

MINUTES
Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission
Agenda Review Meeting
Tuesday, December 8, 2020

As the pandemic continued to grow and threaten society, the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission convened on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at 11:30 o'clock a.m. via remote tele-conferencing (Zoom), for the monthly agenda review meeting.

Attending the meeting were Planning Commissioners, Patrick Phillips, Chair of the Commission, Elizabeth Eason, Jacqueline Dent, Mike Crowder, Scott Smith, Karyn Adams, Sandra Korbelik, Tamara Boyer, Gayle Bustin, Chris Ooten and Jeffrey Roth.

Also in virtual attendance were Amy Brooks, Interim Executive Director of the Commission, and various members of Knoxville-Knox County Planning ("Staff") who provide professional, technical, and clerical support to the Commission.

The meeting was called to order promptly at 11:30 o'clock a.m. by Mr. Phillips, who wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Upon Motion of Commissioner Bustin, seconded by Commissioner Eason, the Commission unanimously affirmed the need to conduct the meeting by electronic means to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, in light of the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.

Ms. Brooks then provided the Interim Executive Director's Monthly Interim Report, which included the following:

1. The Governor has extended his executive order allowing for the conduct of virtual meetings through the end of 2020. The Commission office remains open, serviced by a core staff, with much of Staff telecommuting.
2. Various continuing education opportunities have been made available to Commissioners as reflected in an email circulated earlier by Staff. Recommendations and suggestions for future education programs are welcomed.

Commissioner Tim Hill joined the meeting at this time.

3. Staff is working on steps to improve public access to comments on applications and on methods of sharing those comments.

Ms. Brooks then introduced Ally Ketron of Staff who demonstrated and explained to Commissioners several convenient methods to access public comments on agenda item applications, and attachments to those applications, via the Commission's outstanding

website, www.knoxmpc.org. She walked the Commissioners through various tools available on the public access page of that outstanding website, as well as other avenues on that outstanding website to access the desired data. She and Ms. Brooks confirmed that with the availability of these tools, the Commissioners will no longer be bombarded by endless emails to their separate email accounts. This news was greeted with expressions of relief and gratitude. They also confirmed that all public comments will be saved into the Commission's outstanding website without judgment, and that the Commissioners should rely on that forum henceforth. Ms. Ketron responded to Commissioner's questions.

Commissioners Richard Graf and Eddie Smith joined the meeting during the course of Ms. Ketron's comments and demonstration.

There followed a brief general discussion about the relative desirability of seeing the visages of persons addressing the Commission at the virtual public meetings. Ms. Brooks advised that Staff will look into the technical requirements.

Liz Albertson of Staff then quietly explained the Staff recommendation for Item 9 on the Commission's December Agenda.

Ms. Albertson then softly explained the Staff recommendation for Agenda Item 10 and responded to questions. Tim Hester and Curtis Williams, both with City Departments, weighed in on the greenway and tree plan associated with the application, respectively. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Michelle Portier of Staff, heeding Commissioner's complaints that the meeting pace was lagging, announced that Agenda Item 8 is recommended for postponement, and then explained the Staff recommendations for Agenda Items 11 & 24 collectively, and responded to a boatload of questions.

Commissioner Ooten left the meeting at this time, likely due to a defective internet connection.

Michael ("Big Mike") Reynolds of Staff then explained the Staff recommendation for Agenda Item 15, and responded to questions.

Mr. Reynolds then explained the Staff recommendations for Agenda Items 17, 18 and 21 in turn, and responded to questions about Item 21.

Commissioner Eason left the meeting at this time.

Ms. Albertson then explained the Staff recommendation for Agenda Item 20, and responded to questions. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Commissioner Eddie Smith left the meeting at this time.

Ms. Brooks then explained the Staff recommendation for Agenda Item 26. Discussion ensued.

There then followed an interminable discussion about the advantages of, and hazards associated with, converting from virtual to live meetings while the Covid pandemic continues to rage. Any insights obtained from the discussion remain a mystery, as the Interim Recording Secretary's Zoom connection was lost while the comments and opinions continued.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was duly adjourned...I assume.

Interim Recording Secretary