

PC Minutes 11/18/09

ITEM NO. 4 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 14 (MJL)

CPA-2-1-09: Consider a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Chapter 14 – Specific Plans to approve and incorporate by reference the Oread Neighborhood Plan.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Ms. Michelle Leininger presented the item.

Mr. McCullough said the action requested there were good comments for PC to filter out. Some are easily implemented in the plan and others may be up for discussion. Looking for PC to filter through the comments.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Dennis Brown, President of Lawrence Preservation Alliance (LPA), reviewed the letter he sent for communications that was included in the packet. He asked for another month to review the plan.

Ms. Elle LeCompte talked briefly about parking and said that with a dumpster that would leaves 4 parking spaces off the alley and most boarding houses have more than 4 people. She said that most Oread neighborhoods only have parking on one side of the street. She recommended that congregate living units have 1 parking space per bedroom.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked if she had any desire for a parking permit program.

Ms. LeCompte wondered who would administer and enforce such a program. She did not think it would work all that well.

Mr. Kyle Thompson, President of Oread Neighborhood Association, said about 18 yrs ago a parking permit program was attempted to implement and they ran into a lot of objection. He said it came down to having 50% of property owners on each block to approve it and that wasn't able to happen since there are a lot of rental properties.

Commissioner Harris asked where the 50% requirement of landowners approval came from.

Mr. Thompson said it was a City Commission requirement at the time.

Commissioner Harris asked if it was a City Commission rule at the time but not part of the Code.

Mr. Thompson said yes.

Commissioner Carter inquired about Edgehill Road being eliminated from the Oread Plan.

Mr. Thompson said he was not on the board at the time so he was not sure.

Commissioner Carter asked if there is someone former from the board that could answer that,

Mr. Thompson said he was not sure.

Ms. Marci Francisco, 1101 Ohio Street, said several of the neighborhood association members met and had a few concerns and a letter was provided that was included in the Planning Commission packet. She said the bike lane on Louisiana Street is only two blocks now. She appreciated the

discussion regarding trash dumpsters. The proposed overlay districts, two boundaries are along alleys. She said the 1100 block of Ohio has no alley and is hard to provide parking.

Commissioner Harris inquired about restoring brick sidewalks and the words uncovered or covered.

Ms. Francisco said the words were just moved.

Commissioner Harris asked if the neighborhood wishes to have the brick restored.

Ms. Francisco said traffic patterns would have to be looked at because it may not be feasible to take the asphalt off of the brick on streets such as Tennessee Street.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked for Ms. Francisco's comments on the proposed overlay map.

Ms. Francisco said there are still single family residences on Ohio Street and that it doesn't make sense to indicate that would be a place for high density. High density is not appropriate with steep slopes. Kentucky & Tennessee have a lot of traffic and there are people who are uncomfortable raising a family on that busy of a street. Ohio is not nearly as busy with traffic so it is a nicer street for single families.

Ms. Candice Davis said she was interested in keeping people in the neighborhood year round. She said crime has gone up and there are less people living there year round. She said that property maintenance issues are important. She said that higher density with more parking would be a problem.

Ms. Carol von Tersch said the Oread Neighborhood is already a developed neighborhood and a majority of the structures were built as single family with few boarding houses. She said a goal was to stabilize the neighborhood and put policies in place to address demolition by neglect. She said that conversion of boarding houses does not best preserve structures. Increased density affects livability and discourages families. She discussed the economic impact of the loss of historic character to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked her if she had an idea to address the zoning density RM32.

Ms. von Tersch said an overlay district may address it without down zoning.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Harris asked about the placement of trash dumpsters and if the city will need permission from the owners.

Mr. McCullough said yes, his understanding in talking to Solid Waste is that they will contact the home owner.

Commissioner Harris asked staff if there were any specific public comments the Commission should address.

Mr. McCullough said there were new comments related to the plan from the Oread Neighborhood Association, Ms. Francisco, Ms. LeCompte, and Mr. Watts included in the packet. He said Mr. Watts would like his property included in the Oread Plan. He said staff does not necessarily believe the Oread Plan needs to meet up the boundaries of the neighborhood association.

Commissioner Rasmussen said he had a general concern that there are areas in the Oread neighborhood that are becoming a student ghetto which is a real concern and should be included in the plan. He felt there should be more aggressive enforcement of existing ordinances.

Mr. McCullough said the plan attempts to address that by including neighborhood cleanup, trash pickup, and expanding rental registration. He said the Oread neighborhood gets more trash pickup than other neighborhoods for the same cost.

Commissioner Harris agreed that additional trash service is needed for that area but that it should be paid for. Suggested that yards be picked up within 24 hours of the game or a fine will be given to the property owner.

Commissioner Moore said the Oread neighborhood had good recommendations but that the one space per bedroom could be confusing. He stated that Edgehill Road could be incorporate into the Neighborhood Plan and doesn't affect the neighborhood association boundaries but that it might muddy the waters more.

Commissioner Finkeldei agreed with Moore about the recommendations being good and said they should all be incorporated except the parking one. He also liked the suggestions by Ms. Francisco. He said they could add comments about the reason for doing the plan is because of the changes/perceptions. He did think something could be added to increase trash pickup as something general. Suggested an Oread neighborhood rental program paid for by these landlords.

Commissioner Hird discussed relieving the parking problem through better use of alternate forms of transportation.

Commissioner Rasmussen said the existing zoning map shows RM32 for a large percentage. He wondered about suggestions from staff on how to rezone portions of that. He liked the suggested mixed se.

Commissioner Blaser asked about the Barber Emerson letter.

Mr. McCullough said staff responded and excluding them would leave an island. They are not in the downtown area, they are in the Oread neighborhood.

Commissioner Carter asked what would be the problem with including Edgehill Road in the plan.

Commissioner Moore discussed the tone and tenor of the conversations and that it might muddy the waters.

Commissioner Harris said if the area needs planning then it should be included in the Oread Plan.

Commissioner Rasmussen agreed.

Commissioner Finkeldei wondered if the should include that area and say something specific about the area or parking such as future land use and parking restrictions.

Ms. Francisco said the two lots in question are both single family and may fit more appropriately with University Place. The edge is drawn along the fraternity between low density and high density. The Oread Neighborhood Association helped get parking restricted in 2002 to address parking.

Commissioner Harris said it was important for that area to be part of some neighborhood plan. About the Oread Plan in general, she felt there should be more assertive language about trash enforcement, identify blocks that they want to preserve, and look at the parking change and the ramifications of it. She was not in favor of more boarding houses.

Commissioner Carter suggested inviting landlords to be on the Oread Neighborhood Association board.

NO ACTION TAKEN