

MINUTES
SOUTH WHITLEY PLAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022
6:30 P.M.

SOUTH WHITLEY TOWN HALL
118 E. Front Street, South Whitley

MEMBERS PRESENT

Wendy Bills, President (6:35 P.M.)
Brock Waterson, Vice President
Sherri Ayres
Randy Cokl
Les Hoffman
Anna Simmons

STAFF

Nathan Bilger

MEMBERS ABSENT

Timothy Gable

VISITORS

There were no visitors at the April 18, 2022, South Whitley Plan Commission meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Bilger called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Bilger read the roll call with those members present and absent listed above.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Cokl made a motion to retain the 2021 officers for 2022. Mr. Hoffman gave the second; motion passed 5-0. The 2022 officers are: Wendy Bills, President; Brock Waterson, Vice President; and Sherri Ayres, Representative to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE DECEMBER 20, 2021, MINUTES

Mr. Bilger asked if there were any additions or corrections for the December minutes. There were none. Ms. Ayres made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Cokl gave the second; motion passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bilger announced that the Redevelopment Commission plans to encourage residential development downtown by creating a housing Tax Increment Finance District. He said a property for sale and a potential buyer/developer have been identified and are in the beginning stages of discussion. Mr. Bilger stated that while considering development of the property, he realized the South Whitley Zoning Ordinance lists the same lot width requirement for the R-1, Single-Family Residential District, and the R-2, Two-Family Residential District. Mr. Bilger explained this means there is little to no benefit from the R-2 zoning, and he recommended amending the Code with standards similar to the Columbia City Zoning Ordinance, allowing a smaller lot width for the R-2 district. The members considered various lot sizes. Mr. Bilger additionally pointed out that the current standards potentially create a hardship when applied to properties in the town's historical neighborhoods. Mr. Waterson expressed that developers need to be able to create enough lots in order to profit from their development. He added that a developer he spoke with recently said he would not be interested in developing property under the current lot standards. Several members voiced being aware of the need for residential growth as they have recently attempted to assist individuals in search of housing in the area. It was the consensus of the Commission that Mr. Bilger prepare a draft of the discussed revisions. He anticipated the document would be ready for review at the May or June meeting.

Mr. Bilger acknowledged that the members had been emailed a copy of the 2021 Annual Report which showed another record number of building permits had been issued, including several single-family dwellings for South Whitley.

There was a brief discussion of the Town's commercial properties, many of which have changed ownership recently or are expected to in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Bills made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cokl gave the second, and the members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 P.M.