

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
OCTOBER 8, 2009
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES**

PRESENT: R. Hart; B. Fiala; G. Merhar; C. Cox; B. Irvine, Chairman
ABSENT: No One
OTHERS: J. Sayles, City Engr.; J. Lipscomb, Econ. Dev. Mgr.; C. Woodin, Ward 1 Councilman; J. Ranally, Ward 3 Councilman; R. Carr, Ward 4 Councilman; J. Black, Councilman-At-Large; J. Smally, Design Review Board Chairman; J. Perkovich, Design Review Board; G. Patt, Sign Review Board and Heart of Willoughby; Betty A. Nardelli, Secretary

Chairman Robert Irvine called the special meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

DOWNTOWN RANKING

**Inventory
Of D/T structures**

Janice Lipscomb represented this discussion of the outcome of the Ranking Committee's inventory of downtown structures. The committee consisted of downtown business owners, downtown property owners, Design Review Board members, Robert Fiala, Abbey of Bob Dalton, Judy Johnson, Greg Patt of the Heart of Willoughby, Cathy Webber, Deanna Rowe owner of the Homestead House Bed and Breakfast and Peter Wells.

Janice presented colored renderings of the aerial view of buildings on Elm St., Erie St., Euclid Ave., Clark Ave., Glenn Ave., Public Sq., Second St., Third St., Vine St. and W. Spaulding St.

Janice said that during the Ranking Committee's discussions, they looked at the different structures to determine four categories to group the buildings into and narrow it down to three categories which are: (1) **Preserve** in original state which is represented by **light green** on the aerial view; (2) Preserve with design **flexibility** which is represented by **purple** on the aerial view and (3) does **not** need **preservation** represented by **light blue** on the aerial view.

Janice presented a book prepared by Abbey. The book consists of photographs of the buildings taken from the aerial map with the address, ranking, location and comments of each building. The narrative of each photograph was taken from the 1995 inventory for downtown before they were put on the National Register.

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Janice said that if you look at the buildings represented by the light blue color which doesn't need preservation, it shows a block of new development for downtown. The new development doesn't have to be residential but it could be.

Janice said that what the committee didn't look at was vacant property and the parking lots. If vacant which are mostly City owned, then it is definitely a development area. Bob Fiala said that the properties that are small, would have to be consolidated. The post office is the largest property.

After Planning Commission gives their input, Janice said a text change will have to be done to the Downtown district to allow residential development. Janice said that these aerial maps and this book of buildings should be referenced in the zoning code. Bob Fiala said that the key is to craft zoning and to get the land owners to move forward.

Janice stated that the "Master Plan" calls for two levels of form and design around downtown. Rather than to do that, Janice said that they just want to send a letter to the Historical District and to the Design Review Board to control the level of design in and around the area. They don't care to craft zoning for three different levels for the downtown. Janice suggested to let it be a guide line like the "Master Plan" is rather than to put into code. The rationale of the "Historic Area" is to maintain the character of downtown. The buildings of downtown don't have to be mimicked but the new buildings would have to blend with the character of downtown.

Janice said that what she would like if everyone agrees on what the Ranking Committee has done. She wants a consensus that everyone is in agreement. She wants to know if everyone agrees with the choice of blue buildings or any of the other buildings, if the buildings being preserved shouldn't be preserved. If not, then we need to talk about the kind of text change that needs to be put into the downtown code.

Janice said that we also need to come up with a specific zoning code for the "Lake Front" area. Janice said that she asked Jason Boyd of the Lake County Planning Commission to help with that. She gave Mr. Boyd a \$3,500.00 proposal. If that is okay with everyone then they will go forward on that. This will create a new district for the "Lake Front" area.

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Janice said that most of the buildings are in the Downtown Historic district and nothing in that district gets torn down.

Chairman Irvine asked if anyone here this evening doesn't think this should become part of the Code or just reside in the Design Guidelines or "Master Plan". Janice responded that this is not in the Design Guide lines. So instead of in the Code, Chairman Irvine said it is in the "Master Plan". Janice stated that the Code takes away some of the flexibility because if it is in the Code then it is what it is and you have to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Janice requested that everyone digest this discussion then we'll meet with Mike Lucas to get some guidelines for definitions and where this should be and then return here to discuss again.

Jerry Ranally wanted to know if anyone talked to any of the property owners who own the blue buildings. Janice said that she talked with Tony Grandini who owns a building on Second St. She had no conversation with any other property owners.

In closing, Janice said she will meet with Jason Boyd.

There being no further business the special meeting closed at 7:10 p.m.

Robert Irvine, Chairman

Betty A. Nardelli, Secretary