

City of Norwich
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Norwich City Court

February 28, 2011
7:00 PM

Present: D. DeForest, K. Zaia, M. Stewart, H. Graves

Absent: R. Mirabito, L. Bunce, S. Pelosi, J. Stagliano

Staff: J. Lawrence, T. Dreyer, A. Donnison

I. Call to Order:

Chairman R. Mirabito was unable to attend this meeting and had requested that D. DeForest chair the meeting in his absence. D. DeForest called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. M. Stewart made a motion to accept the minutes of January 17, 2011, seconded by D. DeForest. Ayes all.

II. Comprehensive Plan Update:

T. Dreyer gave all members present a photocopy of the existing comprehensive plan to use as review tool that can be marked up as needed. T. Dreyer also distributed a suggested core topic plan to be used as a guideline each month. T. Dreyer asked members which they preferred, one topic per month or two? Some of the topics can be quite lengthy and involved. T. Dreyer also intends to issue a press release inviting the public and invite people who are involved in the topic of the month from different areas in the community.

M. Stewart asked if there had been any changes in the comprehensive plan since its adoption in 2003? D. DeForest stated no, this will be the first revision since its adoption. T. Dreyer stated that in the development of the current plan there was a steering committee, there will not be one for this update, as the Planning Commission members and Planning Department staff will perform the review with input from the public and interested parties.

T. Dreyer stated that new census figures will be out soon and this will help in the plan review process. New issues such as natural gas and railroad should be reviewed. In 2003 no one expected these two topics to be issues to review. T. Dreyer stated he expects changes to be rather limited, since the plan was just revised in 2003. There will be a general description of changes created as well.

H. Graves asked if the plan is to cover all the sub-topics under housing and other categories or are they so large they need to be split. K. Zaia stated that there probably is no way to be sure until we get into it. T. Dreyer stated that March 21, 2011 meeting date will be used to review the housing sections. T. Dreyer will put out a press release regarding this issue.

M. Stewart inquired if the City of Norwich has a five year plan. D. DeForest reminded the board that the Planning Commission can present a revised plan but it is the Common Council that determines what is actually adopted and what is followed. D. DeForest also stated that the City of Norwich does have a five year plan which includes infrastructure, parking lots, etc and that this document is always changing as priorities and administrations change. H. Graves asked what the exact task of this commission is regarding the update of the comprehensive plan. T. Dreyer stated it is an advisory recommendation to the Common Council only.

M. Stewart asked if the Comprehensive Plan is ever discussed at any of the City Committee meetings. D. DeForest stated yes, when it serves a purpose – such as a grant application in which a current comprehensive plan plays an important role.

M. Stewart asked if the Common Council will hold a public hearing prior to adopting any changes. D. DeForest stated that there will be two public hearings – one held by the Planning Commission and one held by the Common Council.

H. Graves asked for clarification from T. Dreyer as to what pages specifically will need to be reviewed. Pages 66 through 77 but that a review of the goals for the housing section would not be a bad idea.

V. Old Business:

none

VI. Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm on a motion made by M. Stewart and seconded by D. DeForest. Ayes all.