

CITY OF HASTINGS
DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
April 2, 2018

Members present: Brehm, Tossava, Mansfield, Maurer, Benner, Hatfield.

Members absent: McLean, Bowers, Cusack.

Other staff present: Harvey.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Hatfield.

Roll call was taken by Hatfield.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Hatfield asked for comments regarding the draft agenda for tonight's meeting. No comments were forwarded. Hatfield asked that New Business be moved ahead of Old Business on the agenda to accommodate several guests in attendance at tonight's meeting. Motion by Brehm, second by Benner to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting as amended.

Motion carried.

Hatfield asked for comment regarding the draft minutes of the March 5, 2018 meeting of the Hastings Planning Commission, the March 07, 2018 Draft Rutland Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, the March 20, 2018 Draft Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Cancelation, the March 15, 2018 Draft Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes, the March 22, 2018 Draft LDFA Meeting Minutes, the March 19, 2018 Draft Joint Planning Alliance Meeting Minutes, and the March 21, 2018 Draft Joint Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. No comment was forwarded.

Motion by Mansfield, second by Benner to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2018 meeting of the Hastings Planning Commission, and to receive and place on file the March 07, 2018 Draft Rutland Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, the March 20, 2018 Draft Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Cancelation, the March 15, 2018 Draft Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes, the March 22, 2018 Draft LDFA Meeting Minutes, the March 19, 2018 Draft Joint Planning Alliance Meeting Minutes, and the March 21, 2018 Draft Joint Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Motion carried.

Hatfield introduced discussion regarding a request from Randy Van Liere for accommodations in the ordinance to allow a transitional housing use known as Hope House for recently released inmates from the Barry County Jail. Judge Amy McDowell introduced herself and Van Liere as the President of Hope House. McDowell stated that they had tentatively secured a residence being purchased by Doug Vickery located at 421 East Center Street for use as Hope House. McDowell stated that this was a perfect location to allow the residents to get the services that they need. McDowell stated that the location was within walking distance of a number of County and private services, as well as employers. McDowell stated that it was also within the service area of Barry County Transit. McDowell stated that Vickery was initially concerned that the residence could be damaged by the occupants, but McDowell stated that the residents would be under specialty court programs and probation, and subject to additional jail times for misbehavior. McDowell stated that the Court would be seeking exemplary behavior on the residents behalf during the initial years in particular as they sought additional support and funding for the Hope House.

Van Liere stated that only former inmates previously jailed for non-violent and non-sex offender crimes would be eligible to stay at the Hope House. Van Liere stated that only those serious about recovering from addiction would be allowed to stay at the Hope House. Van Liere and McDowell stated that due to their extensive experience working with those facing addiction, they could normally identify who was seriously seeking to recover and who was not. McDowell stated that the facility would house up to 7 former inmates as well as a live-in manager. McDowell stated that the residents would be subject to random drug and alcohol testing by the Barry County Sheriff's Department.

Harvey stated that she was familiar with similar transitional housing in other communities that she worked in. Harvey stated that such uses were typically permitted as special uses in residential zones subject to certain standards and conditions. Harvey stated that such conditions could apply to separation between various types of uses and parking requirements. Harvey stated that if the City of Hastings Zoning Code did not currently regulate such uses, regulations applying to such uses could be added to the Code.

McDowell questioned how long the special use permit would be valid. Harvey stated that the term of the permit could be a condition regulated under the Code. Harvey stated that some communities allowed a one-year permit, and that others required annual reports to be submitted demonstrating compliance to any conditions imposed by the community. McDowell stated that a year to year permit would be acceptable, and that they would be willing to submit annual reports.

Maurer questioned what on-site parking would be required. Van Liere stated that not many former inmates would have cars, and that only limited parking would likely be necessary. Van Liere stated that the manager would likely have a car. Van Liere stated that the property being considered had

room for a number of parking spaces. Maurer asked if privacy fencing to screen the parking could be required.

Hatfield asked when the Hope House would be ready to open. McDowell stated that they could be ready to open in 60 to 90 days. Brehm stated that he would like to see the project move ahead. Harvey suggested that the Planning Commission could set a public hearing to solicit comment on a draft ordinance establishing regulations allowing transitional housing in certain zones, and that the Hope House applicants could apply for a special use permit for the facility while the Council was considering adoption of that ordinance. Mansfield and Hatfield stated that they would prefer to allow time for development, review and adoption of the ordinance prior to accepting any permits under the ordinance. Hatfield asked if McDowell and Van Liere were agreeable to a more measured approach to development of the ordinance and submittal of the application. McDowell stated that they appreciated the Planning Commission considering establishing a process for approval of transitional housing, and would agree to the time frame necessary to allow that to occur.

Hatfield asked Harvey to prepare a draft ordinance to allow transitional housing to be permitted as a special use in certain zones subject to appropriate terms and conditions for review by the Planning Commission at their May meeting. Hatfield stated that the Planning Commission could discuss and further consider those terms and conditions as well as appropriate locations for such uses at the May meeting, and consider setting a public hearing to solicit comment on the draft ordinance at the June meeting of the Planning Commission.

Hatfield asked Mansfield to report on the activities of the JPA and JPC. Mansfield stated that Rutland Township had reported to the JPC/JPA that the Township had turned ownership of the utilities serving the new Hastings Fiberglass Facility over to the City, but was still working on finalizing easements related to those utilities. Mansfield stated that the JPC discussed at length the special assessment district for the construction of sidewalks along West State Street, as well as the acquisition of property as required for extension of the Riverwalk trail from Industrial Park Drive to Wal-mart. Mansfield reported that the City and Rutland Township were exploring ways to make the sidewalk project more affordable, and would be seeking funding for the trail and the necessary property acquisition.

Hatfield noted that there was nothing new to report on the status of the list of tasks to be completed by the Planning Commission in 2018. Hatfield stated that the list of tasks would stand as included in the packet of information for tonight's meeting.

Hatfield introduced discussion regarding the current status of the Master Plan update. Hatfield noted that only 2 of the 5 members of the Planning Commission not on the Master Plan subcommittee were in attendance at tonight's meeting. Hatfield stated that taking this into

consideration, it did not make much sense to have Harvey report on the status of the Master Plan update process at tonight's meeting. Hatfield suggested instead that a special meeting be convened where more of the Planning Commission members could be in attendance. Hatfield suggested that the special meeting could be convened in two weeks on Monday, April 16th at 7:00 p.m. Mansfield to contact the members of the Planning Commission to see if they could attend such a meeting, and schedule it accordingly if at least most of the members could be present.

Hatfield introduced discussion regarding allowing churches as special uses in additional zoning districts. Harvey explained the terms and amendments contained in the latest draft ordinance (Draft #1) provided by McKenna on this matter. Hatfield noted that Section 1 in the draft contained an erroneous reference to temporary storage enclosures. Motion by Mansfield, second by Brehm to set a public hearing for 7:00 p.m. at the May, 2018 regular meeting of the Planning Commission to solicit comment on Draft #1 of the ordinance to amend the terms and conditions applying to churches as special uses in the zoning ordinance.

In favor: Brehm, Tossava, Mansfield, Maurer, Benner, Hatfield.

Opposed: None.

Absent: McLean, Bowers, Cusack.

Motion carried.

Hatfield introduced discussion regarding an ordinance to amend the regulations applying to temporary storage enclosures. Harvey explained the terms and conditions contained in Draft # 2 of the ordinance to amend the regulations applying to temporary storage enclosures. Motion by Brehm, second by Maurer to set a public hearing for 7:00 p.m. at the May, 2018 regular meeting of the Planning Commission to solicit comment on Draft #2 of the ordinance to amend the terms and conditions applying to temporary storage enclosures in the zoning ordinance.

In favor: Brehm, Tossava, Mansfield, Maurer, Benner, Hatfield.

Opposed: None.

Absent: McLean, Bowers, Cusack.

Motion carried.

Hatfield asked for comments from the public. No comments were forwarded.

Hatfield asked for additional comments from the members of the Planning Commission. No comments were forwarded.

Motion by Tossava, second by Benner to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Jeff Mansfield
Secretary