

Athens City Planning Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 16, 2014, 12:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission was held in the Council Chambers, third floor, at City Hall on January 16, 2014.

Attendees: Jeff Risner.

1. **Call to Order**

RJ Sumney called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 12:03 p.m. and administered the oath to all who intended to speak before the commission. Quorum was established.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Nicholas Bittner, Chair Absent
RJ Sumney, Vice Chair Present
Nancy Bain Present
Paul Wiehl, Mayor Present
Paula Horan Moseley, Service-Safety Director..... Present

STAFF:

Paul Logue, City Planner Absent
John Paszke, Director of DEF Present

2. **Disposition of Minutes**

Paul Wiehl *moved to approve the minutes of December 5, 2013. Nancy Bain seconded. All voted aye, Mayor Wiehl abstained.*

3. **Cases**

None

4. **Communications**

Title 23, Zoning Code (continue review)

John Paszke has been working on updating the Athens City Zoning Code by adding language from the state code into our current code.

Mayor Paul Wiehl reminded the commission members that bed and breakfasts are not listed in our code and the commission has discussed adding this to the code.

The commission discussed using models from other cities; such as Zanesville, Lancaster, and/or Columbus. There are uses that currently exist that are not addressed in the city code. Nancy Bain asked the commission to consider how to prepare for new uses or the

potential of them in the future. John Paszke said new uses that are not outlined in the code would need to go through the Board of Zoning Appeals review process for approval.

Paula Horan Moseley felt the goal should be to preserve our neighborhoods but to foster a vibrant commercial district as well.

The commission discussed smaller operations and the preservation of the neighborhoods; hours of operation, distance requirements, and traffic have been discussed in the past and are still major considerations.

The B-3 zone should be a distinct commercial use but Nancy Bain felt the residential student housing is still the driving force in most areas. Nancy Bain said she would like to see the business areas increased but she does not think that our current code language is helping with this endeavor. RJ Sumney said he feels the nature of businesses are changing and the need for more space is lessening and the trend is moving towards more home businesses.

The commission discussed Columbus as a model for residential, business areas, and buffer zones. John Paszke stated that Columbus has a larger business district and a larger land mass to provide a buffer zone between residential and commercial areas. Nancy Bain felt Athens might be better suited to more mixed use zones. The commission recognized the need for opportunities for more businesses but it is unclear to where this could occur.

RJ Sumney wondered if annexation or rezoning would accomplish the goal to provide more business zones in Athens. Paula Horan Moseley said we need to be mindful of future expansions at Ohio University.

The commission members discussed Miami Springs in relation to Athens; college campus and population. Where do you put businesses to bring jobs to the city? The Comprehensive Plan talks about growth towards Albany but many businesses are on the east end of town.

John Paszke said he would provide a draft with updates to the code to the commission for their review and consideration. There will be cases on the agenda for the next meeting in February. The commission will talk about at the next meeting the possibility of scheduling a work session to continue the Title 23 Zoning Code review.

5. Report from City Planner and Director DEF

John Paszke

1. Board of Zoning Appeals
 - A. No meeting – no cases
 - B. North May – Approved

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2. PC Cases

Feb 6, 2014 – John Valentour, Title 41 - application received

6. **Opportunity for Citizens to Speak**

None

7. **Announcements & Other Business**

The next meeting of the commission will be February 6, 2014. The city offices will be closed on Monday, January 20, 2014, but there will **not** be a delay in trash pickup.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

RJ Sumney, Vice Chair
City Planning Commission

Sharlene Bails, Recording Secretary
City of Athens