City of Dublin

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Memo

To: Members of Dublin City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission

From: Marsha I. Grigsby, City Manager

Date: October 26, 2012

Initiated By: Anne C. Clarke

Re: Draft Minutes of Joint Meeting of August 15, 2012

Summary

I wanted you to know that I experienced problems with the laptop used to take notes at this meeting that resulted in losing much of the data. Therefore, you will note that the minutes are not detailed. As you know, we also did not have any recording equipment available at the meeting location.

With the Monday meeting scheduled in the Council Chambers, we will have recording equipment available and a reliable network as well, so I don't expect any problems.

Thanks!

COUNCIL AND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
JOINT MEETING
Wednesday, August 15, 2012
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Minutes of Meeting

Vice Mayor Salay welcomed all to the meeting and called the meeting to order.
Council Members present: Mayor Lecklider, Vice Mayor Salay, Mrs. Boring, Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher, Mr. Gerber, and Mr. Reiner. Mr. Keenan was absent due to illness.
Planning & Zoning Commissioners present: Ms. Amorose Groomes, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Budde, Mr. Fishman, Mr. Hardt, Ms. Newell. Ms. Kramb was absent due to a scheduling conflict.
Staff present: Ms. Grigsby, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Readler, Mr. Foegler, Mr. Langworthy.

Vice Mayor Salay noted that during the Bridge Street Corridor workshops, Council and Planning & Zoning Commission had several opportunities for interaction and dialogue. She suggested that each person briefly summarize why they serve on Council or PZC, comment about their vision for the Bridge Street District, any challenges that exist in achieving that vision, and any future topics for discussion by the group.
(Each attendee made brief comments regarding these matters.)

Signage for Bridge Street District
Ms. Amorose Groomes provided some background on this, noting that the Commission has had recent discussions about what constitutes high quality signage in conjunction with some Administrative Review Team (ART) approved signage for the District. Staff prepared a memo for tonight's meeting with a summary of the signs in the Bridge Street District recently approved and/or recommended for approval by ARB, PZC, and the ART.
Mr. Langworthy also distributed a copy of samples of various signs compiled by Mr. Taylor for the group's review and feedback.

Discussion followed about what constitutes quality signs and is consistent with the vision for the Bridge Street District.

Mr. Reiner stated that he likes the examples of signs provided by the Commission. He envisions the District having sandwich board signs like those seen in Bexley. They would all incorporate an artistic element.

There was discussion regarding the recent ART approval of the Koko Fit Club sign in the Shoppes at River Ridge. The group asked for information about the basis for the ART approval of this sign.

Mr. Langworthy stated that at the time the Bridge Street Code was written, it included a statement regarding "high quality." Everyone acknowledged that at some point, this term would need to be better defined. In the interest of furthering the process of defining "high quality," staff has provided a summary of the range of signs approved by the ART to date.

Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher asked for clarification of the basis for ART's approval of the Koko Fitness Club sign, given the materials used for the sign.
Mr. Langworthy responded that he recalls the discussion focused on color rather than any three-dimensional aspect of the sign.

Vice Mayor Salay asked if the Bridge Street Code calls for three-dimensional signs.
Mr. Langworthy responded that it does not.
Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher stated that the group is really struggling to understand why the Koko Fitness sign was approved by the ART.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that staff brought the Koko Fitness sign to the Commission following ART's approval for feedback of whether the Commission felt this was in line with their expectations for signage in the District. However, the Commission felt that it was far from meeting their expectations.

Mrs. Boring reiterated that the group is trying to understand the thought process that led to the ART's approval of this sign.
Mr. Langworthy responded that he is not certain, as he is just one member of the team.

Ms. Newell pointed out that there is not a definition for "high quality" in the Code, but it seems that the City desires something highly creative and that reflects the use of that building, and is also of high quality. The question for staff is how the ART can deny approval of a sign brought to them that meets all of these criteria.

Mr. Langworthy stated that the challenge is in learning where that line is to be established by the ART.

Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher stated that Ms. Newell has captured what needs to be articulated in the Code. The Code needs to be more prescriptive than simply stating "high quality." She believes staff should be given direction to amend the Code to make that change – assuming there is consensus of the group.

Ms. Amorose Groomes asked staff if they will make an attempt to draft an update to the Code, emphasizing not only high quality signs, not only creative signs, but signage that will culminate in an interweaving with the other elements of the District.

Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher stated that she does not understand why the sign applications cannot be brought to PZC to obtain input, versus everyone working in "silos." She further suggested that all the groups (Council, PZC, Administrative Review Team) come together to review concept presentations by developers.

Vice Mayor Salay stated that is an interesting suggestion, and one that has not been considered previously. However, she acknowledged it may not be desirable by a developer. She commented that the photos of signs compiled by Mr. Taylor do bring to life the words on the page in the Code – especially the three-dimensional sign examples.

Mr. Taylor stated that he believes the City wants to achieve the vision of all the various elements shown in the photos. It is possible to have signage that meets all the criteria, and together, all the signs will add up to something great. It will offer shop owners the ability and motivation to take a creative approach in their signage proposals.

Mrs. Boring stated she will need time to review this information provided by Mr. Taylor, as it was just distributed tonight.

Mr. Gerber stated that creativity is certainly a good thing, and he supports Ms. Newell's idea about better defining high quality. However, where is the limit of good versus junk? Is it possible to write a Code to make one area of the City very different from the rest?
Ms. Readler stated that this can certainly be prescribed by Code for this District.
Mr. Gerber stated that he will reserve judgment until he has had time to thoroughly review this. In regard to a joint session on concept plans, it is possible that would work. However, the goal of the entire form-based code was to expedite the development process for this District. Perhaps a task force comprised of some Council Members, PZC members and staff could review these matters. That approach may be preferable to adding another layer of bureaucracy.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that these bodies need to spend more time together. Once these examples are brought forward, the group can come together to determine whether or not they truly are consistent with the vision.
Mr. Gerber responded that when this Code was adopted, everyone was aware of the changes that would result in the various processes. Perhaps a regular report should be provided by staff, and those reports can be considered in a future workshop.

Mrs. Boring stated that Council previously had indicated that PZC would monitor and review the implementation of the Code. She does not support establishing another body or workshop for this monitoring and review.
Mr. Gerber responded that he does not envision a workshop as delaying the development application process, but rather as identifying any weaknesses in the Code so that minor tweaking can be done as needed.
Mr. Langworthy commented that staff already has compiled some items in need of further discussion and/or refinement.

Ms. Amorose Groomes stated that the Commission appreciates this dialogue. It seems there is a need to bring balance in order that the vision stays on track.

Mr. Fishman commented that the current composition of PZC with three architects is somewhat unique. PZC is capable of reviewing such matters, given this expertise. The desire is not to create yet another layer.

Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher noted that is the challenge, however, as PZC does not have the authority to review these matters. Council established the Administrative Review Team

as the reviewing body in the District. What is needed is simply an understanding of why the ART makes certain decisions and what is their rationale for their decisions.

Mr. Fishman stated that what he has heard tonight is that there is a need to make some modifications to the Bridge Street Code. Maybe PZC can work more closely with staff on some of these reviews.

Vice Mayor Salay pointed out that, in any case, Code changes would need to be reviewed by PZC.

Staff indicated they would provide some options to address these concerns for the group to consider.
Ms. Chinnici-Zuercher stated that this information needs to be provided in a timely manner, given the number of applications already in process.

Mayor Lecklider stated that he appreciates all of the discussion. Personally, he does not like all of the signage examples provided in the sample packet. He does like some of the signs. He supports Ms. Newell's suggestion of better articulating the vision for the signage – not simply indicating "high quality." He imagines the interweaving of smaller districts within the District, depending upon how development occurs in the future. As a Council Member, he wants to be involved in providing feedback, but does not want to add more bureaucracy to the process. Elected officials do represent the community and should have some input, whether at a concept meeting or whatever. He does not support having another layer of review. He pointed out that the composition of PZC does change, and it may not always include the architectural expertise of the current membership.

Mr. Fishman suggested that PZC review the proposals with staff prior to staff making their decisions.

Mr. Foegler noted that he has had discussions with land planner Keith Myers, who worked on the Crocker Park development near Cleveland. Mr. Foegler then indicated he would work on some proposed options for review by these groups that may achieve the goal of what has been discussed tonight. He agreed to have this prepared within three weeks.

Vice Mayor Salay thanked everyone for participating tonight. She is not certain about how frequently this group should meet, going forward. She added that this venue is somewhat challenging for this purpose, given the acoustics.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Clerk of Council