



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final City Plan Commission

*Mayor John T. Dickert, Alderman Gregory Holding
Atty. Jud Wyant, Atty. Elaine Sutton Ekes
Vincent Esqueda, Alderman Eric Marcus, Tony Veranth*

Wednesday, August 25, 2010

4:15 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

Mayor Dickert called the meeting to order at 4:20 p.m.

PRESENT: 5 - John Dickert, Vincent Esqueda, Gregory Holding, Eric Marcus and Tony Veranth

EXCUSED: 2 - Elaine Sutton Ekes and Jud Wyant

Others present: Matthew Sadowski, Principal Planner
Jill Johanneck, Associate Planner
Rick Heller, Chief Building Inspector
Rachana Kothari, Planning Intern
Jean Wolfgang, Associate Planner
Joe Heck, Assistant Director of City Development
Brian O'Connell, Director of City Development
Alderman Jeff Coe

Approval of Minutes for the August 6, 2010 Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Holding, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2010 meeting. The motion **PASSED** by a Voice Vote.

Approval of Minutes for the August 11, 2010 Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Holding, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2010 meeting. The motion **PASSED** by a Voice Vote.

10-5413

Subject: (Direct Referral) Review of Design Guidelines for Single Family Infill Housing in Racine.

Attachments: [Infill Design Standards \(2\)](#)

Director O'Connell introduced Rachana Kothari, City Development Planning Intern, as the drafter and individual working on the guidelines. He advised the guidelines would become part of development agreements for infill housing contracts.

A copy of the guidelines was attached to the agenda and a handout was provided with Alderman Marcus' suggestions for modifications to the guidelines. Alderman Holding noted he provided verbal comments to Principal Planner Sadowski.

Director O'Connell advised Staff is requesting deferral for one more Plan Commission cycle to work on incorporating some of the suggestions into the regulations. Discussion on the guidelines and proposed modifications ensued.

Ms. Kothari advised of the rationale behind creation of the guidelines. Mayor Dickert cautioned the Commission against putting any publication, etc. as part of the guidelines for legal purposes. He noted our job is to provide broad guidelines while not limiting possibilities.

Alderman Marcus advised he felt there would be no legal issues with referencing books in the guidelines. He also noted he felt some wording in the guidelines was conflicting.

Alderman Holding moved to defer to allow creation of a new draft. Seconded by Alderman Marcus.

Discussion after the motion: Alderman Coe asked why the guidelines only regulate properties owned/financed by the City, and would like standards applied City-wide. Director O'Connell advised all communities are required to comply with City codes; however, not all communities regulate design standards. Associate Planner Wolfgang noted that in Green Bay, WI, there were some regulations in place for design guidelines.

Alderman Marcus commented on workmanship versus design quality, and potential concerns with those who may be reluctant to come to the city for guidelines or changes.

Chief Building Inspector Rick Heller responded to Alderman Holding's question of how Racine's construction is governed. He advised that standards are set by the Uniform Building Code, and that construction can go beyond, but not below, the standards. Homes that do not meet Code are required to go before the Board of Zoning and Building appeals for variances. Mr. Heller advised the Mayor on the process of a house review based on zoning and building codes.

Alderman Holding noted he is opposed to requiring all homebuilders to have every house they build reviewed for design review.

A motion was made by Alderman Holding, seconded by Alderman Marcus, to defer this item. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

10-5432

Subject: Communication from the Alderman of the 1st District requiring a 60-day moratorium on all in-fill construction in the City of Racine to review the policies and procedures involved in selecting property developers and contractors including the role of the City of Racine in a general contractor or similar role to begin immediately upon approval by the Common Council.

Director O'Connell advised this is a referral from Council requesting the above. He explained this item concerns the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

Assistant Director of City Development, Joseph Heck, and Associate Planner Jean Wolfgang provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining and providing verbal detail on numerous items, including the timeline of the NSP program dating back to July 2008 to present - including items such as dollar amount allocation, application approval, execution, of the grant agreement, the search for homes meeting the criteria,

contractor notification, establishment of redevelopment agreements, variations between NHS and the City in marketing, assessments, appraisals, loans, and state deadlines.

Alderman Marcus questioned information concerning construction and sales costs, and NHS's role in the process of pricing appraisals. Discussion with Director O'Connell ensued. Mayor Dickert also commented on the financials involved with these homes.

Alderman Holding moved to receive and file. Seconded by Commissioner Esqueda.

Alderman Marcus noted he prefers to defer versus receive and file until the Committee of the Whole has held its hearing on the item.

Director O'Connell advised the Mayor he felt the City is not at risk of losing the funding and if this item is deferred, it continues on unresolved. As the City has already entered into contracts, the City is required to honor them.

A motion was made by Alderman Marcus, seconded by Commissioner Esqueda, that to defer this item. The motion PASSED by 3-1 Vote with Alderman Holding voting no.

(Note: Commissioner Veranth left the meeting at 5:45 p.m.)

10-5435

Subject: Communication from the Alderman of the 1st District requiring a 60-day moratorium on the transfer of property by the City of Racine and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Racine to Habitat for Humanity to review the policies and procedures of such transfers to begin immediately upon approval by the Common Council.

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 8-25-10:
Receive and file.

Recommendation of the Redevelopment Authority on 9-3-10:
Receive and file.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Director O'Connell provided an overview of the item and recent transfer of property to Habitat for Humanity. He advised the Staff recommendation is to receive and file, as well as refer this item to the Redevelopment Authority.

Alderman Holding moved to receive and file. Seconded by Commissioner Esqueda.

Discussion: Alderman Holding noted there are procedures in place for these transfers and does not see the need for a moratorium.

Alderman Coe provided his reasoning behind this request.

Director O'Connell explained the distinction between standard operating procedures versus how the NSP program is required to work regarding property transfers/sale of City-owned properties. The statutory requirements are described in the Staff Recommendation.

Alderman Marcus explained his concern with the process.

A motion was made by Alderman Holding, seconded by Commissioner Esqueda, that this item be received and filed. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote. Alderman Marcus recused himself.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Dickert adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.