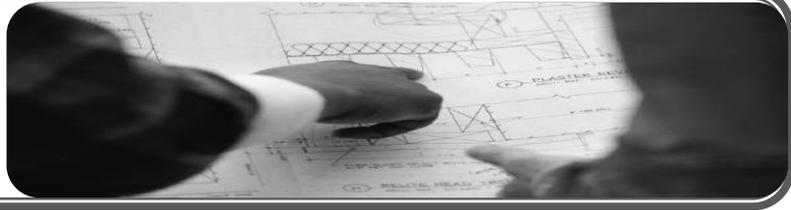


**WARREN CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2013**



The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on November 20, 2013, in the Conference Room of the Municipal Building at 7:30 AM.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Don Nelson called the meeting to order. Members present were: Charles Conaway, Robert Dilks, Jr., Gregory Fraser, Kenneth Holtz, Donald Nelson, Pat Scutella, and William Tarpenning. David Hildebrand, Planner/Development Administrator; Alan Gustafson, Building Code Inspector; Nancy Freenock, City Manager; and Teena Leary, Executive Secretary, were present.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to come before the Commission.

VISITORS

Josh Cotton, Times Observer reporter, was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Dilks and second by Mr. Tarpenning, the minutes of the September 18, 2013 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

BUSINESS:

RESIDENTIAL USE IN C-1 DISTRICT

(See also 9/18/13 minutes)

The Commission continued its discussion regarding residential use of structures within the C-1 Commercial Zoning District, most specifically, the return of structures originally designed/constructed for single-family residential use being permitted to return to such use. Mr. Hildebrand noted that the Zoning Ordinance currently allows multi-family use by special exception.

Mr. Hildebrand displayed a map of the C-1 District and indicated that approximately fifteen structures were designed/constructed for residential use but are now being used for commercial purposes. Mr. Hildebrand suggested that the Zoning Ordinance be amended by adding §470-26.B.14 as a permitted use which would state, "Dwelling, single-family detached if the structure existed prior to (insert date of ordinance amendment)." Also to be added to the Zoning Ordinance would be the following definition: "Dwelling, Single-Family Detached – A dwelling which is designed for and occupied by not more than one family and surrounded by open space or yards and which is not attached to any other dwelling by any means."

Commission members discussed the extent to which residential use should be permitted within the C-1 district (i.e. should new construction be permitted). Mr. Tarpenning expressed concern as to what options the owner of a residential structure would have should the structure burn or otherwise require demolition. Mr. Hildebrand stated that, under the current Zoning Ordinance, the structure could not be rebuilt as a residential structure.

Commission members requested that City staff further review options that might be available as a special exception(s) to the permitted C-1 uses.

HOUSING INITIATIVE

Mr. Hildebrand stated that City staff was contacted by a development group from western New York which specializes in renovating existing buildings into housing. It was noted that the group has requested that their name not be publicly disclosed as discussions are in the early stages.

Mr. Hildebrand noted that a goal of the group is historic preservation. The group has visited Warren to meet with Staff and to tour possible project areas which include under-utilized properties and vacant lots. The group's emphasis is on revitalizing areas near the downtown. Mr. Hildebrand noted that this would complement the efforts of a local group interested in developing a "Walkable Warren."

Commission members discussed the concept and noted that there is evidence of a need for such development. Mr. Hildebrand indicated that he will apprise the Commission as additional information becomes available.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EAST GATEWAY RENAISSANCE AND COMMERCIAL FAÇADE PROGRAM

Mr. Hildebrand noted that the portion of the City centered on Pennsylvania Avenue east of Conewango Avenue was originally a separate community known as East Warren and had its own downtown area. He suggested that the Commission, in cooperation with the Redevelopment Authority, Blighted Property Review Committee, and Street Landscape Committee, develop a plan for the revitalization of this area. He further suggested that a Façade Improvement Program be a part of this plan and that the Commission have oversight of the Façade Program. Members noted the need to improve the aesthetics of the eastern and western entrances to the City and Mr. Dilks suggested that corporations located within these corridors may be willing to provide sponsorship of the recommended programs.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.