

HIGHLAND PLAN COMMISSION

Minutes of the Meeting of
Wednesday, November 20, 2024

The Highland Plan Commission met in regular session on November 20, 2024. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Kissee. The meeting opened at 6:38 P.M. led by Commissioner Kissee.

ROLL CALL: Present on roll call: Commissioners Kissee, Neal, Severson, Turich, Smith & Wright. Also present Ken Mika, Building Commissioner/Zoning Administrator. Attorney Scott Bilse was present on behalf of Plan Commission Attorney John Reed. Commissioner Zemen was absent.

MINUTES: Are there any deletions, additions, or corrections to the minutes of October 16, 2024 regular meeting? If none, they will stand approved as posted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next study session will be held on December 4, 2024 at 6:30 P.M. The next business meeting will be held on December 18, 2024 at 6:30 P.M., with the Business Meeting immediately following the Study Session.

COMMUNICATION: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Docket # 2024-03 - Redevelopment Commission Resolution No. HRC-024-21 concerning 2024 Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Highland Consolidated Redevelopment Area (Kennedy Ave. South Subarea Expansion Area). Dan Botich/Consultant for Redevelopment Commission attended to review the Plan and Resolution.

Mr. Botich reviewed some topics that were talked about at the Plan Commission Study Session of November 6, 2024. He referenced questions at tonight's study session that were answered as well. He furthered at tonight's meeting he would like to present the Resolution that outlines and is for the purpose of the Redevelopment Commission making a Finding of Fact and determination that the land Use planned within the Kennedy Ave South Subarea Expansion is consistent with the official plans of the Town of Highland and that if there are consistencies that are identified they will be mitigated either through a Plan Commission amendment process or the development anticipated would not occur. He said it was the understanding that the Town was currently anticipating a Master Comprehensive Plan update in subsequent months, and this would be taken into consideration at that time. This is in accordance with Statutory requirements under Indiana Code 36-7-14-16 which states that once a declaratory Resolution is approved by the Redevelopment Commission it must be sent to the Plan Commission for compliance determination within the official plan documents of the Town.

Commissioner Kissee asked if there were any questions. There were none. Commissioner Kissee then opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Lydia Shott of 10226 Kennedy Ave., Highland, Indiana, spoke. She said her house is the third house from the Grand Trunk railroad tracks. She has been in this residence for almost twenty years. She expressed her disappointment that residents would purchase a home in a residential zones area only to pull the rug out from under them, by rezoning to Commercial twenty years later. She said the foot traffic is getting unsafe and that students are walking in the middle lane and walking their bikes on the grass on Kennedy Ave. She said this is a weekly occurrence. She said there are semi and flatbed trucks on Kennedy everyday even with a no truck sign posted. She said the foot traffic will slow down somewhat because of the weather but will have to walk on the road when the snow and ice arrive. She said that when Hyre Electric eventually builds, they will add more traffic to this already unsafe area. She told the Commissioners that their decision affects her long after they are done on this Commission, and they will continue to live comfortably in their residential zoned homes. She asked them not to continue making south Kennedy Ave. an industrial area. She continued saying the area is a zone five flood zone and a wetland. She said she is asking for consideration for this senior citizen of Highland.

Commissioner Severson stated that the rezoning would not happen for her house and that her house could not just be rezoned. He said it was for the two parcels at the south end down by Main St., almost to the gas station.

Commissioner Turich interrupted Commissioner Severson to state that the Public Hearing should be open for discussion, and that they would need to have a Motion and a Second, a confirmation from the Attorney and then the Commissioners could have a discussion.

Commissioner Kisse asked for a motion for Docket # 2024-03, Resolution No. HRC-024-21.

Commissioner Severson motioned to approve passing on to the Town Council Docket #2024-03/ Resolution No. HRC-024-21.

Commissioner Kisse asked before the Motion was Seconded, if there were any Proofs of Publication that had to be reviewed. He didn't believe there was. It was stated Proofs of Publication were not required for this.

Commissioner Neal seconded the motion and then Commissioner Kisse asked if there were any questions or comments from the Commissioners.

Mr. Mika commented that this Resolution does not involve rezoning. He said in fact the Town has not received a rezoning request for any property down there (Kennedy Ave). He said there has been discussion about a potential development which has been talked about for about 3.5 years. He said what's on the table now will help facilitate a future development no matter what is in that area. However it does not involve anything to do with rezoning tonight. He continued that the property would need to be subdivided, and if they are looking at changing the zoning, that would have to go through that step too. He said at this point nothing has been presented to the Town to date for that.

Mr. Botich added that there is only one property listed to be acquired and that is currently owned by Elzinga, which is a property on the northwest side of the area and is a detention pond on the west side of the Conrail/ Norfolk Southern Rail. It is a retention/detention pond basically for flood control of the commercial development to the south. The owner is looking to sell it and is worth the Redevelopment Commission purchasing for any overflow in the future for use for drainage. He said the Redevelopment Commission does not have the authority for Eminent Domain.

Commissioner Kisse asked for a roll call vote. It unanimously passed with a roll call vote of 6 - 0.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Severson moved to adjourn. Commissioner Smith seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.