

**CITY OF EAST
PROVIDENCE
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES**

Date: Monday, November 14, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: City Hall, Room 306

Present: Michael Robinson (Chair), Alan D'Aiello, Eric Crook, Octavio Cunha, Jim Moran (Acting Director), Patrick Hanner (Staff), Dominic Leonardo (Staff), Todd Romano (Staff Attorney)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

September 19, 2022

October 11, 2022

On a motion by Mr. Crook, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes for September 19, 2022 and October 11, 2022 with two amendments: (1) that "Planning" be correctly spelled and (2) that the Pledge of Allegiance was recited at the October 11th meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Advisory opinion to the City Council to amend multiple sections of Chapter 19 of the city Zoning Ordinance including Section 19-1: Definitions, Section 19-39: "Special Use Permit Findings Required", Section 19-97: "Determination of Boundaries", Section 19-98: "Schedule of Use Regulations", Section 19-145: "Schedule", Section 19-216-218: "General Requirements", "Area Requirements", and "Schedule for multifamily dwelling usable lot area", Section 19-284: "Off-street parking spaces required", Section 19-424: "Continuance of parking nonconformance" (new), Section 19-451: "Uses requiring development plan approval".**

Jim Moran provided an introduction to the Board describing the Planning Department's work

throughout 2022 to review the City's Zoning Ordinance with the Zoning Officer to make updates to the Zoning Ordinance to reflect modern economic uses and best planning practices.

Mr. Leonardo read the Planning Department's memorandum describing each proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Chairman Robinson asked what prompted the proposed amendment to reduce the minimum off-street parking spaces required. Mr. Moran and Mr. Leonardo (staff) explained that there are a number of examples throughout the City where development was constructed at a time where a significant number of off-street parking spaces may have been needed but that the existing calculations required for off-street parking for specific uses are now obsolete. Staff also explained they have reviewed and targeted specific uses such as office and retail for this proposed reduction, that this amendment does not prohibit businesses or new development from constructing the amount of parking they see fit for their business, and that a reduction in required off street parking results in better drainage, storm water management, and more green space.

Mr. Crook requested the Planning Department note in their memo to the City Council that this policy of reducing minimum off-street parking requirements has rationale and substantial planning research behind it. Mr. Crook also requested the Planning Department use language such as "the combination" of a residential and commercial uses to describe the new "mixed-use" line item in the use table.

The Board discussed off-street parking required for uses on properties throughout the City that do not currently conform to the off-street parking requirements. Staff explained the proposed amendments to Section 19-424: "Continuance of parking nonconformance" intend to prevent the need for zoning relief for off-street parking for allowed uses at pre-existing non-conforming properties.

Attorney John McCoy requested the Planning Board consider adding additional uses to be allowed in an I-1 Zone to provide more development flexibility in I-1 districts. The Board discussed the potential of overlay districts for industrial and commercial mixed use zones. The Board requested the Department review Attorney McCoy's request for additional uses to be allowed in an I-1 Zone and research if any would be appropriate.

Attorney Romano recommended the City's definition of "Mixed-Use" in the Zoning Ordinance reflect the definition in Rhode Island General Laws.

On a motion by Mr. Cunha, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, the Planning Board voted 4-0 to enter the Planning Department's memorandum dated November 9, 2022 with attachments into the record as well as a request from attorney John McCoy to include additional uses into an I-1 zone.

On a motion by Mr. Crook , seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, the Planning Board voted 4-0 to provide a positive recommendation to the City Council to amend Section 19-1: "Definitions". Section 19-39: "Special Use Permit Findings Required", Section 19-97: "Determination of Boundaries", Section 19-98: "Schedule of Use Regulations", Section 19-145: "Schedule", Section 19-284: "Off-street parking spaces required", Section 19-216-218: "General requirements", Section 19-

424: "Continuance of parking nonconformance" (new), Section 19-451: "Uses requiring development plan approval" based upon the finding that the amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and that positive findings were found of the standards of section 19-2 of Zoning. The motion also directed the Planning Department to move the language describing "Mixed Use" in Section 19-1 "Definitions" be added to a new section in Article 4 of Chapter 19 Zoning so that the mixed-use definition is consistent with Rhode Island General Laws.

On a motion by Mr. Crook seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, the Planning Board voted 4-0 to request the Council direct the Planning Department to review, analyze and report back on the McCoy Memorandum dated November 10th, 2022.

2. Advisory opinion to the City Council for proposed amendments to Chapter 19 of Zoning to introduce a Unified Development Review ordinance by adding article XI, "Unified Development Review" and amend article V, "Land Development Projects".

Patrick Hanner provided an overview of the proposed amendments to Chapter 19 of Zoning and read the Planning Department's Memorandum which included proposed modifications to the draft ordinance language.

Chairman Robinson discussed that given the number of changes the Planning Department suggest be made to the draft language of the Unified Development Review Ordinance, he requested the Department's proposed revisions be included in a final draft ordinance before the Planning Board send a positive recommendation to the City Council for its adoption.

A motion by Dr. D'Aiello, seconded by Mr. Cunha, the Board voted 4-0 to continue this item to next month.

5. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Moran provided an update on developments throughout the city including the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new concert venue at Bold Point and the new residential development at East Point.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Robinson announced that the next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2022.

7. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Crook, seconded by Mr. Crook, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

CC: Mayor Roberto DaSilva
City Council

Director of Public Works
City Engineer
City Solicitor
Fire Chief
Zoning Officer