

MINUTES
August 26, 2019
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
7:00 P.M.

Council Members in Attendance: Kent Butler
Sam Crowl
Sarah Grace
Peter Kotses
Patrick McGee
Jeff Risner

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson

Item Discussed:

- Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Paul Logue, City Planner – it is time to approve an updated county-wide multi-jurisdictional natural hazard mitigation plan (see attached summary – a consolidated plan will be submitted to the Ohio EPA and to FEMA – the plan must be adopted by December 31, 2019 – failure to have an adopted plan could have significant cost to the City during any natural hazard event (see attached list of funding received for a flooding event earlier in 2019) – these funds would not have been received without having this plan in place
 - McGee – asked if substantial changes are being made to the plan
 - Logue – it will include new data from the State and updates on the definition of a natural hazard, previously was all weather related, but are now considering inclusion of the impact of invasive species
 - Crowl – asked who created the Natural Hazard Risk Assessment, the federal government, or officials in our area (see attached)
 - Logue – it is a combination of both
 - Crowl – would inclusion of invasive species need to be approved by the federal government, or can we simply add what we consider a natural hazard
 - Logue – will be assessed on public health risks and impacts
 - Fahl – emphasized that there are so many unknown disasters, so different types of scenarios need to be viewed – important to look at mosquitos

-Logue – have a lot of support from the City-County Health Department – they provide updates on the threat of ticks and mosquitos – encouraged Council to complete the online survey and to share it with others

- Affordable Housing Commission

-Sarah Grace, Council Member and Chair of the Affordable Housing Commission – reported that a significant factor in the City of Athens is that 77% of the housing stock is rental property – with City regulations, and the cost and scarcity of land in the City, developers can't develop affordable housing within the pricing criteria, \$125,000 to \$250,000 for starter homes, retirement homes, homes for those facing mobility challenges, to low income – presented the Commission's recommendations for action (see attached)

-Risner – asked about existing housing stock with Ohio University's declining enrollment, leaving some student rentals unoccupied that could be refurbished into single-family affordable housing

-Grace – presents the prospect for neighborhood revitalization for properties no longer in demand for student use -- could transition back into owner-occupied – this would be a slow, steady approach while waiting for the opportunity

-Logue – this has been discussed in great detail – there appears to be more rental signs on property at this time than in past years – first strategy of the Commission is to look at buildable land that already exists – then how to address housing that already exists, which is complicated by needing to acquire real estate without available capital in place – needs additional research

-Fahl – believes sustainability is a key issue when discussing affordable housing opportunities – also, need to keep in mind balancing density and green space through smart development and design

-Butler – public-private partnerships are important to incentivize acquisition – focus on smart growth – hopeful to turn these recommendations into reality

-Kotses – supports revitalization of neighborhoods and return to owner-occupied homes through rehabilitation of existing housing

-Crowl – the Addendum incentives are great moving forward

-Logue – these incentives can be enacted by the City, making us part of the solution, rather than total reliance on other entities

-Butler – again, many smaller homes in our near uptown neighborhoods could be great investments in providing affordable housing

-Mayor – supports plan 100% -- there is a huge need for affordable housing in Athens – a lot of opportunity on The Ridges for mixed-use housing

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

- 1.** Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2.** Affordable Housing Plan

MINUTES
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
AUGUST 26, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Chris Fahl, Chair
Jeff Risner, Vice-Chair
Patrick McGee, Member
Sarah Grace, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson

Items Discussed:

- Short-Term Rentals
 - Fahl – would like to regulate to ensure safety, diversify income needs within the community, and assist with the collection of transient guest taxes – this will be a multi-step approach – the first step is to forward a recommendation to the City Planning Commission to request changes in zoning, Title 23, to accommodate short-term rentals – changes being requested are to allow homestays in R-1 and R-2 residential zones to be a permitted accessory use and tourist homes a conditionally permitted use; and to change bed & breakfasts in R-3 and Business zones from a conditionally permitted use to a principal permitted use – all meetings of the Planning Commission are open to the public and a public hearing will likely be held – there will also be many opportunities for public input at City Council meetings – an ordinance is the second step to amend Title 11, Business Regulations, to provide the procedures and licensing required for each type of short-term rental – this offers an opportunity to improve and revitalize our neighborhoods
 - Mary Abel, Strathmore Boulevard – asked for the definition of a short-term rental
 - Fahl – it is any rental for less than 30 days
 - Grace – explained that there will be different licenses for the type of short-term rental being sought
- Commission on Disabilities
 - Fahl – the Commission has requested a change from May 1 to January 1 for all member appointments; a change from July 1 to October 1 for nominations to be submitted for the Athena award; and that recipients will be honored on a date and location selected by the award committee and approved by the Mayor, instead of at the annual disabilities speaks event.

- Title 35
 - Fahl – needs to be repealed and replaced with more current regulations
 - Risner – noted that cable revenues are declining with fewer dollars coming back to the cities
- Hillcrest Annexation Zoning
 - Fahl – the City Planning Commission has recommended that the recently approved annexation area of approximately .073 acres on Hillcrest Drive be zoned as R-1
- City-County Sewer Extension (amend agreement)
 - Fahl – Section 2.2.2 within the agreement needs to be amended to extend the time allowed for the County's payment of capacity fees to the City

ITEMS NEEDED ON THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. Short-Term Rental Resolution
2. Commission on Disabilities (amend)
3. Title 35 (amend)
4. Hillcrest Zoning
5. City-County Sewer

MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
AUGUST 26, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Peter Kotses, Chair
Patrick McGee, Vice-Chair
Sam Crawl, Member

Administrators and/or
Other Elected Officials: President Knisely
Mayor Patterson

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- Athens Uptown Business Association (AUBA) Trick or Treat
 - Kotses – street closure request
 - Michele Oestrike, President, Athens Area Chamber of Commerce – asked that on Monday, October 28, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm, Court Street from Union to Carpenter, Washington from Congress to the Parking Garage, and State Street from Congress to College be closed – same as past years
 - Crawl – asked about the date for the annual Halloween event in uptown Athens
 - Kotses – it is on Saturday, October 26
 - Oestrike – asked about City-wide Trick-or-Treat
 - Mayor – this year and moving forward, under his Administration, trick-or-treat in the City will always be on October 31st, and the hours will be extended from 5:30-7:30 pm
- Halloween
 - Kotses – City will close Court Street from Mulberry to Carpenter on Saturday, October 26, as necessary – will also suspend the City's Noise and Vending regulations, and Parking Garage rates
 - McGee – asked about City contributions to the event organizer
 - Mayor – there are no contributions made to the Clean & Safe Halloween Committee – the City expends approximately \$60,000 annually just for services to ensure the event is as safe as we can possibly make it – the Committee should look toward sponsorships
 - McGee – asked who to contact on the Committee
 - Mayor – Brandon Thompson

- Kotses – asked if the Halloween event will be part of the process next January to schedule street closures for the year
- Mayor – absolutely – all event planners will be invited to attend a meeting to set the complete calendar of events for the entire year

ITEMS NEEDED ON AN UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL AGENDA:

1. AUBA
2. Halloween