

Southwest Area Commission (SWAC)
Prepared for approval by Liz Reed

Chair: Stefanie Coe
Vice Chair: FeLisa Jenkins
Secretary: Elizabeth (Liz) Reed
Fiscal Officer: David Kerr

Meeting Location: New Horizons United Methodist Church
1665 Harrisburg Pike, Columbus, OH 43223

Minutes for: January 16, 2019

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order.
Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioners

Present: Stefanie Coe, FeLisa Jenkins, Maurice Jenkins, David Kerr, Don Parsons, Barbara Parsons, Liz Reed, Patty Spencer
Absent: George Wagner, Peggy Fosset

Routine Business:

Jack Reynolds, on behalf of 3C Body Shop requested change in the LM designation at 1300 Briggs Center Drive. Approximately 18 years ago, 3C Body Shop requested and received rezoning to an LM designation to allow parking on this lot. Now they are requesting the LM language to allow for storage building on the lot the storage unit will be 100 ft.x400 ft. storage and needs more. Mr. Reynolds provided drawings and maps of the proposed structure and location. The requested change maintains current parking allocations at the site. All internal storage is proposed. Screening will remain between Briggs Center Drive and storage building.

Stefanie moved to approve the proposed LM zoning request, as proposed, at 1300 Briggs Center Drive. Maurice seconded the motion. All approved.

General Information for Commission:

Stefanie discussed sunshine laws as they relate to this Commission. Records, documents and correspondence relating to this Commission must be open to the public and provided upon request. This includes any emails relating to commission business. Additionally, groups of commission members cannot have private discussions or correspondence without public notice and allowing public attendance. All Commission meetings must be conducted in person and Commission votes cannot be done secretly nor privately. The Ohio Attorney General's Office offers training and information regarding these laws on their website. Additionally, the Commission will be provided with a hard copy of materials regarding the Sunshine Laws of Ohio.

The City of Columbus, Department of Neighborhoods, consulted with a group to complete a study and provide recommendations for improvements relating to Area Commissions. Preliminary results and recommendations designed to meet the needs of Area Commissions have been offered. The information and training provided by the City relating to Sunshine Laws came as part of the recommendations and discussions during meetings held by the Department of Neighborhoods in May and December of 2018.

The final results and recommendations will be available in spring. City plans to propose changes to code that impact Area Commissions. One example, will be to require certain language in all Area Commission Bylaws. The Commission then reviewed and discussed A packet of the draft packet of the “Standardization of Area Commission Bylaws Proposed Columbus City Code Changes” language. The discussion, included, in part the following topics:

- Commissions must have between 7 and 15 members.
- Commissioners must attend some required training.
- Limit participation of a Commissioner to only one Area Commission.
- Year to begin at the same time for all Area Commissions; Newly elected positions to start at the same time in January. Elections to be in Sept to Oct rather than August. Would require an adjustment for this Commission.
- Vacant seats only, filled by appointment. At-large positions must be in October. This would require a bylaw change and may prove to be problematic for this Commission. We need to give feedback on this. If we have fewer seats than needs to be filled the election process can be bypassed.
- Can only vote once. This may be problematic of officer roles when there is a need to break a tie.
- Commissioners will continue to receive no compensation and will serve 3-year terms for appointments.
- Defines officer roles.
- Can't serve a chair for more than 6 consecutive years and no other officer role for 3 years after this. Can't hold same position of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer no more than 6 years. Most problematic for areas like ours when there isn't enough interest in the position.
- Conflicts of interest language proposed is too broad; the language doesn't match intent. We should provide feedback on this.
- Commissions must announce information regarding meetings (including special meeting)--have it posted in the City Bulletin with 7-day notice required.
- Meetings must be in person. Must be public ballots, can't vote secretly. This is consistent with Sunshine Laws.
- Must give minutes to Dept. of Neighborhoods.
- Must maintain a distribution list to provide agenda, minutes, etc. for anyone upon request. Emails related to Commission is public record.
- We may recommend additional language related to funding and when it should be distributed. The current language discusses when the city may withdraw funding, but no language regarding providing funding. Additionally, language could be added regarding required MOUs of quarterly reports related to funding.

- We may want to add language for additional funding to Commissions that must pay rents due to lack of free public facilities to hold meetings. Currently, much of our budget is allocated to rent due to lack of facilities.

Memo was sent to Commissions and we need to complete the feedback forms regarding the proposed language. That feedback must be presented back to the City by March. It's important get our input included—our goal is 100% participation.

This will need to go to City Council.

Beth Fairman Kinney announced that East High School will host an event on Monday for MLK.

The mayor will present the Mayor's State of the City speech on January 31, at East High School. Will be aired on CTV and be available online live.

Commission discussed ongoing dust and dirt problems with the 1035 Frank Rd. property which is in township.

Unfinished Business:

The property at 1367 Frank Road that had a split vote in this Commission went to City Council. The variance request didn't go to BZA. She filed a council variance—those go directly to Council. City personnel determined that property was a nonconforming use, a business was there, and it was presented as a setback issue. Don Parsons voiced his disagreement with the findings that the property was a nonconforming use and he believes that some of the information presented was inaccurate. In the previous meeting, the majority of this Commission voted that it is okay to continue to use the property as it is being used and allow the fence to remain in place; City Council approved.

Financial: We will pay for what we voted on-reimbursement for the website.

Felisa made a motion, seconded by Patty to allow the Chair and/or the Secretary to use Commission funds to pay for paper copies of materials needed for Commission business.

Felisa made a motion, seconded by Patty to pay rent for July through June. \$40 per month, less the two month we did not have access to the meeting space (July 2018-June 2019 less Sept and Oct.).

Felisa agreed to look into the option of SWAC t-shirts, polo shirts and business cards. Commissioner members can use business cards. We'll also consider a SWAC logo. We can decide what direction to go in terms of purchases at a later date.

Additional purchases may include a name plate, name badges, or professional level websites to allow for email addresses for Commissioners, easy identification for members at meetings.

David thanked Stefanie for her willingness to serve the citizens of Columbus by being considered for one of the appointed positions on City Council. Stefanie shared a new part of that process that included a new process by the Columbus Chapter of the new Leaders Council. The 12 of 15 candidates participated and gave 1-minute speeches. She stated it was great to hear that information and what some candidates knew about the city. All of the speeches, including Stefanie's, are available on YouTube. Shayla Favor was selected and sworn in. There will be a second council position to be filled Feb 25.

Stefanie wants provide a focus on issues relating to the south side corridor. There is no reason Rt. 104 can't be a better corridor. This focus would include the southwest, south side, and far south. Economic development is needed in this area. With the projected growth in Columbus, she hopes to influence the infrastructure, consider affordable housing options. Need to build partnerships, create committees and plans and she plans to involve other area commissions.

Adjournment

Stefanie Coe moved to adjourn the meeting. Felisa Jenkins seconded the motion and unanimous approval to adjourn.

Next Meeting February 20, 2019