

MINUTES
COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2024
7:00 P.M.

WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
MEETING ROOM A/B, LOWER LEVEL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chip Hill
Jon Kissinger
Donald Langeloh
Nicki Venable
Dennis Warnick
Dan Weigold
Larry Weiss
Patrick Zickgraf

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF

Nathan Bilger

ATTORNEY

Dawn Boyd

(E)lectronic participant

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Two visitors signed the Guest List at the meeting. There were no attendees on the webcast. A Guest List is included with the minutes of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mr. Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Bilger read the roll with members present and absent listed above. Mr. Bilger noted that Mr. Crowder was no longer a Council member, and, therefore, his seat on the Plan Commission was vacant.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Warnick nominated Mr. Zickgraf for President. Hearing no discussion, Mr. Warnick made a motion that the nominations be closed. Mr. Weiss requested a nomination for Vice President; Mr. Zickgraf nominated Mr. Weiss. There were no further nominations or discussion; Mr. Weiss closed the nominations and called for a vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Warnick made a motion to retain the 2023 representatives on the Board of Zoning Appeals (Jon Kissinger) and Joint Advisory Board (Don Langeloh) and the members of the Technical Review Committee (Don Langeloh, Dennis Warnick, Larry Weiss). Ms. Venable gave the second; motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Zickgraf indicated that Mr. Weiss should continue to run the meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Bilger stated that minutes from the December meeting were not yet complete.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

Ms. Boyd administered the Oath to visitors planning to speak at the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Bilger announced that Impact Holding's development plan request, 23-C-DEV-5, had been withdrawn by the applicant.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 24-C-CPA-1

Mr. Bilger referred to the City's new Downtown Revitalization Plan (proposed to replace the 1993 version) and explained there were several ways to approve such a plan, one of which being an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Catherine Puckett, HWC Engineering, presented a slide show on the Revitalization Plan and the process that went into creating the document. Ms. Venable asked Ms. Puckett if Chauncey Street business owners had been asked how closing the Street might affect their businesses. Ms. Puckett replied that the Revitalization Plan was a collection of ideas, and when an idea moved into the concept development stage, more of those questions would be asked at that time. Mr. Hill added that several of the business owners had been included in the committees whose ideas helped create the Plan. He also stated that, when the jail relocates, there will be an increase in parking downtown, as the County currently has reserved parking around the jail site. Mr. Weigold described that infrastructure updates were considered as ideas were discussed.

The members discussed ideas that had been included in Ms. Puckett's slide show. Mr. Weigold voiced that he had been skeptical of some concepts at first, but after visiting communities that had implemented similar plans, he looked forward to changes in Columbia City. Several Commission members voiced being optimistic about the ideas. Mr. Langloh asked if there would be guidelines to ensure historic preservation. Ms. Puckett replied that façade grants could be pursued. Mr. Warnick wondered how other communities obtained funding for revitalization projects. Ms. Venable described that once a plan is in place, grants can be applied for, and if obtained, projects can move forward quickly.

There were no further questions for Ms. Puckett. Mr. Weiss asked if anyone else wished to speak; hearing none, he closed the public hearing. Mr. Hill made a motion to accept 24-C-CPA-1, seconded by Mr. Warnick. The motion passed 8-0.

2. 24-C-RES-1

Mr. Bilger stated that the Resolution proposed an amendment to the Rules of Procedure to include a process for reviewing the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Area as well as adding a Table of Contents. The members reviewed the presented draft. They briefly discussed the protocol for cancelling a meeting. It was the consensus of the members that the verbiage on this subject was adequate.

Mr. Warnick made a motion to approve the amended Rules as distributed. Mr. Langeloh gave the second; Motion passed 8-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. Mr. Bilger reminded the group that a training session had been scheduled for January 29th.

Mr. Weiss asked if the City was planning to create a new Comprehensive Plan in 2025. Mr. Bilger replied that the mayor had requested the Plan be reviewed to determine what steps would be taken in 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Zickgraf made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kissinger gave the second, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.

GUEST LIST

1. Catherine Puckett, HWC Engineering 135 N. Pennsylvania Street, #2800, Indianapolis
2. Niki Keister P. O. Box 971, Columbia City

GUEST LIST (WEBCAST)

3. None.