



**FLINT MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**February 16, 2016**

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**Members Present:**

Judy Hovey  
 Linda Boose  
 Councilwoman VanBuren  
 Charles Tutt  
 Raynetta Speed  
 Mona Monroe-Younis

Elizabeth Jordan  
 Sandra Robinson  
 Bob Wesley  
 Jim Richardson  
 Councilwoman Poplar  
 Paul Mattern

**Members Not Present:**

Bryant Nolden  
 Richard Boone  
 Barry Williams  
 John Henry

Isaiah Oliver  
 Clarence Pierce  
 Pamela Hawkins

**Staff Present**

Kevin Schronce  
 Jonathan Moore

Isaac DeGraaf

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Co-Chair Jim Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:48 pm. The meeting was held at the Flint Public Library, 1026 Kearsley St., Flint, MI room B2.

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

No public comments presented

**PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE:**

Mr. Wesley explained the commission has begun looking at the draft code. He explained they have gotten through article 7 and encouraged anyone wanting to read through the document to do so and add any comments or suggestions they might have. It was also mentioned that staff is recording and documenting all the commissioners comments during each meeting and within a week they will be posted to the Imagineflint.com website

**DRAFT ZONING CODE DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Richardson then turned the discussion over to Mr. Schronce to begin the Draft Zoning Code discussion. Mr. Schronce began by explaining today's discussion will include an update on the current status of the draft, an overview of the input provided by the steering committee throughout the process, and a review of Additionally Regulated Uses (ARU's).

Mr. Schronce explained that a revised draft was released on January 26, 2016 all of which can be found on the imagineflint.com website for review. He explained the draft is currently going through the Planning Commission approval process. He stressed the process will take some time since the commission is having to review the draft while at the same time still performing their regular duties but so far at the last meeting they were able to review articles 1-7. As mentioned earlier a summary of Commissioner's comments on the draft will be made available after each meeting and posted to the imagineflint.com website. The Commission will continue the review process during their bi-weekly meetings with the next meeting scheduled for 2/23.16. Mr. Schronce did want to make it clear that just because the Planning Commission has begun the review process that doesn't mean the timeframe for additional comments has closed. The draft continues to be a working document and the public is still encouraged to review it and provide comments to the planning division via the zoning feedback form on the website or by calling the division directly.

The Planning Division will also be holding two additional public workshops in the coming months to provide members of the public an overview of the draft and a chance to add comments. Additionally a legal review of the code began in early February by faculty from University of Michigan's Law school. Councilwoman Poplar asked where the funds for the legal review are coming from and Mr. Schronce explained the Master Plan grant had some funds devoted for the zoning code process so it will be coming out of the grant money. He also added they were given a significantly reduced price due to the city's current financial situation. Mr. Richardson asked if there is a target date in mind to get the draft sent to the City Council but the response was that it ultimately depends on the speed of the Planning Commission review, and what comes out of the legal review so at this point flexible dates make the most sense.

Mr. Schronce then moved the discussion onto input generated by the Steering Committee. To begin the committee reviewed the discussion they had about liquor stores. As a result of that discussion and numerous public comments the new code includes stronger restrictions on liquor stores than the current code. The new code significantly reduced the number of districts liquor stores are allowed, added temporary signage and permanent signage regulations for new stores, and permits the sale of liquor in mixed use development but includes restrictions on the amount of floor space permitted for liquor sales. Furthermore liquor stores are categorized as an additionally regulated use which adds additional locational standards for "stand alone" liquor stores. Mrs. Hovey then asked what Mr. Schronce meant by locational standards. He responded that means regulations such as they can't be within 300 ft. of any residential zone, school, church, or dedicated park. It also can mean limits on the number of stores that are allowed within a certain area. Councilwoman Poplar wanted clarification that we are indeed making it harder on liquor stores. Mr. Schronce responded that yes we've added restrictions that will help limit where new stores can go and how many can be in a certain area but the new code cannot impact existing stores except for signage. He went on to explain we are limited in what we can do for existing stores but that if an existing store is moving they cannot move into a building that's isn't already a liquor store. Mr. Tutt asked what the transfer rules would be if for example a beer/wine store wants to switch to a liquor store. Mr. Schronce said that would be addressed by the state so it's hard to comment on what would happen but that potentially that may be permissible. He went on to explain that the state cannot override location standards but that transfers are controlled by them. In summary the new code can't just cut down from 95 to 50 stores but we can make it difficult to add any new ones.

Moving on from liquor stores Mr. Schronce showcased the three new districts, MR-3, GI-1 and GI-2, which came out of steering committee discussions. Additionally it was discussed that Green Uses should not only be permitted in Green Neighborhoods but across all residential districts. He explained many of these uses are listed as accessory uses in residential districts which means the use is in addition to a residence. The uses also have corresponding conditions that must be followed in order to participate in them. Ms. Robinson asked if accessory means the use must be attached to the house which it wouldn't have to but for some uses would be an option. Mr. Tutt then clarified that if a resident bought a next door parcel to expand their lot could they then participate in these uses on that lot. He was told yes as long as it's the same parcel then the intent is still residential because your house is on that parcel and these green uses would serve as an accessory use. Essentially the intent of these districts is still residential but the new code will allow for more flexibility in your residence.

Mr. Schronce moved on to explain feedback staff had received about signage. The steering committee's input was that stronger regulations were needed particularly in regards to size and location as well as stricter temporary signage regulations. Additionally the new code does include a signage amortization clause which was well received by the committee. The clause is under further legal review and planning commission approval. Mr. Richardson mentioned he had heard about cities requiring businesses to take out a bond for things that the city would have to address if the business upped and left. He wondered if something similar could be applied for signage, It was debated how it could be enforced or how it may impact attracting new development but Mr. Schronce agreed it's an interesting approach and that staff would research it some more to see if it would be viable in Flint.

The steering committee also provided their recommendation for chicken keeping being allowed in certain districts of the code. It was agreed however that the surrounding residents should have some say in the decision. Currently it is listed as an accessory use in only GN districts and Ms. Robinson suggested we consider allowing in other districts such as TN if the same procedure of allowing neighboring residents to be involved. Ms. Speed mentioned that she wasn't originally an advocate for allowing chickens but she recently heard regulations allow a farmer to have 30 days to get eggs to the store and the store then has 30 days to put it out for sale so ultimately eggs from the store are not going to be too fresh and allowing chickens would be away for residents to get fresher food which she believes is a good thing. Councilwoman Poplar asked if the city ever had a chicken ordinance because she remembers many people on her block raising chickens we she was growing up in the city. Mr. Schronce replied he didn't know but chances are there was no ordinance but most things were less restricted.

Councilwomen Poplar continued by saying when we stopped growing and tending our own food was when people started getting unhealthier. She wants to bring it back to when everyone had their own garden and people were more involved in the production of their food. She is worried that we actually might be regulating these things to harshly even in the new code and that the younger generation won't be bothered to partake in them. Ultimately however she said the Steering Committee did all they can to promote these agricultural uses and she was proud of the suggestions and changes they had made to promote these uses as best we can. Mr. Moore added that community gardens are allowed on vacant lots in GN and TN neighborhoods so hopefully that is another way to bring fresher food into neighborhoods.

Remaining topics that the committee assisted with included live/work flexibility and parking standards. The committee agreed parking should be flexible to allow for the re-use of land but also should protect residential districts. This discussion led to the draft including language that would allow for the repurposing of vacant lots in residential districts for "surface lot parking", but regulations on design, impact, and hours of use are included. Additionally Mr. Schronce explained that the steering committee challenged staff to make the code more user friendly and accessible which led to more graphics being incorporated, a quick reference guide, nearly 100 pages being removed that eliminated redundancies, and tools like zoningcheck.com being developed for residents and developers.

Mr. Schronce concluded with a discussion on Additionally Regulated Uses (ARU's). Councilwoman Poplar asked if Medical Marijuana falls under this category which they do. She was concerned because they seem to be popping up all over the city and Mr. Schronce acknowledged that the city has been receiving an enormous amount of requests for them. He explained they listing them as an ARU in the draft will attempt to limit the gray area that is found in the current code. They will fall into the category of Group C which will have similar locational restrictions as Liquor Stores in Group B. The current ordinance is quite flexible with them and for example are allowed in districts similar to neighborhood center of the draft code. Based on the purpose statement found in the master plan about NC district it makes sense that they wouldn't be allowed in that type of area. Additionally the current ordinance doesn't include any locational standards such as being 500 ft. from residential or only having a certain number within the same area like the draft code proposes.

Before concluding Mr. Richardson asked what would be helpful for the Planning Commission to have from the Steering Committee's discussion on topics as they begin their review process. Ms. Jordan responded that something similar to the presentation that Mr. Schronce just provided that lists the Committee's recommendations on the topics that had been discussed would make sense. That way they could have something to refer back to when discussing a particular topic. Mr. Schronce agreed that staff can organize the summary he just provided into a useable document and send it out to the committee for their approval before passing it onto the commission. Councilwoman VanBuren added that the same thing could then be given to the City Council when they begin the adaptation process along with a similar document that lists all of the public comments that have been received. A list of public comments has been compiled already by staff and given to the commission as well as posted online so it will be forwarded to the council as well when the time comes.

#### **CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS UPDATE:**

Mr. Schronce then moved onto giving an update on the Chice Neighborhoods Project. Thus far, the Choice team has hosted 2 large community meetings, 2 youth oriented workshops and 4 Steering Committee meetings. The next steering committee meeting will be held on Wednesday February 17 from 5:30-7:30pm at the AE community center. The team is in the process of conducting a needs assessment of all Atherton East residents. The team is also beginning to form working groups centered on housing & development, jobs & workforce, health & safety, and education & youth. The working groups will meet two times each in the month of March to discuss the issues identified through community and youth meetings, steering committee meetings, the needs assessment, existing conditions and other data.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT:**

Before adjoining the meeting Co-chair Richardson asked about the next time the Committee should meet. It was agreed that the committee could review the document summarizing their input on their own time and that the next time they meet could be for the annual Master Plan Update and celebration/appreciation for their work. March 15 was decided upon as a tentative date for the event depending on if the venue is available. Co-chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:30.

Submitted by Isaac DeGraaf 2.18.16