

**CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 5, 2024
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

PRESENT MEMBERS: Leonard Horowitz
Ken Surratt
Michael Gaynier
Judith Miles

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Zamft, Director of Planning & Development
Karen Knittel, Assistant Planning Director
Jason Hines, Assistant Law Director
Christy Lee, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Mr. Gaynier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed the audience to the June 5, 2024 regular meeting of the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Horowitz motioned to approve the April 10, 2024, Minutes. Mr. Surratt seconded the motion; the motion was approved.

Mr. Horowitz motioned to approve the May 8, 2024 Minutes. Mr. Surratt seconded the motion; the motion was approved.

Staff Report on Planning Activities

Karen Knittel stated that tonight staff would be updating the Planning Commission on a variety of parks, public spaces and playground projects. Using a PowerPoint Presentation, she reviewed that the Zoning Code Section 1111.06 states the powers and duties of the Planning Commission. She said that Code Section 1111.06(a)(3) Pursuant to Article XI, Section 2 of the City Charter, states that the Planning Commission may make recommendations to Council and the Mayor to investigate and prepare on its own initiative recommendations for the location and design of public parks, parkways, playgrounds and recreational facilities and other park areas. She also reviewed Code Section 1111.06 (b)(5) that states that in addition to powers conferred by Charter, the Planning Commission shall have the power and duty to review any substantial changes to public parks.

Ms. Knittel reviewed park planning activities including the proposed stramp, plans to update the skate park and plans to update playground at Cain Park.

Ms. Knittel stated that the Compton Greenway either ends or begins at Cain Park, depending on your perspective. She reviewed the planning process that included extensive public engagement including walking meetings to discuss the concept and stated that the work to create connector lot/park were bid out and contracted so that work should begin soon. She stated that the mini-roundabouts were to be rebid with the hope that these will also be implemented this year.

She reminded the Planning Commissioners that they had reviewed and approved the new plans for Coventry Peace Park which is owned by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library. She stated that the library has a conditional use permit which is one reason the project was reviewed but that also it was appropriate for the Commission to review this project as it is a public park.

Ms. Knittel reminded all of the restoration of Doan Brook at Horseshoe Lake Park planning study, briefly reviewed where the current plan and stated that this project will be holding public meetings in July to review the 30% design. She reminded all that information is available on the NEORSD website.

Ms. Knittel stated that the Lower Lake Dam Restoration Project was currently in pre-design and that all could follow the progress of this effort including knowing about public meetings at the NEORSD website.

Ms. Knittel stated that there had been some discussion of Cumberland Park possibly being the location of a dog park. She said that this discussion has expanded to considering where an appropriate location may be for this type of us.

She stated recently improved playgrounds were installed at Forest Hill Park and Dennison Park. She also stated that many of the local schools have playgrounds and shared plans for the Caledonia School Playground.

She concluded her report by informing the Planning Commission that the city would be issuing a Request for Proposal for a Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROs) Master Plan. She said that the study will look at our current parks, how are they connected, how are they managed, is there a way to better connect them. It should also consider whether we are offering the right mix of amenities at our parks and how are we maintaining our natural resources in these parklands.

Director Zamft added that it is intentional that the study includes parks, recreation and open space because open spaces are not necessarily in parks and so this will be a significant component of the master plan.

Ms. Knittel stated the Planning Department has also issued a request for proposal for landscape architects. She said the city intends to engage landscape architectural services to assist by reviewing the landscape design plans for larger projects but also to assist staff with advice on a variety of smaller projects.

Mr. Gaynier invited the Commission to ask questions or comment. Ms. Miles asked if there is a timetable for the Cain Park projects. Ms. Knittel stated that she did not believe any of the projects had been bid yet but that she anticipated the projects moving forward this year.

Mr. Surratt asked if there is thought of creating smaller parks like a Turtle Park on any of the vacant lots in the city. Ms. Knittel responded that staff is considering the location of the vacant lots and are considering what make sense, she mentioned that there are a couple vacant lots along Compton that are currently being considered to remain as greenspace. Director Zamft added that part of the park study will include the status of existing parks and also the identification of future opportunities. He stated that we do have a map showing a 15-minute walk to a park in Cleveland Heights and commented that there are parts of the city where folks have to walk more than 15 minutes to a park which is not desirable. He stated that the goal is to create a system where all are within 15 minutes of a park space.

There was discussion around what may need to be understood in order to appropriately locate a dog park and that this should be included in the PROs study.

A question was also raised about the possibility of trails along North Park and along other locations in the Shaker Parklands and that this also should be a consideration of the PROs study.

A discussion of a few of the smaller green spaces throughout the city was discussed along with the need to better understand these spaces and how they should be incorporated into the park system.

Mr. Gaynier invited the public to comment.

Ms. Peggy Spaeth commented that she is excited about the concept of a master plan because to have a discussion of where to locate a dog park requires us to really understand all of our parks, consider access to the park and be careful about where it is placed. Ms. Spaeth stated that it is okay to have unprogrammed space in a park, that there is nature. She reported that the Friends of Cain Park had ten volunteers plant one hundred

Pennsylvania Sedge and forty Christmas Ferns and other native plants today at Cain Park. She said that this is an example of the community volunteers and their passion to assist with being good stewards of our parks.

Planning Activity

Director Zamft stated that he had an update on zoning amendments. He reminded the Commissioners that the Places of Worship zoning amendment was brought forward, he stated that the Mayor has asked that the amendment be looked at a bit closer. The Planning Department is working with the Mayor and Law Department to have a conversation with the community about what we want to see in our residential districts, we would look at what is permitted now in the residential districts and suggest a few ideas of what we think might make sense and listen to the public about their ideas. He added that going along with this discussion may be asking what are the types of residential uses that people would be comfortable with. He explained that the "missing middle" is the term that is being used. He said communities and states are starting to look at this.

Director Zamft stated that the first designated outdoor refreshment area (DORA) in Cleveland Heights in the Cedar Lee District is before Council and that there will be a couple of readings on this. He said that the Cedar-Lee SID had brought this idea to the city last year and that staff has researched these in communities similar to Cleveland Heights He said they spoke with their public safety directors or police chiefs and he reported that in every case they said they thought there would be a problem but that there is no problem.

Director Zamft reported that the City would be working with Cuyahoga County Planning Commission on a Gateway and Wayfinding Signage Plan. Looking at our gateways but also our wayfinding, especially in our business districts to better direct people and to let them know that they have arrived. He said this agreement should be finalized soon and that we hope to get started with them quickly. He said there will be some public engagement with this around the location and typology of the signage. The hope is that the signage would be installed next year.

Mr. Gaynier asked if the PORs planning study would include a steering committee for the project. Director Zamft stated there would be a technical committee that would include residents and persons with technical knowledge of parks and recreation topics. Mr. Gaynier stated that he thought it would be a good idea for a representative of the Planning Commission to serve on this committee. Director Zamft concurred and said the Chair would be asked for names of who should serve on the committee.

Mr. Gaynier asked if there was an update on the Taylor Tudor renovation project. Director Zamft stated that there is a lot going on and that they are getting ready to submit plans for a building permit.

OLD BUSINESS

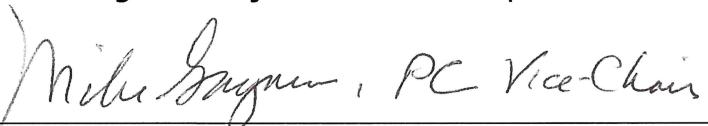
There was no old business to discuss

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

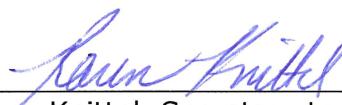
The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.



Mike Gaynier, Planning Commission Vice-Chair

9-11-24

Date



Karen Knittel, Secretary to the Planning Commission

9-11-24

Date