

Village of Peoria Heights Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes from July 16th, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 PM

Sarah DeVore called roll call. Upon roll call the following members were present. Rick Picl, Cathy Stevenson, Sarah DeVore, Craig Masters, Steve Cady, Elizabeth Khazzam, Tessie Bucklar and Mike Woo.

Approval of meeting minutes from March 19th, 2018. Cathy Stevenson made a motion to approve, motion seconded by Tessie Bucklar. All members were in favor.

Rick asked Chief Sutton if we had an update on the gun shop opening and Chief Sutton told the board that we have no updates as of now.

New Business:

Cathy Stevenson, begins to explain the TIF Districts. Steve Kline arrives and picks up where Cathy has left off. Elizabeth ask, “ How many TIF Districts are safe for a village of our size. Mark Walton tells the board that the number of TIFs safe is to be determined by the appetite for development in our area. The fact that the Village is willing to listen to developers is what makes the TIF districts feasible. Craig Masters asks, “why are their exemptions in TIF District #3?” Steve Kline states that a few of the exemptions are from property owners who are also Village Trustee’s. Their properties are exempt due to a conflict of interest. Craig reply’s and says, “I thought it was used to help the area, are those people aren’t allowed to use the updated areas?” Steve tells the board, everything that is in the TIF area will get the updates and everyone is included in that even if their properties are exempt. Sarah DeVore asks, “what are the advantages for the property owner to not be in the TIF? Mark replies, “ Nothing, it is not advantage or disadvantage to the property owner it is just how each property’s taxes are allocated. Steve tells the board, the Village does not have to seek permission from the property owner to leave out or include the property from the TIF. It is how they best see the taxes allocated. Elizabeth asks, “How does the TIF work?” Steve replies, “It is to try to increase the tax assessed valuations, Eric Heath would say that the valuations have stayed stagnant, so new money and development would increase the assessed values.” Mark adds that the Trefgzers Building is a great example, the building was not bringing in hardly any tax dollars, so by increasing the value and the tax dollars going back into the building helping it generate more money then down the road the tax dollars collected will also increase.

Cathy asks, how do we ensure that we do not have vacancies? How do we make the village stronger? Having empty buildings is a downside. Steve tell the board that a TIF is a financing tool, not something to control the market. That burden is on the private party. The Village give the developer the option but the responsibility is on them. People investing are the ones responsible for making it work. If Peoria Heights doesn’t have buildings to go to people (developers) will go elsewhere. “Site Finders” are impatient people, they want something right now, they do not want to build. So most people are coming to you to cross you off the list. Peoria Heights is not a threat to

have a huge vacancy problem. The Village is currently looking into incentive for our vacant buildings.

Cathy states that our zoning ordinances were created in the 1970's while all of our successful areas were developed between the 1920's- 1950's. We don't want the developers to determine what our Village looks like. There are benefits to keeping the facades looking the same. Due to our ordinances we have no leg to stand on. The developments of Heritage Square and CVS. Tessie adds that she is not liking the look of the plans that the consultants are putting together. We should change our zoning to create a look that we (the Village) wants. Mark says, Form Based Zoning is create for what we want to achieve when it is implemented correctly. There are four zones in Form Based Zoning; 1. Natural 2. Rural 3. Walkable/Urban 4. Automobile/Suburban. Zones three and four compete with each other. Creating zoning that will go with both will be difficult and should have some differences. We can transition to Form Based Zoning but we can make adjustment to what we have already without going all in. Redoing all of the zoning would require a consultant. Cathy asks if we can have different zoning for each area, Mark replies yes. Mark continues by stating that picking up Form Based Zoning we could create and overlay district. So essentially the business development district would have different zoning rules.

Statements were made saying that all new buildings need to purposeful. So no buildings that have a specific shape to a franchise. i.e. the old pizza hut building. If development happens it would have to be build to new codes. Steve tells the board, we don't need to use the TIF districts as boundaries for our new zoning rules. How do we move forward? Steve tells the board, the Village has hired Houseal Lavigne we can have a meeting with them about their plans vs what we see, we can ask the Village to pay for a consultant to recreate the zoning ordinances. Cathy asks if we can change what we currently have in the meantime? i.e. Parking, building height etc. Mark replies that the amendments to the zoning code could be created and then send to the Village Trustee's to be voted on. Rick adds Can TIF funds be used to pay for the zoning updates? Steve says, probably not because the TIFs are not mature enough at this time to pay for it but that the Zoning Board could ask the Business Development District to pay for the consultant.

The Board decides to make a list of what issues we would like to see immediately address. We created a list and plan to approach the Trustees with our ideas.

1. Remove parking minimums
2. Large sidewalks
3. Height requirements-to scale- relative proximity to surrounding buildings
4. Glass minimums on store fronts
5. Architectural reviews
6. Review existing permitted uses
7. Signage
8. Awnings/Shade
9. Build to/Yards/Setbacks
10. Design new districts
11. No Drivet
12. Lighting
13. Esthetically and structurally compatible

Mark tells the board, you have to give developers an outline of what you want, but still give them choices. They need to know what they are getting into. Elizabeth confirms that the board does not want to be difficult for developers but we just want them to know our vision.

The board decides to ask for a Special Meeting on August 21st at 5 PM. It is important the Board of Trustees understand that we are hoping to preserve what already exists. We hope for things to be concise and easy to look at. The Zoning Board would like to have one sheet of explanations for the developers to look at and see our vision.

Rick asks if there are any questions? None are asked.

Meeting adjourned 6:59 PM