

Roll Call

The Kalamazoo City Commission met as a Committee of the Whole on Monday, March 6, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
Qianna Decker
Jeanne Hess
Stephanie Hoffman
Esteven Juarez
Chris Praedel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Public Comments

When an opportunity was given for general public comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

In Person Comments**2023-10-01**

Katie Bloom, City resident, submitted a copy of a Petition to Restore Parking to the Winchell Entrance of the Asylum Lake Preserve, containing the signatures of 300 residents. Ms. Bloom reported she had presented the petition to Commissioner Hess and Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) Deputy Director Christina Anderson prior to the meeting.

Devin Loker, non-resident, stated he was an attorney representing Royal Web, a marihuana business permit applicant, and he asked that the City allow Class A Microbusinesses to operate in the City.

Call-In Comments

None

2023-10-02

Presentation re: Zoning Updates

Community Planning and Economic Development Deputy Director Christina Anderson delivered a presentation entitled *Committee of the Whole Zoning Update: March 6, 2023*. A copy of the slides from this presentation was filed with the papers for the meeting.

In response to questions and comments from City Commissioners, Deputy Director Anderson provided the following information:

- to address concerns about the large number of changes being proposed at one time, staff was breaking down the information and giving multiple presentations to the Planning Commission, rather than one big presentation. In addition, the changes would be brought forward in a way that would allow them to be considered in pieces.
- the proposed ordinances would require first readings at one City Commission meeting and adoption at a subsequent meeting. There would be more Committee of the Whole presentations prior to these action steps.

- in the early 2000's the City created the Downtown Design Review District (DDRD) and associated design guidelines. Some years later, the City created the Southtown Design Review District (SDRD), which extended the application of the DDRD guidelines to an area just south of the DDRD. The City has started to include form-based guidelines in the Zoning Code, and it was the City's intent to apply a form-based zoning district to the Southtown area. Once this was in place, the DDRD/SDRD guidelines would be duplicative. Right now the situation is confusing.
- "Southtown" was not on the City's neighborhood map; it was created in 2012 as design review district.
- "zoning" dictates the standards for the use, design, and intensity of a property; everything starts with zoning. Zoning is like the basement of a building: it is not the building, but the building cannot exist without it.
- the Zoning Code displays the community's values when it intersects with the Strategic Vision.
- the job of elected officials is to get zoning right in the first place; with a good zoning code there will be a small number of variances. The Zoning Board of Appeals works under specific requirements for variances, which creates a neutral, non-political appeal process.
- state law required that the City notify the property owners within 300 feet of a property proposed for rezoning. However, that requirement only applied if 10 parcels or less were involved in the rezoning. For the 2,000 properties being proposed for rezoning, the City will notify those property owners but not the owners of properties within 300 feet.
- outreach for the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 (IK 2035) master plan update will begin in January 2024. This update should not involve as many changes as the IK 2025 plan.
- the Planning Commission will get an in-depth presentation on the proposed zoning changes at its April 7th meeting.

Commissioner Decker remarked that the zoning updates were important for economic vitality and attracting new businesses, and she thanked staff for looking at barriers in challenged neighborhoods.

An opportunity was given for general comments from City Commissioners, but no comments were offered.

The meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

Approved by the City Commission on: _____

2023-10-02

Presentation re: Zoning
Updates (cont'd)

Commissioner
Comments

Adjournment