

Athens City Planning Commission
Minutes of Public Hearing & Regular Meeting
October 1, 2020, 12:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission was held virtually on October 1, 2020.

Attendees: Rob Delach

1. **Call to Order**

RJ Sumney called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 12:04 p.m. Quorum was established.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

RJ Sumney, Chair	Present
Christy Zempter	Present
Nancy Bain, Vice Chair	Present
Steve Patterson, Mayor	Present
Tom Pyle, Interim Service-Safety Director	Present

STAFF:

Paul Logue, City Planner	Present
David Riggs, Code Enforcement Director	Present

2. **Disposition of Minutes**

RJ Sumney moved to accept the September 17, 2020 minutes. Tom Pyle seconded. All present voted aye. Motion passed 5:0.

4. **Cases**

None

5. **Communications**

2040 Comprehensive Plan – Paul Logue

Shared his PowerPoint presentation with group and proceeded to review the slides where he left off at the last meeting. The slides that were reviewed are attached for reference. Additional notes for each slide included below:

West Side (Camp Wool)

- Commercial uses already exist in the Washington and Shafer area, so rezoning to B2D makes sense
- To encourage another business at the old Frank's Bait Shop location, rezone to B1
- Rezone parcels near innovation center to R3 to encourage more housing opportunities

- Retain West Elementary as an anchor on the west side

Athens Far East Side (Sells Place)

- Issues from residents center around traffic, safety
- Delineate the neighborhood from E. State Street by signage, gateways
- Add sidewalks, curbs, gutters
- Farmer's Market possible relocation to the Community Center brings traffic concerns

Near East Side (Sunnyside)

- Old commercial building at the corner of Morris and Shannon – consider rezoning the area to bring in another business

South Side (Mechanicsburg)

- Resident concerns revolve around traffic and public transit
- Rezoning of Oakmont Ph. 4 so that a developer can afford the required connector road to Pomeroy

North Side (North Hill)

- Residents concerned about traffic safety, sidewalks, lighting
- City already implementing traffic calming effort

Off Campus Student Housing (Campus Hill and Campus Crossing)

- Safety and lighting concerns
- Town/Gown disconnect, improve communication

Stimson Avenue Corridor

- Plans in process
- Rezoning to have a more urban city feel

West Union Street Corridor

- Rezone to achieve a more urban city feel
- Currently there are steps connecting Depot St. to W. Washington
- Fairgrounds relocation is not a city decision. Relocation would open up potential for development.
- Whites Mill: safety concerns about the dam
- Hocking River: better outdoor recreational opportunities

East State Street Corridor

- This corridor is fully developed pretty much, zoning in place
- Moratorium on extension east because of flood plain issues, high cost to provide water and sewer infrastructure
- Rezone the south side to B3 – what is there is already permitted in a B3

Richland Avenue Corridor

- Connect the preserves and Camp Rotan through trails
- 2" waterline on Dairy Lane. Portion of Dairy Lane is serviced by LeAx

Columbus Road Corridor

- Theater Lane infrastructure issues are related to the sewer lift station

Uptown Area

- Maintain the historic ambiance of the uptown area
- Parklets very successful at Brennan's
- Studies have been conducted already on the Court Street reversion to two-way. Public transit, bicycle travel more efficient.
- Consider two-way on the small portion of Union that is one-way

Questions regarding the Comprehensive Plan will be taken at the next meeting.

6. Report from City Planner and Director of Code Enforcement

Paul Logue

- Age Friendly Athens effort is ongoing.
- Census online submission deadline is October 5th. Large campaign is underway to encourage student submissions.

David Riggs

- No Report

7. Opportunity for Citizens to Speak

No comments

8. Announcements & Other Business

Steve Patterson

- Halloween block party not occurring. No AUBA trick or treat. Neighborhood trick or treat will take place October 31st from 5:30 to 6:30. Guidelines are on the website.
- Thank you to Paul Logue for his presentation and work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The next meeting will be October 15, 2020.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

RJ Sumney, Planning Commission

Patricia Witmer, City of Athens

West Side (Camp Wool)

- Change the zoning of the Washington and Shafer area from B-1 to B2D
- Rezone the former Frank's Bait Shop location at Second and Central to B1
- Rezone the parcels near the innovation center to R3
- Build a connector road from University Estates to either SR 682 or Armitage Road
- Improve Central and Second intersection
- Keep the site at West Elementary in use in the public interest, and support its thoughtful repurposing.
- Support ARTS/West and its importance as a community arts center by increasing city programming in the space.
- Add pocket park on a vacant parcel in neighborhood
- Improve street lighting issue (community walks/possible pole ownership)
- Address sidewalks issues
- Continue general code enforcement issues

Athens Far East Side (Sells Place)

- Improve crossing at East State with Eden/Charles
- Improve walkability/traffic calming throughout the neighborhood
- Improve code enforcement
- Add amenities at Sells Park
- Manage traffic concerns with possible Farmer's Market relocation

Near East Side (Sunnyside)

- Promote tree canopy throughout the area
- Formalize parking area and signage at end of Morris for better access to recreational fields
- Pilot traffic calming projects
- Change zoning along Stimson
- Improve pedestrian experience along Stimson

South Side (Mechanicsburg)

- Stretch public transit out– Mulligan, Oakmont, Canterbury
- Increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists (Complete Streets policy/traffic calming)
- Improve Camp Rotan (trails, playground, garden/parking)
- ODOT study of Blackburn/US 50 needed
- Rezone Warren Rd to R-3
- Rezone large tracts between Blackburn Road and Richland Avenue to R3
- Rezone Oakmont Phase 4 to permit multi unit, small lot, and townhome styles using universal design standards.
- Support Ridges Tier 2 area development

North Side (North Hill)

- Highland Park-- Realign the parking and street configuration to reduce speeds of vehicles
- Construct a new pavilion with ADA accessible-grade at Highland Park
- Implement a city wide complete streets policy
- Improve signage and lighting along stairs that connect the neighborhood
- Implement traffic calming especially along Columbia, Madison, and Joneswood

Off Campus Student Housing (Campus Hill and Campus Crossing)

- Explore a comprehensive snow/ice removal by the city, (as described previously in this plan)
- Adopt a Complete Streets policy to address sidewalk maintenance and expansion.
- OU create a student housing liason
- Review code language regarding conditional use permits for Greek houses and annexes
- Increase town/gown communications and opportunities to connect

Stimson Avenue Corridor

- Change in zoning for the south side of Stimson from Campbell to the roundabout to a B2D or similar designation
- Change Campbell Street zoning from B-3 to M (Oil station/ATCO/AmVets/Jackie O's)
- Improve accessibility along Stimson with improved pedestrian pathways
- Improve Carpenter/Stimson/State Street intersection
- Rezone Carpenter/Stimson/State Street intersection to B-2d type to encourage commercial re-development

West Union Street Corridor

- High Street to Shafer stretch should be rezoned to a B2D designation
- Explore connecting Depot Street to West Washington Street
- relocation of The Fairground and Township garage
- Repurpose former Habitat house for city outdoor recreation HQ
- roundabout and realignment of the traffic interchange at Union/682
- Keep SR 56 shoulders wide, clean, and paved
- Annex Number Fest site and zone for commercial or mixed use

East State Street Corridor

- Moratorium on extension of city services east beyond Holzer Clinic
- Rezone south side of East State Street from Manufacturing to B3.
- Improve pedestrian crossings to neighborhood
- Support Farmer's Market relocation to Community Center

Richland Avenue Corridor

- Connect Camp Rotan, the Dowler Preserve, and the Gawande Preserve
- minor street improvements in this corridor to address pedestrian needs (street crossings, curb cuts)
- improving the signage for the bike/pedestrian underpass
- Resolve water line issues along Dairy Lane
- Add sidewalks/shared use path along Dairy Lane

Columbus Road Corridor

- Add streetscape improvements
- Develop park and go, sheltered bus stop, and small park, or other public amenities at 83 Columbus
- Resolve infrastructure issues on Theater Lane.
- Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) with the township at the end of Columbus Road
- Avoid any annexation beyond the US 33 overpass

Uptown Area

- Maintenance of all currently existing brick streets
- Parklets should be utilized to encourage more active use of the street
- Two-way reversion of Court Street and all one-way streets Uptown
- Rezone the single-family rental parcels on Carpenter to permit townhouse style development
- wayfinding and signage improvements that better supports the needs of people with autism spectrum disorder and those with vision impairments (city wide).
- city council adopt historic preservation design standards for uptown Athens