

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2017**

Members Present: Chairman Todd Wallace
Tim Kessler
Jeff Funke
James Holderfield
Tom Pretz
Peter Vargulich
Laura Macklin-Purdy
David Pietryla
Tom Schuetz

Also Present: Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
Ellen Johnson, Planner

1. Call to order

Chairman Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Vice Chairman Kessler called the roll. A quorum was present.

3. Election of Officers.

Motion was made by Mr. Pretz and seconded by Ms. Purdy to elect Todd Wallace as Chairman and Tim Kessler as Vice-Chairman. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

4. Discussion regarding Design Standards and Guidelines for the RT Traditional Residential Districts

Mr. Colby presented background information about the purpose of the Design Standards and Guidelines applicable to the RT Traditional Residential Districts, why the Design Standards and Guidelines were adopted, and what they do and do not require.

Commissioners were asked to provide feedback on the following questions posed by staff:

1. Should architectural style be regulated by the Design Standards and Guidelines?
2. Should the Design Standards and Guidelines stipulate allowable and/or prohibited architectural elements or building materials?
3. What review and approval process should be followed?

Several Commissioners agreed the Design Standards and Guidelines should not regulate architectural style or overly control design; this would prohibit creativity. Mr. Kessler noted that leaving the Standards/Guidelines more open-ended was the intent of the Residential Architectural Consultation

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process adopted in 2006 and the current Design Standards and Guidelines adopted in 2015. He felt zoning standards such as bulk and setback requirements are what make a structure fit the neighborhood.

Mr. Pretz felt that homes in the RT Districts should incorporate features to blend with the neighborhood; not requiring that does a disservice to the neighborhood and neighboring property owners. Exact style should not be dictated, but new homes should not stick out.

Jackie and Diane Stopka, residents, were present. They felt that more Standards are needed so that new structures are required to fit the general feel of the neighborhood. For example, pitched roofs should be required and certain materials should be prohibited. They felt that the Guidelines are not effective because they cannot be enforced.

Commissioners discussed whether certain building materials should be listed as permitted or prohibited. Some thought it would be difficult to do so and could stifle creativity. It was suggested that a materials list could be added as a Guideline instead of a Standard.

Mr. Funke suggested forming an architectural review committee made up of architects, similar to what exists in Arlington Heights. The committee would be charged with reviewing new development in the RT Districts. Mr. Pretz suggested the Historic Commission could take on this duty. Mr. Kessler felt design review is under the purview of the Plan Commission.

In terms of the review and approval process, Mr. Kessler supported the second option presented by Mr. Colby: Administrative review and approval with an option to request a Commission-level review under certain circumstances. Other Commissioners agreed with this option and discussed that if staff determines a proposed design does not meet certain Design Guidelines and the applicant believes they are still meeting the intent of the applicable section, they could present their design and rationale before the Plan Commission. The Plan Commission would then interpret whether the intent of the section is being met.

Mr. Colby estimated that in a given year, 10 to 15 new houses are constructed in the RT districts, so the Commission may review some portion of this number. Mr. Vargulich noted an applicant would still have the ability to bypass the Plan Commission review if they follow all of the Standards and Guidelines.

Mr. Funke said a street elevation drawing showing the proposed structure next to neighboring homes should be required for the design review to analyze how the building looks in the context of the neighborhood.

Mr. Colby noted the code would need to be changed to create a new process and each section of the design review chapter would need to be reviewed to determine how the existing Standards and Guidelines would apply under the new review process. There may be other changes needed.

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Commissioners felt neighboring property owners should be notified by mail when a design review interpretation is scheduled to come before the Plan Commission; however a public hearing should not be required.

Mr. Colby said the comments from the Plan Commission will be shared with the Planning & Development Committee at their meeting in October. The Committee will need to direct staff on whether to file a General Amendment application to amend the code. The proposed amendment text would then come before the Plan Commission for a public hearing and recommendation.

- 5. Additional Business from Plan Commission Members or Staff**
- 6. Weekly Development Report**
- 7. Meeting Announcements**
 - a. Plan Commission
 - Tuesday, September 5, 2017 at 7:00pm Century Station Training Room
 - Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Tuesday, October 3, 2017 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - b. Planning & Development Committee
 - Monday, September 11, 2017 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Monday, October 9, 2017 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
- 8. Public Comment**
- 9. Adjournment at 8:34 p.m.**