

Planning Commission Meeting
September 26, 2023
12:00 p.m.

The planning commission members met on the above date and time in the commission chambers of Herington City Hall. In attendance were Karen Soliz, Cynthia Naylor, Joshua Lawrenz, Janet Wade, Marcus Hawkes, Neighborhood Services Director James Masters, City Manager Thatcher Moddie and Rhonda Rice.

The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Chair Marcus Hawkes called the meeting to order.

Consider minutes of June 27, 2023-Regular Planning Commission meeting and Workshops July 25, 2023, and August 22, 2023. Janet Wade requested mor specifics be used when variances are in the minutes for better clarity.

Karen Soliz made a motion to accept the minutes with staff changes, seconded by Cynthia Naylor. Motion Carried 5-0.

Public Forum: None

Additional agenda items:

Cynthia Naylor made a motion as requested by Janet Wade to replace 12a with Flood Plain Update and add 12b Brownfields Downtown Redevelopment. Motion was Seconded by Karen Soliz and carried 5-0.

Discussion was had on the resignation of Gwen Owens-Wilson. It was noted by City Manager Thatcher Moddie that she had submitted a resignation to him. He was very appreciative of her service to the Commission, as was also noted by the other Commissioners. All are sad to see her step down but understand the reasons.

Janet Wade made a motion to accept the resignation of Gwen Owens-Wilson, seconded by Cynthia Naylor. The motion passed 5-0.

City Manager Thatcher Moddie introduced a proposed new member to the Planning and Zoning Commission, Rhonda Rice. She has turned in the appropriate application and would like to join. The application was made available for all to read.

Cynthia Naylor made a motion to recommend Rhonda Rice join the Planning and Zoning Commission to the City Commission. Motion was seconded by Janet Wade. The motion passed 5-0.

Discussion was had on a setback ordinance. City Manager Thatcher Moddie introduced his background on the issue, trying to learn what had happened in the past. Karen Soliz noted we discussed this extensively in the past. Janet Wade commented that her recommendation was to change the residential set back from 15 feet to 5 feet in the back and side yards. We did not look at business or commercial districts. Neighborhood Services Director James Masters added, the multiple residential areas did not match and so the attempt was to get them to that point. Mr. Moddie asked what was our goal in working on this matter? Ms. Wade and Mr. Masters agreed the old standards are very limiting and it would be easier to avoid having people get variances on "tool sheds" constantly. Mr. Moddie thought City Attorney Brad Jantz might offer scenarios where five feet would not work. The Commission, as a consensus, thought five feet should be the set back. Mr. Moddie offered that staff will look at zoning regulations where the five foot is needed and supply that to Mr. Jantz. From there. Mr. Jantz will provide a draft ordinance for the Planning and Zoning Commission to vote or recommend changes. If passed it will go to the City Commission for a final vote. If not, it will go back to Mr. Jantz.

A Discussion on an RV ordinance was had. City Manager Thatcher Moddie noted it seems we are starting from scratch. We could look at other cities to see what they do. Input is needed on where to go from here. Thoughts were given as to what was discussed in the past while a previous Neighborhood Services Director was employed. Current Neighborhood Services Director James Masters shared some regulations used in neighboring community Council Grove. Some past discussions were shared which included time limits, not to extend past the front of the house, parked behind a fence, and parked in back yards. Janet Wade found August 2022 subcommittee notes that she could provide to staff for them to work from.

A presentation of the Planning and Zoning Commission to the City Commission was discussed. Mr. Moddie asked for it to be an update on what had been accomplished and what is being worked on. It was decided that Marcus Hawkes would do the presentation and would like to do it at the November 7th meeting.

A Flood Plain update was given by Janet Wade. Ms. Wade had forwarded an email to all. The finalization date for the flood plain map is March 13, 2024. Ms. Wade noted the city should have or will receive all appropriate literature and official letters regarding this. We will need to work on appropriate ordinances that will apply to this.

A discussion of the Browns field downtown redevelopment program was brought by Janet Wade. The Flint Hills Regional Council has a grant to support small communities through the FHA to help restore buildings. Ms. Wade and Ms. Rice attended a workshop about this program. Junction City and Ogden has benefitted from this. After the workshop members of the FHRC walked Herington and expressed it to be an ideal candidate for the grant. It would be of no cost to the city and could provide a mini comprehensive plan, as well as structural analysis, and reuse alternatives. The FHRC will be at the October 3rd City Commission meeting to discuss the grant.

Commissioner Comments:

Karen Soliz- Looks forward to the discussion on an RV ordinance. They do not belong on the street.

Janet Wade- None

Cynthia Naylor- None

Josh Lawrenz- None

Marcus Hawkes- None

Joshua Lawrenz made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by DJ Neuberger and the motion carried 5-0

Chanda Wilson, Deputy City Clerk