

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL WORKSHOP  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
APRIL 2, 2009**

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Eugene Sierakowski, Vice Chairman  
Joseph Diminico  
Kevin Dougan  
Salvatore Mancini  
Andy Kidd

Alternates: Eric Prause

Absent: Matthew Galligan  
Adam Gootkin

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Neighborhood  
Services and Economic Development  
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner

Time Convened: 7:15 P.M.

Chairman Sierakowski opened the meeting saying that during recent workshops the staff submitted several statistical reports for the Commission to review and discuss at tonight's workshop. He said there are essentially two components to tonight's discussion - the development of vacant and underdeveloped areas and the areas of redevelopment.

Mr. Pellegrini explained that currently under the Planned Residence Development and Elderly Housing Development regulations the Commission has broad legislative authority to decide whether to approve a proposed zone change. In doing so the Commission refers to the Plan of Conservation and Development and generally strives to be consistent with the Plan. He mentioned examples of recent applications in which the Commission has either approved or denied applications by following this procedure. The Commission discussed the procedure and decided that under current zoning regulations the preliminary plan procedures for Planned Residence Development, Elderly Housing Development and Comprehensive Urban Development zones should not be changed.

There was a discussion on whether the Commission should change its land use map in the Plan to establish different recommended densities. Mr. Pellegrini explained if the Commission decides to do that, it should be done as a separate process through the changes to the Plan. The Plan is scheduled for amendment next year and the planning department intends to start the process in the summer of 2009. The moratorium is a different process not affected by changes to the land use maps and the Plan of Conservation and Development, he said.

The Commission discussed the conversion to two-, three-, and four-family units in the Residence B and Residence C zones. Mr. Pellegrini explained that under current zoning regulations such conversions are subject to special exception criteria of Article IV Section 20, and specific criteria outlined in each zoning district as applicable. The Commission reviews and applies these criteria

in approving applications for these types of conversions. Mr. Pellegrini said he could recall only one such approval in the past few years. The Commission decided that a special exception was appropriate for such a low amount of applications and indicated they would not change those regulations.

Mr. Kidd asked about approvals for conversions of mill buildings to multi-family in the historic zone. There is one building that could still be converted. The conversion into a residential use in historic districts is currently a site plan approval granted by the Commission. The use is permitted as of right. The Commission discussed whether there should be a greater amount of control in approving the conversions of historic mill buildings. Some wanted to make residential areas a special exception while others suggested eliminating multi-family entirely.

Mr. Pellegrini recommended that one of the findings under the moratorium could be that the conversion of historic mill buildings either be prohibited or be made a special exception rather than eliminating this use for the one remaining property. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Pellegrini spoke about residential units in the CBD zone. He said currently live/work units are allowed on the second story in the central business district. In order to have regular apartments or what is referred in our zoning regulations as high-rise apartments, a building must have three stories. There are some buildings that are very tall but do not have three stories. For these buildings, he suggested the high rise apartments regulations be stricken and the regulations amended to allow residential apartments on the upper stories in the Central Business District. In that way, this particular requirement for the building to have three stories will be avoided and some of the existing buildings will be more easily utilized especially on Main Street in the downtown. Mr. Mancini was in favor and mentioned that as a part of the downtown organization it was very important to fill in and help downtown so that there are no vacant abandoned buildings on the Main Street in downtown.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

May 4, 2009

Date

Eugene Sierakowski, Chairman

**NOTICE: THE CASSETTE TAPE RECORDING OF THE BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**

**OFFICIAL TAPE NOS. 1027 & 1028**