiterated they do not want a concentration.

Ms. Moeller then presented Theme 4. She explained they are going to be cleaning up parking and sign regulations, making them more modern to work better for the City. She also mentioned affordability and cost issues in relation to requirements that single-family homes be 50% brick, stone, or other natural material on each façade, which she said is the most stringent she has seen across the region, and most of the state. She explained there are communities

that require 50% brick or natural material on the front, the area to be seen from the street. Ms. Moeller said they would also be adding design standards for multi-family; they would be broadening the architectural standards for all residential, but for single-family, they plan to focus on the front façade by expanding approved materials. She added they would also allow for hardy plank or other cementitious fiber materials, and consider requiring a certain grade of vinyl siding.

Director Hauck shared that in 2025, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved approximately 20 variances regarding materials to be used to build homes, and the new homes in Twin Creek are all proposed to be 50% hardy plank on the front, and he believes a higher-grade vinyl on the other three sides.

Council Member Finley asked what is the price point for these new homes. Council Member Pearson and Vice Mayor Brown confirmed the price point to be around \$280,000. Council Member Finley asked how many new homes are being built in Twin Creek. Vice Mayor Brown said they are building 18 new homes. Council Member Finley asked how many have sold. Director Hauck believes a couple may already be sold, but he cannot verify that number.

Deputy City Manager Kellum mentioned two houses were built on Skinner (Olde Town) last year; both are 1,440 square feet. She stated one sold for \$260,000 and the other sold for \$277,000, and neither one is brick.

Ms. Moeller commented they just want to modernize and clean up the language on the rest of the standards; they are not looking to make huge changes. She went on to say her approach to parking is to keep it simple; they would keep the requirements for residential parking spaces, but remove the requirements for non-residential uses and require the applicant to provide additional details that when using cross-referenced resources, would dictate how many parking spaces are required. She shared this is another way to reduce variance applications.

The final points Ms. Moeller presented were related to infill compatibility standards specific to the RSF-H districts. She explained how they will look at setbacks and buildings being compatible with the established character of neighborhoods. She mentioned green infrastructure may also be an option. She then talked about building with flexibility and how landscape in Olde Town might need to look different than landscape on Salem Avenue; two very different characteristics, two different densities. She explained how building with some flexibility is necessary because there is no one-size-fits-all in development.

Council Member Finley asked about residential parking requirements and mentioned an issue with RVs and trailers. Director Hauck shared that at City Manager's request, he did some research on what other communities are doing and provided a recommendation based on that data; he expects Council will hear from the City Manager or Deputy City Manager very soon.

Mayor Page asked for any other questions on this packet. No further questions or comments were presented. Deputy City Manager Kellum added for staff to achieve the goal of bringing more single-family housing to the City, Council will need to consider some changes because developers are not going to come, and all of them don't ask for a variance, they just see the Code and determine it is too high and too steep, so they move on. She encouraged

**Council Members to look at other developments and remember that demographics are changing, different generations desire different standards; she encouraged them to consider some compromises.**

**VI. Adjourn**

**Mayor Page thanked Ms. Moeller for her presentation, ensured all minds were clear, and adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.**