

Planning & Development Committee
Wednesday, August 3, 2016 – 5:30 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Committee Room – City Hall
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Paul Lundberg; Vice Chair, Councilor Cox; Councilor Valerie Gilman

Absent: None.

Also Present: Councilor Nolan; Dan Smith

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. *CC2016-029 (Gilman/Ciolino) Request that P&D & Planning Board review & recommend to City Council an amendment to the GZO Sec. VI “Definitions” “Open Space” to include: “natural resources of wetlands, forest and agricultural land as open space;” and amend GZO Sec. VI “Definitions” by adding a definition entitled, “Compost Facility /Composting Operations” that addresses permitting, siting, design and operations requirements*

Councilor Gilman updated the Committee on the progress of her Council Order by recounting the following: The approach working through the Zoning Ordinance to create a definition within it for Open Space is not necessarily appropriate, and that there is work to be done through the Code of Ordinances instead c. 15 Parks & Recreation. That whole section needs to be revisited to include “Open Space,” according to city staff. The Planning Board opened their public hearing on July 21 and was continued to August 4. The recommendation from the Planning Board will be available for the P&D Committee’s next meeting.

This matter is continued to August 17, 2016.

2. *City Council vote of June 23, 2015 regarding renewal of Rogers Street Parking Lot at #65 Rogers Street*

Councilor Lundberg acknowledged the necessity to renew the Council’s vote in order for #65 Rogers Street to remain a parking lot at the parcel known as I4-C2 and reviewed the following: Because the city had to amend the Code of Ordinances in order to designate 65 Rogers Street as a parking lot, and because of the issues regarding that parcel’s development and the difficulties associated with it, the Council voted to have a five-year limit for use of the property as a parking lot. Last year when the Council renewed its option to keep 65 Rogers Street for another year as a city parking lot, they asked for an action plan on where the Administration stood on a new RFP. Then CAO, Jim Destino, said the Administration was working on the plan and that was the last the Council heard on the matter.

Speaking to Dan Smith, CAO, and now the new Community Development Director, **Councilor Lundberg** acknowledged Mr. Smith’s straddling both jobs until a new CAO is found, but asked that Community Development give this matter the attention it deserves working with the Economic Development Director, Sal DiStefano. He said there needs to be a plan other than using the property as a parking lot and a summer outdoor movie theater.

Councilor Cox said DEP gave the city 10 years to utilize 65 Rogers Street as a parking lot, but that the City Council determined five years was the limit with annual renewals in order to ensure the property was pushed into development. She expressed concern that the Economic Development Director has been in that position for over a year from when the previous Council request for a plan on the property was submitted, and yet there is still no response to the Council. She said she was aware there have been meetings with interested parties, but nothing seemed to have brought the city to the point of issuing an RFP. She pointed out that there is a one-year renewal remaining on the five year limit, and the Council would like to see some action items on this city parcel.

Mr. Smith said he has seen some conceptual reports, usage and drawings but hasn’t seen any viable business plan or funding to support any concepts for the property. He said he will look into the matter. **Councilor Cox** asked for a response to the Committee’s request in writing in 30 days to which **Mr. Smith** said he will give the Council a status report within that timeframe.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Gilman, the Planning & Development Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council renew an amendment to GCO Sec. 22-288 “Off Street Parking Areas” by ADDING Rogers Street Parking Lot at #65 Rogers Street and a description of the lot as 74 parking spaces and 4 handicapped parking spaces for a total of 78 parking spaces as shown on a plan submitted by the Department of Public Works for 65 Rogers

Street Parking Lot dated 7/29/13 to expire one year from 08/09/16 and to be followed by one further one-year renewal subject to a City Council review.

This matter will come forward out of the P&D Committee Report at the August 9 City Council meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgensson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: None.