



Planning Board Meeting  
February 28, 6:00 pm  
Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of prior minutes of January 31, 2019
4. Old Business
  - Comprehensive Plan Update
5. New Business
6. Open Discussion
7. Adjournment







**BELLBROOK PLANNING BOARD**  
**PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**  
**JANUARY 31, 2019**

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**PRESENT:** Mr. Denny Bennett  
Mr. Brady Harding  
Mr. Ed Stangel  
Mr. Mitch Thompson  
Chairman Van Veldhuizen

**GUEST:** Mr. Devon Shoemaker  
Ms. Jessica Hansen  
Mr. Don Walsh  
Ms. Sharon Baker  
Mrs. Hope Taft  
Mr. Michael Sabin  
Mrs. Heather Sabin  
Ms. Brook Berry  
Ms. Michaela R. Grant

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Van Veldhuizen called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:00 PM.

**FORMAL APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Van Veldhuizen requested a motion regarding the prior minutes of November 29, 2018. Mr. Bennett moved to approve the prior minutes; Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. Roll was called. Mr. Bennett, yes; Mr. Thompson, yes; Mr. Stangel, yes; Mr. Harding, yes; Chairman Van Veldhuizen, yes. The motion carried 4-0; the minutes stand approved.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- **Rezoning of 28 East South Street**

City Manager Melissa Dodd reported that the staff recommends the rezoning of these parcels from O1 Commercial District to R3 Multi-Family Residential District. This is in keeping with the surrounding properties.

Ms. Sharon Baker, 4122 Amy Brooke Circle, a Realtor with Irongate Realtors, reported that there are two current owners who are selling the property. The building was originally two units and there is a fire wall. For six months they have been trying to sell it as a commercial property, but prospective buyers want to use it as residential property.

Mr. Thompson made a motion to recommend the rezoning of 28 East South Street to City Council. Mr. Stangel seconded the motion. The roll was called. Mr. Thompson, yes; Mr. Stangel, yes; Mr. Harding, yes; Mr. Bennett, yes; Mr. Van Veldhuizen, yes. The motion passed 5-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Lot Split for Lot 61A – Highview Terrace**

Mrs. Dodd explained this request would reverse the lot combination that took place last year. The owner ended up purchasing a different property.

Mr. Bennett made a motion to approve the Lot Split for Lot 61A Highview Terrace. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harding. The roll was called. Mr. Bennett, yes; Mr. Harding, yes; Mr. Thompson, yes; Mr. Stangel, yes; Mr. Van Veldhuizen, yes. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Van Veldhuizen asked how many lots were still available in Highview Terrace. Mrs. Dodd said she was unsure of the number but the third and final section is being recorded.

- **Comprehensive Plan Presentation by Devon Shoemaker, Executive Director, Miami Valley Regional Planning and Coordinating Commission of Greene County, Ohio**

Mr. Shoemaker started by thanking the City and said he has come to have a much greater appreciation for Bellbrook through the process of creating the plan. The plan should be considered a living document that serves the city of Bellbrook with both short-term and long-term recommendations. There were many steps to the process of creating the plan including the Open House in November, community surveys, and the Walkable Community Workshop.

The Plan recognizes six key subject areas:

1. Downtown Revitalization and Historic Preservation
2. Community Identity
3. Transportation Plan
4. Land Use
5. Healthy Communities
6. Economic Development

Mr. Shoemaker recommends the creation of a downtown association. This could be set up as a 501c3 organization with a director. Main Street America is an organization that could be an asset and it is free to get started.

The next recommendation by the Regional Planning Commission is to create a special active downtown overlay. It would contain special design regulations on top of the zoning requirements already in place. The focus of which is the intersection of Franklin and Main. One of the short term recommendations is to close the gaps between buildings. We want to create a wall of buildings like you see in cities like Xenia. Each building can be different but have a cohesive look. There needs to be a zero setback policy with parking in the rear that is not visible from the street. Access management is a key. Buildings should have inset entries or overhangs or awnings. Downtown buildings would be multi-level with businesses or offices on the ground floor and apartments on the upper floors. On-street dining areas are an inviting option. Enough space is required to ensure it does not create a pedestrian barrier. Mr. Shoemaker showed an example where the eating area does not leave enough space on the sidewalk.

Mr. Shoemaker explained the next recommendation to adopt form-based codes. This would allow for differences in areas like downtown versus the west end properties. The codes would be based less on how the property is used, and more on the physical form. Historic preservation is also addressed with these types of codes. Mr. Shoemaker suggested becoming a Certified Local Government through the state's Historic Preservation Office. Doing this allows the city to be eligible for grants which could help pay for properties to meet the design guidelines.

GCRPC believes the City could make better use of its downtown properties by freeing them up for business use. These could become incubator properties that are usually managed by an outside non-profit corporation called a Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). Bellbrook could utilize Greene County's already established CIC.

Mr. Shoemaker stressed the importance of branding, gateways, and wayfinding. Branding tells visitors who we are and what sets us apart. Design competitions could encourage local participation.

Jessica Hansen, GIS Planner, spoke about the opportunities available for pedestrian/bike/multi-use connectors. She showed a map proposing a loop path connecting the parks, additional sidewalks, and crosswalks.

Mr. Shoemaker explained the benefits of adopting a Complete Streets policy that considers all users and modes of transportation. Access management is important. GCRPC recommends removing some of the access points onto Franklin and Main Streets. This will require the cooperation of the property owners.

Roadways are classified by function Mr. Shoemaker explained. The map showed how the classifications work together. The downtown roads are classified as arterial with a special classification of Community Activity Streets. Major collector streets like Linda and Belleview could get funding to help adding sidewalks.

Land Use was the next topic of the presentation. Mr. Shoemaker explained that the Sans Souci property is identified as important for the future and was given a classification of Community Commercial or Recreation. Public input clearly showed the residents do not wish to see this land be used for residential property. Ideas focused on community-based commercial uses and mixed uses with open spaces.

Mr. Shoemaker emphasized that their goal was to create a healthy community. The key is to promote health, sustainability, and an active lifestyle. This can be done by encouraging health and wellness events. Bellbrook's Farmer's Market is being planned for 2019. Another idea is a community garden. Policy barriers should be removed to allow these.

Economic Development can be spurred with more places of employment, a vibrant art scene, and good marketing. The city could consider offering incentives to prospective companies and incubator businesses.

Both Mr. Shoemaker and Ms. Hansen look forward to the adoption of the comprehensive plan and the future of Bellbrook.

Mr. Harding asked how long would it take to implement the plan. Mr. Shoemaker said it could take 20 to 40 years to fully complete it. But there are things that could be completed quickly like the salt barn that is right in downtown. This property could be much better utilized.

Mr. Van Veldhuizen opined that if the Planning Board adopts the plan there are items in it that the City Manager could use now.

Mrs. Dodd agreed that staff can use the suggestions and the plan is in line with where the city wants to go. The existing plan is from 1974.

Mr. Shoemaker suggested forming a committee that would review the plan every two years.

Mr. Thompson opined that the most valuable part is the final section listing the first steps to take.

Mr. Harding asked how difficult it is to become a certified local government. Mr. Shoemaker stated that first we should do an inventory of the historic buildings. Mrs. Dodd added that some things are already in place, like the Village Review Board. The city needs to refine it to meet the criteria.

Chairman Van Veldhuizen opened the floor to the public.

Michaela Grant, 2550 Thomas Jefferson Drive, introduced herself as the city administration's intern. She stated she is very impressed with the plan and the direction the city is taking.

Mike Sabin, 26 N. West Street, owner of the Bellhop Café, is excited about the Healthy City initiative. He shared that the public is invested in the plan. He would like for this plan to be shared widely with the public. He also opined that Mrs. Dodd is a godsend. He said there are many things that can get this going. He offered to buy the paint needed for another crosswalk.

Hope Taft, 2933 Lower Bellbrook, introduced herself and explained that she is very involved with preservation of the Little Miami River. She also liked the plans to create a healthy community and gateway for recreation. She said she would like for Bellbrook to be a destination not just a place to pass through.

Brooke Berry, 66 S. East Street, is a resident with a passion to revive the city and make it more accessible. Mrs. Berry is a member of the Downtown Beautification Fund Committee.

Mr. Shoemaker said the next step for the Planning Board is to accept the plan as is, or with revisions, and recommend it to the City Council.

Chairman Van Veldhuizen made a motion to table the discussion to give the board members time to review the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Bennett seconded the motion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 PM and was seconded by Mr. Bennett.

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Dave Van Veldhuizen, Chairman Date

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Pamela Timmons, Secretary Date