

**City of Camden
Planning Commission
August 21, 2012**

Minutes

The City of Camden Planning Commission met for a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 21, 2012 at 6:00 PM at City Hall. Commission members present were Mr. Bill Ligon, Chairman; Mr. Jim Burns, Ms. Joanna Craig, Mr. Johnny Deal, Mr. Brandon Moore, Mr. Charles Wood, Mr. Byron Johnson and Mr. Shawn Putnam, Secretary. Also present were Ms. Cheryl Matheny and Ms. Liz Gilland.

Mr. Ligon entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the July 9, 2012 and July 17, 2012 meetings. Mr. Burns moved to accept the minutes, and Mr. Wood seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Recommendation for final zoning – 1.08 acres parcel located at 2209 West Dekalb Street

Mr. Burns moved to open the public hearing, and Mr. Deal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. No one spoke during the hearing. Mr. Burns moved to close the public hearing and Mr. Deal seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Putnam noted that City Council approved the interim zoning classification as General Development (GD). He recommended the final zoning classification also be General Development.

Mr. Burns made a motion to recommend to City Council to give the property a final zoning classification of General Development. Mr. Wood seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Amendment to the zoning ordinance regarding affordable housing

Mr. Putnam explained that the city received a CDBG grant in 2010 to make infrastructure improvements in a low to moderate income neighborhood, and a condition of the grant was to amend the zoning ordinance to include a provision on affordable housing. This amendment will meet that requirement and allow the grant to be closed.

This amendment provides developers an incentive in the form of a density bonus to include affordable housing units in their projects. The density bonus available is to add one additional fair market rate dwelling unit for each affordable dwelling unit included in the development. This will only apply to rental multi-family housing developments that contain a minimum of ten housing units. The density may only be increased to a maximum of 25% of the maximum residential density allowed in the specific zoning district.

The amendment includes a requirement that affordable housing units have to be mixed in with market rate housing units and cannot be clustered together. If the development is built in phases,

the affordable housing units cannot be all built in the last phase. Additionally, the exterior appearance of affordable housing units must be similar to the market rate housing units by using similar building and finishing materials.

The amendment also includes a requirement for an Affordable Housing Development Agreement that contains requirements that the affordable housing units will only be rented to households that meet the definition of low-income or moderate-income as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The agreement must also state that the affordable housing units will be restricted to ensure they are rented at rates affordable for low and moderate households for a period of 30 years.

Ms. Craig moved to open the public hearing, and Mr. Burns seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. No one spoke during the hearing. Ms. Craig moved to close the public hearing and Mr. Deal seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Craig asked if this was in anticipation of having affordable housing or if the city has received requests for it. Mr. Putnam indicated that he was not aware of any developers requesting it, but this would give them an incentive. Mr. Wood asked if this could be expanded later. Mr. Putnam stated that it could be expanded later to include for sale property.

Ms. Craig made a motion to recommend the proposed amendment to City Council as presented. Mr. Moore seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Discussion on five-year update to Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Putnam stated that the city is required to conduct a five-year update to the comprehensive plan according to state law. State law was amended at the same time our plan was adopted, so there are some revisions to comply state law. Here is a list of the items staff suggested to revise and/or update to come into compliance with state law.

- Update data in the population and housing elements as available
- Revise the housing element to include affordable housing
- Add a transportation element
- Add a priority investment element
- Review goals and objectives and add and/or remove as needed

Mr. Deal asked for an explanation of the priority investment element. Ms. Matheny stated it is a mandate from the state for local governments to coordinate on infrastructure needs. It also states the community will review possible funding sources for infrastructure projects that are identified. Commission members agreed to the proposed scope of work for the plan update.

Presentation on Zoning Ordinance Update

Ms. Matheny reviewed comments on buffers and landscaping from the previous meeting and indicated they were working on those edits. The purpose of this meeting is to review open space and tree conservation requirements. Ms. Matheny focused on the revisions to the buffer table and

noted that buffers would be required between single family/duplexes and multi-family residential units. The Commission members agreed to the revised table.

Ms. Matheny then reviewed comments from the March workshop on open space requirements. These requirements include allowing cluster developments, clearer explanations of what qualifies as open space and when open space is required, adding an option to have land trusts own open space areas, and open space requirements for single family and multi-family residential developments, as well as manufactured home parks.

The Commission then discussed proposed open space requirements and agreed on the following points: require open space for single family developments for 20 or more units and multi-family developments with 9 or more units; require clustering of non-environmental open space around edges of developments; require average slopes in open space areas to be between 5-15%; prohibit high maintenance facilities in open space areas, such as pools, and bridges; and give developers the option to dedicate open space into a greenway system.

Ms. Matheny then reviewed comments from the March workshop regarding tree conservation. Based on those comments, she asked if it would be acceptable to require trees between 8 and 25 inches in diameter to be protected. The Commission agreed as long as it would not unreasonably restrict development while protecting trees.

Ms. Gilland explained the idea of a tree fund, which is an option that would allow developers to pay for trees that were required in the event they could not plant or preserve for some reason. The Commission members approved of the concept and asked it be included in the ordinance. Ms. Gilland gave a brief presentation on tree conservation and made recommendations for the ordinance, including requiring tree protection areas to be 2 feet in diameter for every 1 inch of tree diameter at breast height (DBH), require substantial fencing and signage to mark tree protection areas, and incorporate retaining walls into areas where significant cut and fill areas.

Several members expressed concern about tree conservation requirements being applied to individual single family lots. After a lengthy discussion the Commission agreed to not apply tree conservation requirements to individual single family lots. Commission members asked that tree conservation requirements be written to provide the Urban Forester flexibility in making determinations regarding the safety and health of significant trees on development sites. They also agreed that tree conservation requirements should be reasonable, and that requirements for public and private trees be consistent regarding maintenance, planting and replacement.

There being no further business, Ms. Craig made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Moore seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.

Shawn Putnam
Secretary

Bill Ligon
Chairman