

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday; August 19, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Vice-Chair Gooch called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Armando Lissarrague
Bill Klein
Dennis Wippermann
Joan Robertson
Annette Maggi
Harold Gooch

Commissioners Absent: Paul Hark (excused)
Pat Simon (excused)
Tony Scales (excused)

Others Present: Tom Link, Community Development Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the August 6, 2014 Planning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

OTHER BUSINESS

Presentation of Request

Tom Link, Community Development Director, advised that the City Council and City staff have been working on developing values, mission statements, and a vision statement. City Council adopted city values in 2013 and a mission statement in 2014. After the City Council adopted the city mission statement, they asked each of the departments to review their individual mission statements and also asked for commission input. The Planning Commission is being asked to review and comment on the Community Development Department's mission statement, which reads 'The mission of the Community Development Department is to foster a high quality physical environment for the current and future community, through the delivery of effective, professional, and customer-oriented services'. Mr. Link explained that the Community Development Department serves a number of functions, including planning and zoning, building inspections, code compliance, housing, and economic development. Community Development also staff's the Housing Committee meetings, Planning Commission meetings, Environmental Commission meetings, Airport Relations Commission meetings, Economic Development Authority meetings, as well as City Council meetings. He advised that any comments will be reflected in the minutes, which will be forwarded to the City Council.

Planning Commission Discussion

Vice-Chair Gooch asked for clarification of the meaning of the statement 'to foster a high quality physical environment'.

Mr. Link replied that most of what the Community Development Department creates is physical features that can be seen and touched (i.e. buildings, parking lots, roads, housing, etc.).

Commissioner Maggi suggested that verbiage be added to reflect that the Community Development Department also considers the City's long-term vision.

Mr. Link agreed that when reviewing an application for a private property owner, the City must also

consider the larger impact it would have on the entire neighborhood or community.

Commissioner Klein suggested rephrasing the mission statement to read 'high quality physical environment **as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan**'. He asked when the next Comprehensive Plan update was due.

Mr. Link replied that the Comprehensive Plan must be updated by 2018; therefore, the process would likely begin in 2016.

Commissioner Wippermann questioned why the mission statement used the term 'community' rather than 'residents'.

Mr. Link replied that the same comment came up during staff discussions; however, it was recognized that it was broader than just residents and they wanted to include businesses, visitors, people passing through, etc.

Commissioner Robertson stated she was in favor of retaining the word 'community' as it conveyed a more welcoming approach to residents, business owners, and visitors.

Commissioner Klein noted there were also many people coming in and out of the college as well.

Commissioner Lissarrague asked staff for an example of delivery of an effective, professional, and customer-oriented service.

Mr. Link provided a few examples, stating that staff strives to provide accurate information in a timely and courteous manner.

Commissioner Klein stated that some customers would need more assistance than others, such as an amateur homeowner versus an experienced contractor.

Mr. Link agreed that the type of customer could be varied and therefore all would require a slightly different approach. He advised that in many cases it is staff's job not only to do the inspection or process the planning application, but to educate as well.

Commissioner Robertson suggested changing the word 'service' to 'information and service' or 'guidance and service' because the City employees interacting with customers were not only serving but educating and providing information as well.

Mr. Link advised that he would bring that suggestion back to the department.

Vice-Chair Gooch suggested contracting a professional marketing agency to write the City's position statements or perhaps asking creative City staff to volunteer their services. He advised that a typical mission statement for a company would have a few sentences about their basic purpose, followed by bullet points addressing each of the various divisions (i.e. planning, inspections, code compliance, economic development, and housing). He referred to the statement that 'the mission of the City of Inver Grove Heights is to provide services' and questioned whether that was truly the mission of the city as a community, or more what the departments of the City were intending to do.

Mr. Link stated he could bring that comment back to City Council, and he also noted that the City used an outside facilitator for the staff portion of the process.

Commissioner Klein agreed with Commissioner Gooch's recommendation to use an outside

marketing agency to create position statements.

Vice-Chair Gooch suggested that the mission, values, and/or vision statements be displayed at City Hall on a plaque.

Mr. Link thanked everyone for their helpful comments and advised he would take them back to the department.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary