

MINUTES
COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2022
7:00 P.M.

WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
MEETING ROOM A/B, LOWER LEVEL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Walt Crowder
Chip Hill
Jon Kissinger
Don Langeloh
Dennis Warnick
Dan Weigold
Larry Weiss
Patrick Zickgraf

MEMBERS ABSENT

Doug Graft

STAFF

Nathan Bilger

ATTORNEY

Dawn Boyd (E)
(E)lectronic participant

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Guest List, attached, was signed by four visitors. There were no attendees on the webcast.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

President Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Bilger read the roll call with members present and absent listed above.

CONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The January 3, 2022, regular meeting minutes were presented for review. Mr. Bilger pointed out two corrections needed on page 3. It was the consensus of the Commission that in the third paragraph under Other Business, the fourth sentence should read, "Mayor Daniel suggested the Commission consider extending the extraterritorial jurisdiction around the TIF properties," and, under Adjournment, the minutes should reflect that Mr. Warnick gave the second to the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Warnick made a motion to accept the minutes with the amendments; Mr. Langeloh gave the second. Motion passed 8-0.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH TO WITNESSES

Two visitors were sworn in by Ms. Boyd.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 22-C-SUBD-2

Triangular Development, LLC, requested primary plat approval of a 1-lot subdivision proposed to be called Richmond Park. Mr. Bilger summarized the Staff Report. He described the proposal to plat 3 acres from the existing 11.6 acre lot (of Blue River Industrial Park, Phase II, Section 2) and noted that the remaining parcel, being over 5 acres, was currently exempt from the platting process but would need platted if it were divided in the future. Mr. Bilger suggested three conditions of approval:

1. Consult with the Drainage Board on the potential impact of future planned development.
2. Record covenants, maintenance agreement, or similar to provide for the maintenance of the shared driveway.
3. Secondary plat approval be delegated to staff.

There were no questions for Mr. Bilger, and Mr. Weiss invited the petitioner to speak. Kevin Michel of Walker & Associates was present on behalf of Triangular Development. He stated that water from this property drains to the east and that none goes to the County tile to the south. Due to this fact, he asked if the proposed plat needed a notation about consulting with the Drainage Board.

Mr. Langeloh asked if the property to the south would receive more water. Mr. Michel replied that no change to the water flow was proposed and all would continue to flow east. Mr. Zickgraf asked if there was room for additional development. Mr. Michel was unsure of the developer's long term plans, but he stated that altering the topography would cause the need to rework detention if construction were to occur. Mr. Michel clarified for Mr. Weiss that the area of consideration was the 3 acres with the existing building, and the future plan for the remainder piece was unknown. There being no further questions from the Commission, Mr. Weiss asked if anyone present wished to speak with regard to the petition. Hearing none, Mr. Weiss closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Zickgraf asked if the City had any concerns regarding the existing infrastructure. Mr. Hill replied that there were none. Mr. Langeloh asked if covenants had been provided. Mr. Bilger stated that covenants for Blue River Industrial Park would be carried forward; he clarified that his suggested condition was that some method of a maintenance agreement be created, whether that be a specific agreement or a covenant on the plat. Mr. Warnick asked if further platting would warrant new covenants. Mr. Bilger said the Blue River Industrial Park covenants would still carry forward, and it would be the developer's option to add to them or seek to dissolve them. Mr. Warnick made a motion to approve the petition with the suggested conditions. Mr. Kissinger gave the second. Motion passed 8-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Continued discussion of the extraterritorial jurisdiction

Mr. Bilger stated that the ad hoc committee had met and attempted to refine some of the ideas presented at the January Plan Commission meeting. He displayed a 1978 map of the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and noted how similar it was to the existing area. He then

referenced a draft the ad hoc committee had developed, which had been included in the Commission members' meeting packets, and described the proposed boundary and the thoughts behind where the line was drawn. He stated that some scrutiny is likely needed where the boundary follows a section line, because some properties divided by the section line are of common ownership and potentially should fall under the same jurisdiction.

Mr. Bilger said the next steps in this process would be workshops to finalize the draft, public hearings, amending the Comprehensive Plan, and assigning zoning to the ETJ. He asked if the Commission members had any comments about the draft, but there were none. Mr. Weiss asked if Mayor Daniel had discussed this topic with the Commissioners. Mr. Bilger replied that the conversation had not yet taken place, but it would in the near future. Mr. Warnick asked if documents would be updated before presenting the ETJ proposal to City Council. Mr. Bilger stated the amendments would need completed before the Council could provide an approval. He clarified that the concept would be discussed with the appropriate parties prior to changing any documents so that no amendments would be made unnecessarily. Mr. Hill offered some reassurance on the topic, stating that the conversations he was aware of had been positive.

Mr. Bilger suggested the Commission members consider the details of the draft and prepare comments for further discussion. Mr. Langeloh asked about zoning. Mr. Bilger said zoning would be part of the Comprehensive Plan amendment. He added that it could be as simple as preserving existing zoning as much as possible by assigning corresponding City zones; for example, County Agricultural (AG) could become City Agricultural (A-1). Or, he continued, it may be beneficial to act with forethought and assign new zoning. Mr. Kissinger asked if the County's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) area was expected to grow. Mr. Bilger stated that the TIF was set to expire in 12 years, and, if not reestablished, the expiration would likely cause reevaluation of the ETJ.

Mr. Weiss requested that conversations between the political parties take place and prove favorable before any amendments occur. The Commission also discussed the importance of communicating to the public the benefits of owning property in the ETJ. It was the consensus of the Commission that they review the draft outline in detail and prepare feedback for the committee.

There was no other business to discuss. Mr. Warnick asked if Mr. Bilger wanted to announce a future staffing arrangement that he had revealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Bilger then described his plan for Ms. Thompson to manage duties for the Plan Commissions (Columbia City, Churubusco, South Whitley, and Whitley County) and for Mr. Bockelman to manage duties for the Boards of Zoning Appeals. Historically, one staff member managed both Boards and Commissions for Columbia City, Churubusco, and South Whitley, while another staff member managed the County's Board and Commission. Mr. Bilger expected the transition to occur sometime after the completion of the County's Comprehensive Plan amendment, which he estimated would be around June or sooner.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Kissinger made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Zickgraf gave the second, and Mr. Weiss declared the meeting adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

GUEST LIST

1. Kevin Michel, Walker & Associates 4242 S. 700 East, Columbia City
2. Dave Stemen 1292 S. Raber Road, Columbia City
3. Tom Maher 365 W. Gates Road, Columbia City
4. Amy Maher 365 W. Gates Road, Columbia City

GUEST LIST (WEBCAST)

5. No electronic attendees