

City Planning Commission

Erie, Pennsylvania

June 16, 2020

-Minutes-

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission was held Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 1PM via Zoom webinar.

1. *Call to Order / Roll Call*

Member Name	Present	Absent
Mark Kloecker, Chair	X	
Richard Speicher, Vice-Chair	X	
Armand Chimenti		X
Erica Jenkins	X	
Jason Wiczorek	X	

Four of five members present; quorum achieved

2. *Approval of February 18, 2020 meeting minutes of the City Planning Commission.*

On a motion by Mr. Kloecker, seconded by Mr. Wiczorek, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes as received.

3. *Review of a replot of properties located at 329 West 5th Street located in an R-3 High Density Residential zoning district.*

Mr. Tim Polaski described the proposed replot and answered questions. He explained that the replot will convey property to the Erie County Historical Society and accommodate the 5th Street entrance and parking for the Canalside Townhouses. Mr. Welsh indicated that the proposed replot meets all subdivision and zoning requirements.

On a motion by Mr. Speicher, seconded by Mr. Kloecker, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the replot.

4. *Review of a replot of properties located at 1640 & 1648 West 21st Street located in an R-1 Low Density Residential zoning district.*

Mr. Welsh described the proposed replot. He explained that the replot will convey property from the rear of two residential lots to the Polymer Molding facility, to add a portion of their existing facility to their main parcel and also accommodate potential

future expansion. Mr. Welsh indicated that the proposed replot meets all subdivision and zoning requirements.

On a motion by Mr. Kloecker, seconded by Ms. Jenkins, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the subdivision.

5. *Academy-Marvintown Neighborhood Action Plan – Review and recommendation.*

City Planning Director Kathy Wyrosdick provided an introduction to the project; and a presentation was given illustrating the findings and recommendations. The document was also available on the City's website for review prior to the meeting. Highlights of the presentation and document:

The strategies described in the City's Comprehensive Plan, *Erie Refocused*, served as the base for the Academy-Marvintown Neighborhood Action Plan (the Plan), which included making Erie's healthy, stable, transitional middle market areas stronger and more sustainable through reinvestment and community engagement. As part of the Neighborhood Strengthening strategy, *Erie Refocused* called for five main approaches described below that have been incorporated into the Plan.

1. Promote reinvestment by homeowners on strong 'middle market' blocks.
2. Target the removal or rehab of distressed properties to encourage reinvestment by neighbors.
3. Initiate proactive code enforcement sweeps to maintain and spread high maintenance standards.
4. Invest in streetscape improvements along gateway corridors.
5. Cultivate resident leadership.

Emphasis was placed on the values and vision of the neighborhood's residents, and planning began by attending neighborhood and stakeholder meetings, assembling a core planning team with community and city leaders, conducting a door-to-door neighborhood survey, and holding community meetings to review plan recommendations. Neighborhood priorities were identified; Street Lighting was reported as a top priority, followed by Community Safety and Street Repairs.

A housing market analysis and property condition surveys were conducted to document the current housing market and conditions; including identifying unsound properties, rentals, vacancy, and open code violations, in order to identify priority properties for demolition or blight designation, code enforcement, or rehabilitation.

In addition to the targeted property strategy, several neighborhood wide strategies were identified in the draft document to further strengthen the housing market and build a stronger community:

- **Market Building Activity:** Gateway signage, landscape improvements, and marketing of Academy's slogan 'Live, Learn, Grow' can all help build a strong neighborhood identity and promote the neighborhood to potential residents.
- **Encouraging Homeownership:** Academy-Marvintown is considered a good entry-level housing market for new home buyers. Vacant properties in good condition should be marketed exclusively to owner-occupants in order to further strengthen the housing market.
- **Community Building:** Building fellowship within a community is essential to promote lasting neighborhood investment. A strong community provides support, safety, and a positive atmosphere for a growing neighborhood.
- **Engaging Anchor Institutions:** Academy-Marvintown neighborhood contains several anchor institutions, including four Erie Public Schools. As Erie Public Schools begin implementing service learning into their curriculum, faculty and community leaders should partner to promote community service opportunities within their neighborhoods.
- **Engaging the Business Community:** The major corridors of 26th Street, State Street, and Parade Street contain a number of locally-owned businesses. Promoting these businesses through neighborhood websites and community events is vital to building community support and reinforcing local economy.
- **Economic Development:** Façade improvement programs will be targeted to owners along Parade Street with help from Sister's of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network (SSJNN) and Erie Redevelopment Authority (ERA).

After further discussion of the planning process and recommendations, Ms. Wyrosdick indicated that the next step is for the planning commission to consider endorsing the plan for approval by City Council. The Planning Commission will also be asked to support and prioritize programs and projects that directly align with the Plan.

On a motion by Mr. Kloecker, seconded by Mr. Speicher, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommended approval and adoption of the Academy-Marvintown Neighborhood Action Plan by Erie City Council.

6. *Adjournment*