

*Minutes*

**Asheville City Council  
Planning & Economic Development Committee**

**3:30 p.m., May 21, 2013  
City Hall, First Floor Conference Room**

**Present:** Vice Mayor Esther Manheimer, Councilman Marc Hunt, Councilman Cecil Bothwell

**Staff:** Gary Jackson, Jeff Richardson, Cathy Ball, Sam Powers, Judy Daniel, Maggie Ullman, Blake Esselstyn, Christy Edwards

The Planning & Economic Development Committee met on May 21, 2013 in the First Floor Conference Room, City Hall. Vice Mayor Manheimer called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the April 16, 2013 meeting were approved.

**Updates**

*Food Council Recommendations*

Judy Daniel reported that she recently attended the national planning conference and participated in a number of sessions about urban agriculture. There will be a discussion item on the June 5 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting about Urban Agriculture. Community members have reported that some current UDO regulations limit their options for farming. The discussion before the P&Z Commission hopes to get direction on allowed agricultural uses and thresholds for agricultural production in residential areas. It will also explore the possibility of different standards for accessory structures for agricultural uses. The resulting UDO amendments will likely go to P&Z in July, with presentation at Council following.

*Sign Ordinance Amendment*

Judy Daniel reported that a wording amendment will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on June 5 that will modify the amortization time for signage after annexation.

Councilman Hunt asked if this proposed amendment would preempt current proposed legislation. Ms. Daniel stated that we didn't really know but it is a friendly gesture because amortization rules were fairly restrictive anyway. If adopted, the wording amendment would be effective immediately.

Councilman Bothwell inquired what would happen if we didn't change the current standards for non-conforming signs in recently annexed areas and the legislation were adopted. Ms. Daniel replied that businesses would not have to change their signs until 2040 and the language could be interpreted to mean that there would be no signage regulations in the affected areas.

Also included in the signs wording amendment is an allowance for drive thru restaurants to have 2 menu sign boards and for multi-tenant development on street corners to have 2 free standing signs.

*Thresholds for Industrial Projects*

Ms. Daniel stated that the current UDO standards for site plan review of industrial uses are ambiguous and confusing. A wording amendment is being written to clarify misconceptions and further define review levels for industrial projects and allow more flexibility on the open space requirements. Staff review has revealed that other cities of similar size in North Carolina have no public review of industrial projects although it can be noted that Asheville's industrial areas are used for multiple uses.

Councilman Hunt stated that the desire for infill and density vs. open space requirements seem to conflict each other and inquired what New Urbanism or Smart Growth say about this conflict. Ms. Daniel replied that buffers and green space around industrial uses often do not make as much sense as they do in commercial or residential areas.

Mr. Powers stated that unlike other cities in the central and coastal areas of the state, topography is a challenge in the Asheville area and we are lucky to find a 5 acre industrial site. The challenge of topography and open space requirements limit our abilities to be competitive in the market and open space requirements can further limit their potential.

The amendment will be presented to P&Z on June 5, with a presentation to Council shortly thereafter.

### **New Business**

Discussion regarding future agenda items

- ? An update on the I-26 corridor planning does not need to be reported in June.
- ? Charlotte Street Traffic Study – update in June.
- ? Proposed Investment districts – update in June.
- ? Discussion Density bonus – within 1/8 mile within major corridors
- ? Economic Incentive, Development Tools, Package – July

Ms. Daniel reported that selection committee will meet on Thursday to review 6 RFPs for form based code documents for the Haywood Road area.

### **Unfinished Business**

None

### **Presentations & Public Comment**

None

### **Closed Session**

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.