

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

May 7, 2019

7:00 p.m.

Present at the 7:00 p.m. meeting:

Chairman: Alan Silverman

Commissioners Present: Bob Cronin
Will Hurd
Bob Stozek
Tom Wampler

Commissioners Absent: Stacy McNatt
District 6 (Vacant)

Staff Present: Mary Ellen Gray, Planning and Development Director
Mike Fortner, Planner
Paul Bilodeau, City Solicitor

Mr. Alan Silverman called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. CHAIR'S REMARKS.

Mr. Silverman: I'd like to call to order the City of Newark Planning Commission meeting for Tuesday, May 7, 2019. Under Chair's Remarks, just a reminder that Item 6 on our agenda, the Comprehensive Development Plan amendment and major subdivision with site plan approval for the property at 321 Hillside Road, has been withdrawn by the applicant so there will be no discussion on that topic tonight.

2. THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 2, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.

Mr. Silverman: The minutes of our previous meeting of April 2, 2019 have been distributed and they've been posted on the internet. Madam Secretary, have we received any comments, additions, or corrections?

Ms. Michelle Vispi: No, we have not.

Mr. Silverman: Okay, if there are no objections, then the minutes as submitted and posted stand approved.

THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 2, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING ARE APPROVED.

3. ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY.

Mr. Silverman: Moving on to Item 3 on our agenda, the election of Planning Commission Secretary. As you know, our secretary resigned from the Planning Commission as of the last meeting. State statute and city code requires that we have a Secretary to the Planning Commission, however the administration of the secretarial functions and the administrative functions of the Planning Commission are provided through the City of Newark, so the Planning Commission Secretary position is more or less ceremonial. We do need, however, to fill the

position. The Chair opens the floor for nominations. I've spoken with Commissioner Wampler and he has agreed to take the secretary's position.

Mr. Tom Wampler: If that's okay.

Mr. Silverman: If there are no objections, we'll close the nominations and, again, without objection, we will declare Commissioner Wampler the Commission Secretary.

VOTE BY ACCLAMATION THAT COMMISSIONER TOM WAMPLER BE ELECTED TO POSITION OF PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY.

VOTE: 5-0

AYE: CRONIN, HURD, SILVERMAN, STOZEK, WAMPLER

NAY: NONE

ABSENT: MCNATT

MOTION PASSED

4. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENTS REGARDING FOCUS AREAS.

Mr. Silverman: Moving on to Item 4 on our agenda, review and consideration of Comprehensive Plan amendments regarding the Focus Areas. Mary Ellen?

[Secretary's Note: A link to the Planning and Development Department memorandum regarding Comprehensive Development Plan amendments regarding Focus Areas and the letter from the State of Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination can be found at the end of this document.]

Ms. Mary Ellen Gray: Mr. Chair, thank you. The Planning Commission reviewed the text amendments for Focus Areas to Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan at the February 5 meeting. The Planning Commission provided additional comments and recommended that staff forward the amendments to the Office of State Planning for review by the Preliminary Land Use Service, otherwise known as PLUS, for state agency input and review. Although the PLUS review is not required for this Comprehensive Plan amendment, Planning staff felt it would be helpful to obtain input from the Office of State Planning and related state agencies on this proposal.

We have just received, when we were putting together the packets, we did not have our letter from the state. We received it today. Overall, the PLUS participants gave the text amendments a favorable review and we also, per the request of the Planning Commission, we included the application we submitted to the Office of State Planning. When I had included an attachment at the February 5 meeting, I had erroneously included the wrong attachment and that created a little bit of confusion, and I apologize for that. That is the correct attachment that you have. The letter that we received indicated on the first page from the Office of State Planning Coordination, the last line indicates that any forthcoming changes to the future land use maps within the Comprehensive Development Plan needs to be reviewed through the PLUS process as additional plan amendments. I had discussions with the Office of State Planning regarding this issue last week. We still have some questions regarding that. I do not believe that is the case given our Memorandum of Understanding that I had included in your packet. I will be reviewing this with our legal counsel, Mr. Bilodeau, and our special legal counsel, Max Walton, who has institutional knowledge of the MOU, as well as Mr. Fortner, because we just got this today . . . sorry, I didn't share this with you . . . but he has some institutional knowledge of how we have done things in the past. It's not to say that we don't, just because we've done things one way in the past doesn't mean that we do it the same way moving forward, but I just have some questions regarding that. My read of the MOU indicates that we don't need to go

through the PLUS process for any Comp Plan amendments outside of the 5-year updates and the 10-year revision. So, I will be pursuing that discussion in a very friendly manner, of course. This is not an adversarial discussion. I want to make that clear. So, I will report back to the Planning Commission next month on the outcome of those discussions. So, there might be a revision to this letter or this letter will stand, and then we will abide by the outcome of that discussion. Are there any questions regarding that?

Mr. Will Hurd: Just a clarification question. Your memo says five focus areas . . .

Ms. Gray: Yes, that number is wrong. It's four.

Mr. Hurd: Okay.

Ms. Gray: Thank you.

Mr. Hurd: Just making sure we weren't missing one.

Ms. Gray: No. If you recall, we started off with five and then College Square went and redeveloped, so now we're down to four.

Mr. Silverman: Are there any questions from the Commissioners? Okay, moving on to Item 5, review and consideration . . .

Ms. Jean White: Item 4, the Focus Area, that's an action item. Can the public speak?

Mr. Silverman: Feel free.

Ms. White: [inaudible]

Mr. Silverman: We are simply moving paper. We're making no revisions to what was submitted. Feel free to comment.

Ms. White: Last time and the previous time, the public didn't have a chance to speak then.

Mr. Silverman: We're still moving paper. We haven't concluded, we haven't . . .

Ms. Gray: I do have one more comment, but please let Mrs. White speak.

Mr. Silverman: Feel free to speak.

Mrs. White: I guess I'm mixed up. Okay. Jean White, District 1. This has been on two times before and the public wasn't allowed to speak. Basically, I wasn't allowed to speak. So, this is moving along and when can we, people who live in the areas or in the town, have a chance to speak on whether they agree or not on these Comp Plan changes for the focus areas?

Ms. Gray: I'm being recognized by the Chair with a look. Thank you, Mrs. White, for that question. I have that on my informational items but certainly I'd be happy to report on that now.

Mr. Silverman: How about if we move that up?

Ms. Gray: That would be great. So, in talking with some Council members and Mayor Clifton, their thoughts are that they would like to, because the Planning Commission, I'll do a refresher, the last two times we talked about this had expressed an interest in having a public meeting to ascertain some comments from the public, such as Mrs. White just indicated, to get some input. Council has expressed a desire to have a meeting, a public meeting, with them present. We've had a couple informational meetings with Council as of late. One was on parking, one was on rental, the student growth and rental needs, one was on something-something that was, it's

escaping me, but it was a format that Council is liking in that it's an informal discussion . . . well, it's a formal discussion in that there's a presentation by staff or others on information presented. The public is asked to comment and ask questions. Certainly, Council asks questions, but no decision is made. But general direction is given to staff on next steps, whether that be, hey, let's put this in an ordinance or I'd like to see more information on X, Y, and Z, or I don't like this, but I would like to see more on that.

So, that's the next step for this, would be to have this public forum meeting. We are working with, I say we, the City Secretary's Office is working with Council to set up that meeting. There are two potential dates they're working on and we'd love to have Planning Commission attend that meeting, as well. The two potential dates are June 3 or June 17, and those meetings would start at 7:00 p.m., 6:30 or 7:00 p.m., and we've also invited Connie Holland who is the Director of the Office of State Planning Coordination to take this opportunity for her to speak on comprehensive planning and what it means and what it doesn't mean and what it means for the City of Newark. So, she will also be in attendance, as well.

Ms. White: Okay. And to change the Comprehensive Plan, eventually Council has to approve that. Is that correct?

Ms. Gray: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. White: Okay.

Ms. Gray: So, this meeting, those changes would not be occurring. This would be an informational meeting. So, this meeting, either on June 3 or June 17, would be a discussion. So, if the direction of Council would be staff move forward, then we would move forward . . . let's say, hey, this is great, let's move forward with this proposal or this proposal with these recommended changes, then staff would come back with an official proposal with a text amendment as an official Comp amendment change. And then that would be an official public, put on the public hearing on the proper meeting agenda, properly public-noticed and whatnot.

Ms. White: Okay, then I have two questions on that. At this workshop or the format you described, the public, other than the Commissioners and the Council, would be able to make comments, too?

Ms. Gray: Absolutely.

Mr. Silverman: Yes.

Ms. White: Okay.

Ms. Gray: Absolutely. You've been at the last couple of meetings where this format has taken place.

Ms. White: Okay.

Mr. Silverman: It's actually an open discussion.

Ms. Gray: Absolutely.

Mr. Silverman: Rather than you making a presentation, it's a round-robin discussion.

Ms. Gray: Yes.

Ms. White: Okay, and the second this is, those who live in the different focus areas, are they told about this? In other words, are notices sent to them in some manner that somebody who might have an interest, or even not in that area, I'm somebody who doesn't live in those areas,

but those who are particularly affected by living in those focus areas, are they told that this is going to happen? Because if people don't really know about it, they can't actually come and make comments one way or the other.

Ms. Gray: We haven't gotten that far in the notification process.

Ms. White: Okay.

Ms. Gray: It was not my intent to send out individual notices to every property owner in this focus area for a general public meeting. That would be outside the scope of a general public meeting. We would advertise it in the normal venues that we advertise a public meeting.

Ms. White: Okay. Well, I came to speak tonight, particularly to Focus Area #1. That may be inappropriate for me to do it, but I can do it anyway or not, if you want? I don't know where I am on this.

Ms. Gray: Sure.

Ms. White: Okay. Basically, I'm just going to talk about Focus Area #1 and a little bit about #2. I have a problem with all four of them in different ways but there's only so much time.

I am totally opposed to changing the Comprehensive Plan for Focus Area #1 New London Road community. As noted, this is the historic African-American community. In fact, as I've come to realize well after I moved to Newark, that this was not just an African-American community, but it was a completely segregated community and those African-Americans were only allowed to live in this area. In fact, it wasn't until a U.S. Supreme Court ruling, *Brown versus Board of Education* in 1954, that students there, high-school-student-aged, were even allowed to go to Newark High School. Before that, they had to make their way somehow to Wilmington. Gradually, there has been a transition that is now going much further for the community to transition to be more diverse and integrated. Some moved away, some by choice or by economic pressure, or perhaps died, or because they had offers by developers that they eventually took. And being lower-cost land and housing presented the opportunity for landlords and developers to acquire it. Up to a point, that is understandable. My point is, keep the Comprehensive Plan for New London Road as it is. Do not convert along New London Road, Church Street, Wilson Street, east side of Corbit Street, Ray Street, and Rose Street from low-density to high-density. One of my reasons is it would be unfair and impact negatively the three African-American churches in the area – Mount Zion UAME Church, which is both on New London Road and Rose Street, St. John's African-Methodist Church, and Prayer Temple Ministries on the first block of New London Road. And the second thing, there are also some non-student renters and homeowners in the area that would be affected negatively. The third reason is increased cars. When you make it to high-density, all the people that are living there will no doubt have cars and that increases the traffic. Yes, they might walk and, yes, they might bike, but you can already see this in some areas that are being developed further out on New London Road, but I won't get into that. And, fourthly, I object to this being proposed for the express purpose of packing in more college students in this section of town. I feel that first this area had enforced segregation and now the area is considered expendable. And I say no, let it continue to transition, which it still can transition, under low-density and continue the transition that it's having.

Focus Area #2, I was just going to talk about Prospect Avenue, which I used to live in that part of town beyond Prospect Avenue, so I'm well aware of it. On Prospect Avenue the houses are actually, it doesn't have the same issue at all. It doesn't have the issue of New London Road, but the houses are pleasant and large. A few of them had been, three of them had been made higher but still it can be lived with. Anyway, I think it's a shame to make Prospect Avenue, in particular, to be allowed to be high-density. And I won't focus on the other ones, which would be North Street, Wilbur Street, Cleveland Avenue. There are things that could be said about them, but I won't say them. Okay, thank you for letting me speak. I appreciate that.

Mr. Silverman: Thank you, Ms. White. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak? Seeing that no one else wishes to speak, we will move on to the next item on our agenda.

5. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO PLANNING COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Mr. Silverman: Agenda Item 5 is review and consideration of proposed changes to Planning Commission Rules of Procedure. I want to call to your attention this very low-tech device that we have acquired. We found that the rather elaborate timer and timing device and light system that's designed for Council use cannot be readily adopted, adapted, I'm sorry, for our use. It is people-intensive, it's physically located in the middle of our work area and cannot be used by our secretary, so I made an executive decision, since one of our proposals is to extend speaking time to five minutes, I googled, and I have found a source of hourglasses that is accurate within 10 seconds. It's certified.

Mr. Bob Stozek: Of course, it is.

Ms. Gray: Certified, man.

Mr. Silverman: It's certified. And this is what we will be using in the future for a timing device for our speakers.

Mr. Hurd: So, that's the 5-minute timer?

Mr. Silverman: That's the 5-minute timer.

Mr. Hurd: Do we have a 3-minute timer? Did we get a 3-minute?

Mr. Silverman: Well, if we adopt the Rules of Procedure tonight as we are proposing, one of our proposals is to extend the time to five minutes.

Mr. Hurd: Well, yes, I know, but we've also talked about there would be times we would pull that back to at least no less than three minutes.

Ms. Gray: Don't look at me.

Mr. Silverman: We could acquire one for three minutes. They make these in a rather wide variety of time intervals.

Mr. Hurd: Okay.

Ms. Gray: Perhaps we should look for a 3-minute timer for next month.

Mr. Stozek: Maybe get a different color sand.

Mr. Silverman: Okay, in some seriousness, moving into the agenda item. You have copies of the proposed changes in the regulations. We have a mark-up showing our comments, reflecting our comments from the last meeting, and we have a clean copy reflecting the proposed revisions based on our recommendations. Do we have any additional discussion on this?

[Secretary's Note: A link to the Planning and Development Department memorandum regarding proposed changes to the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure can be found at the end of this document.]

Mr. Hurd: Just a question from my memory. Did we decide that that sort of introductory statement is not going to be in the Rules of Procedure but will be sort of a standalone document that the Chair has discretion over reading and adapting? I remember we spent some

time sort of reconciling and making sure that the two of them said sort of similar things, but I don't see that that statement has been included in the Rules of Procedure and I couldn't remember where we left that.

Mr. Silverman: I don't believe it's included in the Rules of Procedure because we felt that it would be applied where appropriate. For example, tonight, basically it's administrative kinds of things . . .

Mr. Hurd: Right.

Mr. Silverman: We wouldn't need to go through that.

Mr. Hurd: Okay. I'm good with what I'm seeing here.

Mr. Silverman: The Commissioners are generally satisfied? Members of the public, do you have any comments? Ms. White?

Ms. White: Jean White, District 1. The Commission, I feel, did a thorough job of discussing the surrounding aspects of the rules and I also feel that the Planning Director and the Planning Department did a good job of distilling those comments and coming up with the present draft. I just had two comments related to it. One, where it says additional items on the very last page, and this you could say is not truly important, I would say on #2, agenda items shall be annotated discussion, action, or information, as applicable, and leave out the to discern, and move the as applicable to the end of the sentence. I can repeat that if it's not clear to you. I actually looked up the word discern in the dictionary and it can be used there, but it seems to me it would be clearer and cleaner just to say, agenda items shall be annotated discussion, action, or information, as applicable.

Mr. Bob Cronin: Sounds good to me.

Mr. Silverman: Commissioners, any comments?

Ms. White: And the other thing . . .

Mr. Cronin: I like that suggestion.

Mr. Silverman: Okay.

Ms. White: Okay . . .

Ms. Gray: Hold on. Hold on, I need the tracking. I'm not there yet.

Mr. Silverman: We're going to pause for a moment so that the computer tracking can catch up.

Ms. White: Shall I go on?

Ms. Gray: Shall be annotated, okay, now I need to track. Sorry, oh, there we go. Okay, Bob, we went old school here and got out a pencil. Okay, thank you.

Ms. White: Okay and the other thing was . . .

Mr. Silverman: If you'll hold on one moment, Ms. White.

Ms. Gray: Okay, perfect. Thank you.

Ms. White: Oh, sorry.

Mr. Silverman: Just want to make sure we have it.

Ms. Gray: I'm good now. I'll just copy from Mr. Cronin.

Mr. Silverman: Please continue.

Ms. White: This is a tiny little thing and really doesn't matter too much. And on page 9 of the minutes of the April 2 meeting, there was a suggestion by a Commissioner to list the standard agenda, what it is, and so, to contribute it to institutional memory. Not the items particularly, but each of the individual things here. Just the outline of it. And so there would not be lost institutional memory. Okay and one reason I think that might be good was the last thing on this is that the public, however it is here, but anyway, the public may make comments at the end on something that is not on the agenda but related to the work of the Planning Commission. And I'm particularly thinking about that because in January it had already been passed and it was on a previous agenda in September, October, November, and December, but when in January I came to do that and it wasn't listed as an item there, there was a discussion about should I be allowed to speak or not, when it was already agreed that it was something that had been put on earlier, that particular item, to have the ability for somebody to come and make a general comment about something Planning Commission-related but not on the agenda. And by having the outline, not the specific items and specific rules, but the outline, then I think that's an example of something that could be, again, forgotten if one doesn't have it. I think it was Commissioner Hurd who made that comment. It's on page 9 of the minutes of this past April meeting, which I don't know if I have with me or not. I don't know whether I have said this clearly enough so that you can understand it but . . .

Mr. Hurd: Yes.

Ms. White: But it was basically things would be, you know, the items would be . . .

Mr. Silverman: Do you have a recommendation where it would be included in the Rules of Procedure?

Ms. White: Well, it would include the format, maybe I can, let me see, sorry, I'm somewhat disorganized. It was Mr. Hurd on page 9 and I'll just read part of what's in here. We have a standard agenda format which would be chair's remarks, approval of minutes, items for consideration of the Commission, new business, informational items, and public comment. The public comment is not from individual items but the part at the end. And so, three at the beginning, three at the end, reading what he said, that are sort of fixed and in the middle is everything else. So, this is what he said, so, it may be useful if we're going to have these sorts of rules to take that kind of outline, put it into the document and just go, our standard agenda format is this, so that we get it documented. I think the idea was so one wouldn't forget. I mean pretty much if we have somebody who has a plan that they're going to present, you're not going to forget that. So, I don't know if I've made this clear or not. I can just sit down and you can think about it.

Mr. Hurd: I think I'm still in support of that. I had sort of forgotten I had said that and I didn't flag it in here. To me it could be just like you take a standard agenda outline and just block it out as those standard, you know, the first three and the last three and the stuff in the middle, and just attach it to the rules as our agenda template or something.

Ms. Gray: I'm not even in the ballpark.

Mr. Hurd: Okay.

Mr. Silverman: I'm thoroughly confused.

Ms. Gray: Yeah, I don't understand what you're getting at.

Mr. Hurd: I think the confusion was that when we first discussed the Rules of Procedure, we talked about having items for like new business and for public comment.

Ms. Gray: Yes.

Mr. Hurd: And then those didn't show up on the agenda. The public comment line didn't show up on the next agenda. So, it's a . . .

Ms. White: I think it was the January one.

Mr. Hurd: Yeah, so basically this is a request to document what is our, sort of what is our standard agenda outline, similar to what Council has, where they've got standard blocks that get filled in but it's just a way to say our standard meeting agenda is, you know, chair's remarks, approval of the minutes . . .

Ms. Gray: Oh, I got it. Right.

Mr. Hurd: Basically, everything from the Planning Department that's being brought to us for consideration, new business, informational items, and public comment.

Mr. Silverman: Would it be the equivalent of old business?

Mr. Hurd: No, it's just taking a standard agenda and stripping it down to just say we lead off with these three items, we hear the big chunk in the middle where do the work, we have these last three on the end, and that's our standard agenda so that we don't lose track of the fact that we want to make sure we have a new business item, an informational item, and the public comment item. And, basically, what I'm saying is put that into this document so that the next group of commissioners can look at it and go, oh, okay that's their outline and we know what we're working with. Is this helping at all?

Ms. Gray: Yes, I've got it.

Ms. White: The reason I'm bringing it up is that at the January meeting the public comment part was not at the end and I had something I wanted to say . . .

Mr. Silverman: That was an oversight.

Ms. White: It may have been an oversight, but the point is there had to be a whole discussion whether I would be allowed to speak. And the other thing is this is not just any old public comment. The public comment on the agenda items has already happened and this public comment, it can't be like Council where you can speak on anything you want to, it has to be something directly to the work of the Planning Commission. So, it might be good to define what that public comment at the end means. Thank you.

Mr. Silverman: Thank you. Okay, in light of the first suggestion which was a very easy fix, moving some wording around, do we want to carry, is there any reason why we cannot carry this work item to the next meeting or a future meeting to work out the exact wording for the last part of our discussion? Or do we think we have enough understanding to adopt this as with the proposed revisions?

Mr. Hurd: I'm willing to go that way. I think that the changes are minor enough . . .

Mr. Silverman: So, we can conclude this then?

Mr. Hurd: Yeah.

Mr. Silverman: Okay. Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the revision to the Commission's Rules of Procedure as described in the April 30, 2019 memo from the Director of Planning and Development, with the changes as discussed with respect to additional items.

Mr. Hurd: I'll so move.

Mr. Silverman: Okay, is there a second?

Mr. Wampler: Second.

Mr. Silverman: Okay, it's been moved and seconded. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by saying Aye. All those opposed, Nay. The motion carries.

MOTION BY HURD, SECONDED BY WAMPLER THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPT THE REVISIONS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION RULES OF PROCEDURE AS SHOWN IN THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM DATED APRIL 30, 2019 AND REVISED BY THE COMMISSION AT THEIR MAY 7, 2019 MEETING.

VOTE: 5-0

AYE: CRONIN, HURD, SILVERMAN, STOZEK, WAMPLER

NAY: NONE

ABSENT: MCNATT

MOTION PASSED

- 6. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT AND MAJOR SUBDIVISION WITH SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR THE PRPOERTY AT 321 HILLSIDE ROAD, LOCATION OF THE FORMER UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE JOHN DICKINSON RESIDENCE HALL COMPLEX. THE PLAN PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING DORMITORIES ON THE SITE, SUBDIVISION OF THE PARCEL INTO TWO LOTS, ONE OF WHICH WILL BE MAINTAINED AS OPEN SPACE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF TEN 4-STORY BUILDINGS CONTAINING 189 APARTMENT UNITS. [WITHDRAWN UNTIL A FUTURE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.]**

Mr. Silverman: Agenda Item 6 has been withdrawn.

[Secretary's Note: Agenda Item 6, review and consideration of the land-use project at 321 Hillside Road has been withdrawn by the applicant until a future Planning Commission meeting.]

7. NEW BUSINESS.

Mr. Silverman: Agenda Item 7, new business.

Ms. Gray: I think you just took my agenda. What's on here? Alright, what number are we up to? New business. We don't have any new business, but I do have, oh, introduction of new items for discussion and new items requiring public notice . . . okay, so I do have informational items for Agenda Item 8.

8. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

- a. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT CURRENT PROJECTS**
- b. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT LAND USE PROJECT TRACKING MATRIX**

Mr. Silverman: Okay, consideration of Agenda Item 8, informational items.

Ms. Gray: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, I have a couple of informational items. Some updates, 20-22 Benny Street, the project that Planning Commission recommended approval on, was approved by Council on April 22, 2019. That was a unanimous approval on that and that project is moving forward.

The Rental Workgroup had its first meeting on April 30 of last week and it is being supported by the consultant JMT. We have established four subcommittees within that workgroup, UD Student Growth, Affordable Housing, Non-Student Rental Housing, and Rental Permits, and they will meet four times in May, June, August, and September. The full committee will meet June, August, and September. And the final report/presentation is anticipated to be made to Council in October. All meetings are open to the public. We're working on a website right now. The website, to be fair, we have it pulled together but it's in the queue to have that website magic be done. So, it's formatted, and the website person just needs to do his website stuff.

The Transportation Improvement District Workgroup will have its first meeting tomorrow from 1:30 to 3:30 in this room. I'm sorry, on the other workgroup, their meetings are in the Council Chambers. So, the first Transportation Improvement District Workgroup is meeting tomorrow. It is anticipated that this workgroup will meet monthly and this process will be a little longer. It's anticipated it will take about 18 months or so, and there's a chunk of this work that is on DelDOT's plate, so some of the progress of this workgroup is dependent upon DelDOT. So, there might be some months when we might not meet, depending upon DelDOT's workload.

The Sustainable Newark grant project is moving forward. That's being led by Mike Fortner. They are working through a draft, which is a very good draft and it's a robust draft. They hope to have their, they just had a meeting yesterday and they are looking to have hopefully just one more meeting to get through the rest of the draft and that effort is being led by AECOM, as well. They expect a working draft for public workshop that would include the Planning Commission, City Council, and the CAC in late summer or early fall, with a final report to Council to follow after that public workshop.

The Green Building Committee did have a meeting scheduled in April but due to low attendance, that meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, so hopefully we'll have good attendance on that.

I'm currently working on the request for proposal for the parking implementation component of the Parking Subcommittee strategy.

We're bringing onboard two part-time interns this summer. Not sure where we're going to put them but we're working on it, and also a temporary seasonal person to help us out in our business license program.

And I know this isn't a Planning Commission issue but, in a way, it is. We're in process of hiring a Code Enforcement Manager person and that will hopefully take, because I've been acting on that role for many months now, so that will hopefully lighten my load on that side, so I can focus back on planning issues.

I attended the American Planning Association National Conference in San Francisco in April and I attended many, many presentations and my brain is full of stuff. I focused my attendance on presentations regarding housing, inclusive housing, student housing, demand responsive parking, parking maximums, planning for equity, planning for smart cities, transportation innovation, workforce housing, managing planning commission members, meetings, and relationship . . . that was an interesting meeting . . . creative solutions to student housing impact, designs for developments, food systems planning, and housing and collaboration. Also, right-of-way management from small cells to scooters, which was an interesting meeting.

As part of that conference, I also attended two days of leadership meetings. By way of background, I'm currently the president of the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning

Association. I took over from Mike Fortner, who is now the past president of the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association. The City is very supportive of staff participating in these types of organizations. I feel it is very important that we participate in these types of organizations, not only through the networking opportunities, but also the learning opportunities it provides for us and the professional development. Actually, we just had a professional development meeting the other day on the Jack Markell Trail and I was just thinking we probably should have extended the invitation to you all. I apologize. Any future meetings we will extend invitations to you all on that. So, as part of my role as chapter president, I attended two days of leadership meetings where I met with other chapter presidents throughout the country and we talk about things such as professional development, chapter development, and support. We adopted three national policies, including transportation, housing, and planning for equity. So, it's a really good opportunity to talk with other planners throughout the country and find out what they're doing, what their challenges are, and to network and build those collaborative relationships, which I feel is very important for not only professional development but, hey, what are you doing? What's working out there and what's not working? So, that's a really helpful thing.

Next week I will have a speaking engagement in Wilmington with the Urban Land Institute Delaware Regional Council to talk about the goings-on in Newark and what development is happening. So, I'm looking forward to talking about that. And that's a nickel tour of what's going on in the Planning Department regarding Planning Commission.

Mr. Silverman: Thank you very much.

Ms. Gray: You're welcome.

9. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT.

Mr. Silverman: Let's move on to Item 9 on our agenda, general public comment. Ms. White? Okay. If there is no one wishing to speak, do the Commissioners have any general comments? Okay, I believe that concludes our work for this evening. The Chair will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Hurd: I so move.

Mr. Silverman: Is there a second?

Mr. Stozek: Second.

Mr. Silverman: It's been moved and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none, if there is no objection, we stand adjourned.

There being no further business, the May 7, 2019 Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Wampler
Planning Commission Secretary

As transcribed by Michelle Vispi
Planning and Development Department Secretary

Attachments

Exhibit A: [Planning and Development Department memorandum \(Focus Areas\)](#)

Exhibit B: [State of Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination letter \(Focus Areas\)](#)

Exhibit C: [Planning and Development Department memorandum \(Rules of Procedure\)](#)