

CITY OF WHITEWATER
PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION
Whitewater Municipal Building Community Room
May 14, 2009

**ABSTRACTS/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL
ACTIONS OF THE PLAN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Zaballos at 6:02 pm. PRESENT: Binnie, Coburn, Dalee, Stone, Torres, Zaballos. ABSENT: Miller. OTHERS: Brunner/City Manager, Kienbaum/City Council (until 7:30 pm), Singer/City Council, Parker/Zoning Administrator, Nimm/CDA, Fischer/DPW, Saubert/Finance, Amundson/Park & Recreation, McDonell/City Attorney, Mark Roffers/Vandewalle & Associates, Stanford.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS. None

APPROVAL OF APRIL 20, 2009 MINUTES. It was moved by Torres and seconded by Coburn to approve the minutes for April 20. AYES: Binnie, Coburn, Dalee, Stone, Torres, Zaballos. NOES: None. ABSENT: Miller.

REVIEW PROPOSED EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS TO THE MAIN STREET SIDE OF THE BUILDING AT 162 W. MAIN STREET FOR CHRIS HALE. This item was pulled from the agenda by the applicant in order to provide more information.

REPORTS.

- a. CDA. There was no report.
- b. Tree Commission. Stone reported on the Arbor Day planting of a tree in Cravath Lakefront Park.
- c. Park & Recreation. Stone reported that the Park & Recreation Board toured park areas in Whitewater at their last meeting. They looked in particular at improvements that have been made in these parks.
- d. City Council. Binnie reported that CDA and Council have changed the proposed location for the Whitewater/University Technical Park. It is no longer planned for a site to the southwest of town but will be close to the current business park. He also noted that the first reading of the Neighborhood Nuisance Ordinance for the property condition related portion had passed at the last meeting. The ordinance will be in force for properties with four violations of city property ordinances in two years and for properties with three Police Department violations in two years. The Neighborhood Nuisance Ordinance, Police Department portion had not been passed. Binnie also reported that there has been a change in the Alcohol Licensing Ordinance such that there are listed criteria to substantiate a decision on granting licenses. Whether the business licensed would provide an economic stimulus to the community is one of these criteria.
- e. Downtown Whitewater, Inc. There was no report.
- f. Staff. On June 15 there will be a public hearing on the sign ordinance. A draft of the proposed ordinance will be sent to Plan Commission members before the meeting date.

g. Chair. Zaballos welcomed Binnie to the board. She added that Greg Meyer has been appointed as an alternate. He was not present at the meeting.

HOLD ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON, VICE CHAIRPERSON, PLAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, AND PLAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE TO THE TREE COMMISSION. The Commission agreed to postpone the election to the next meeting when Miller would be present.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY OF WHITEWATER SIGN ORDINANCE. Delayed until the next meeting.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE PLAN COMMISSION TRAINING SESSIONS. Delayed until the next meeting.

PUBLIC KICK-OFF MEETING FOR THE CITY OF WHITEWATER COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS. City Manager Brunner introduced the planning process by stating that it will be an eight to nine month process, required by the State Smart Growth Initiative. City planning will focus on goals, objectives and policies and be a blueprint for sustainability in the future. Included in the process will be a survey of residents, focus group activity, a University study and the study by Vandewalle & Associates. Brunner urged all present to “Think big-make no small plans”. He referenced a meeting schedule with agenda items listed that was handed out prior to the meeting. Focus groups will be formed in early fall when the document from Vandewalle available.

Roffers stated that the plan prepares the community for new opportunities in the form of grants and other government funds. The plan’s priority items are annexations and street development and will be used by the CDA, Park and Recreation (for park acquisition and development), as a communication tool with surrounding units of government, and to advise connective plans for sewers and streets. After adoption, city mapping and zoning of subdivisions must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The plan is meant to be used as a reference and a work in progress.

Zaballos questioned the requirement that other city plans adhere to the Comprehensive Plan. McDonell and Roffers replied that they will make sure there is enough flexibility in the plan to allow for some decisions to be made at a later time. In answer to Kienbaum’s question about cost, Brunner replied that the process will cost \$30,000 along with some work done by City staff. Leslie Steinhaus (Whitewater School District Administrator) asked if there would be any federal stimulus money available to the City resulting from completion of this plan. Roffers stated that there may be a second round of stimulus grants and the plan may work into those grant proposals.

Terry Race (280 Esterly) asked if the plan is reviewed every ten years, does this freeze all zoning in the City. McDonell stated that a one year horizon could be written into the plan if the City Council wishes.

Brunner added that in 2005 a strategic action plan was implemented with vision and mission statements as broad goals. One of the results of this action plan was the revitalization of downtown through the establishment of a State recognized Main Street group, Downtown Whitewater, Inc. The comprehensive plan will review strategies for economic development involving city residents, the school district and the university. Whitewater seeks to bring more young families into the city to live and work.

Roffers commended the City on its previous land use planning. The city currently has six TIDs, with five of them formed last summer. He gave a history of the area development plans starting with the Northeast, Central, and Southeast plans done in 1996 and 1997. The Central Area Plan was revisited last year with proposed changes for Tratt Street to increase density and this year to provide direction on neighborhood preservation. The next plan to be finalized was in 1999 for the East side of the city including the existing business park and land to the South. In 2002 a West side plan was completed that extended to just beyond the Highway 12 bypass. In 2006 a North side plan was developed including the business park, residential development (including Prairie Village) and a Starin Road extension to Highway 59. The plan for the South side of the city was certified by Council this May and has involved intergovernmental interaction with the Town of Whitewater.

Amundson stated that the first Park and Open Spaces Plan was completed in 1970 and has had five year updates since that time. This plan is a DNR grant request requirement for State Stewardship funds for trails and land acquisition and is referred to on a yearly basis. Brunner added that there may be transportation enhancement funds for multipurpose trails coming to the city based on this plan.

Roffers observed that on regional maps of the area it becomes obvious that Whitewater has a very large school district. The sewer service area extraterritorial to the City up to three miles out can be included in the plan. Whitewater also has an issue in that the city cannot annex into a new county without the approval of that county and the local governing body (Rock County/ Lima Township). He recommended that the city's Central area plan be retired.

Roffers continued by directing the commission's attention to the Preference Questionnaire Summary of May 14. This item was also a handout.

Professor Russ Kashian of the UW Center of Fiscal and Economic Research will be reporting to Brunner in a few weeks on a study of the relationship between students and residents over housing issues. His study had 271 responses. He summarized the study for the commission. He added that his home community of Muskego took three years to do a comprehensive study without the use of a planner.

Roffers asked the commission what the key directions and themes for focus should be. He started with two: 1) neighborhood preservation, 2) sustainability. Steinhaus added that communication is crucial to the plan. People have to know that this is going on. Amundson would like the city to set a higher standard for what is accepted as parkland. There would be a benefit to working with developers to put in park areas and trails before housing. This could be a

selling point for developers as recreational areas increase property values for land nearby. Zaballos added that the quality of trails in the downtown area should be raised.

Roffers asked for those present to state one major opportunity and one major challenge for the City.

1. Jim Nies replied that what makes Whitewater unique is small town life.
2. Stone noted that Starin Road is very pedestrian friendly now and would like to see improvement of highway U as a bypass for that area of town when Starin is completed to Highway 59.
3. Coburn stressed the importance of a vibrant downtown.
4. Dalee would like to see the city maximize infrastructure as has been done on the East side already.
5. Torres emphasized the importance of the City growing at the edges (by the Highway 12 bypass).
6. Binnie focused on the affordability of single family housing and the lack of growth of employers in the area.
7. Brunner stated that Whitewater will always be a stand-alone community but that the community should work on becoming well-rounded so that people do not need to leave for services and employment.
8. Zaballos indicated that the University is still underleveraged and underutilized. More links should be built between the City and the University.
9. Prudence Negley added that the University is an excellent source for planning input.

Roffers referred the group to the maps of past plans and a questionnaire. Those present were invited to comment on these plans and fill out the questionnaire. The maps and questionnaire will be on display for input from the community in the municipal building upstairs lobby through the 15th of June.

ADJOURNMENT. Torres motioned that the meeting be adjourned with Stone seconding the motion. The meeting was adjourned with a voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Stanford
Administrative Assistant