

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO  
PLAN COMMISSION

BOARD MEMBERS

Val Gomez, President  
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Joanne Moricz, Commissioner  
Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner  
Douglas Sloss, Commissioner  
Grayling Gordon, Commissioner  
Lydia Lopez, Commissioner  
Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Monday, August 1, 2022 @ 4:30 p.m.  
Reported for Fissinger & Associates  
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present in Chambers: Val Gomez, Lilia Ramos,  
Douglas Sloss, Lydia Lopez, Stacy Winfield.  
Present via Zoom: William Allen, Chanthini  
Fowler.

STAFF: Present in Chambers: Richard Morrisroe, Debbra  
Gritters.

MR. GOMEZ: We do have a quorum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting of Monday,  
July 18, 2022

Comments/Questions: None

Motion to approve July 18, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes made  
by Douglas Sloss. Second by Lilia Ramos.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None  
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

NEW BUSINESS:

1 City Planner's Reporter:

2 MR. GOMEZ: We'll move on to New Business. We have the  
3 City Planner's Report. Today we're supposed to review the  
4 Indiana Citizen's Planner's Guide, Chapter 8 Zoning  
5 Ordinances. Mr. Morrisroe, you have the floor.

6 MR. MORRISROE: Thank you very much, ladies and  
7 gentlemen.

8 I am going to rely on Will and Chanthini's  
9 knowledge of the City maps since they won't be able to see it  
10 as much when I put it before you.

11 You're welcome to come down and look on it on your  
12 way out.

13 This is the City Zoning Map. And all these colors  
14 are different categories. And this is what this chapter is  
15 about.

16 And I was quizzing Pastor Sloss who is an  
17 out-of-towner from Muncie, Indianapolis, but not born and  
18 raised here, about the various numbers.

19 And I was asking him about for instance his church  
20 is at 1500 McCook in East Chicago. I was asking him if he  
21 was aware of why it had that number and what that number  
22 said. Any guesses?

23 MS. RAMOS: What number is that?

24 MR. MORRISROE: 1500. It's right a block north of 151st  
25 Street on McCook Avenue. Very close to where the West  
26 Calumet Housing area was.

27 MR. GOMEZ: You're referencing the numbers on the map on  
28 the side and on the top?

29 MR. MORRISROE: Yes.

30 MR. GOMEZ: Those are the street numbers.

31 MR. MORRISROE: Well, they tell you the block numbers.

32 MR. GOMEZ: The block numbers north and south and east  
33 and west.

34 MR. MORRISROE: Yes. And what is the basis for these

1 numbers 29 to 57?

2 MS. RAMOS: Are those the lots?

3 MR. MORRISROE: They're blocks. The lots carry those  
4 numbers within those blocks.

5 But where do we get these numbers? How come we  
6 don't have for instance 70 to 90 like parts of Hammond has?

7 MS. RAMOS: That's a good question.

8 MR. GOMEZ: Because of where we're at north and south  
9 coming this way.

10 MR. MORRISROE: Well, what I asked him was if he ever  
11 heard of State and Madison, the corner of State and Madison.

12 MR. GOMEZ: In Illinois where it's zero zero.

13 MR. MORRISROE: Zero zero. So really East Chicago  
14 begins at 129th. And some of the streets are called that.  
15 Like they have the extra hundred on it. But the numbers, the  
16 house or commerce or whatever it is, don't have those. I  
17 have 43, 45 where I live and others.

18 Now, the other question is where did we get our  
19 east and west numbers? For instance what was the Gold Store?  
20 Was it 801 West Chicago Avenue? Where do we get west and  
21 east?

22 The map tells the story. But it's just if you're  
23 aware of it.

24 Val, this one I assume you know.

25 MR. GOMEZ: No. You got me on that one.

MS. RAMOS: Is that the intersection of Indianapolis and  
Chicago Avenue?

MR. MORRISROE: No. That's 800. Water Department is  
400, 400 East.

Pastor Sloss.

MR. SLOSS: Did they use the canal to determine that?

MR. MORRISROE: Yes. The canal is the north-south

1 dividing line.

2 The blocks are very, very short. The blocks going  
3 north to south are eight blocks to a mile which is the basis  
4 of Chicago's geography. Whereas our east-west for instance  
5 you could have two streets. And it may not be a block. It  
6 probably would be less than a block.

7 So you have going west to White Oak and to Bishop  
8 Noll and beginning of Hammond goes from 1 to 16. And then  
9 going east it goes from 1 to 3200.

10 So you have for instance in Guadalupe Homes you  
11 have a mix of 43, 44 that are on a north-south axis part of  
12 the horseshoe. When you turn around the corner, all of a  
13 sudden you've got 27s and 28s which are east and west from  
14 the canal.

15 I mention these because sometimes we just take for  
16 granted where we are and what it is. And I don't know how I  
17 found those things out. But somehow they came to me in  
18 different years.

19 Now, today was the very special day for the Housing  
20 Authority. It was a Section 8 registration day. So when I  
21 came in the morning there had to be at least 50 people lined  
22 up. Mostly mothers.

23 What is it about Section 8 that is so special,  
24 Section 8 Housing Coupon?

25 MS. WINFIELD: What's so special? You said what's so  
special about it?

MR. MORRISROE: Yes.

MS. WINFIELD: Most of them are eligible for free rent.

MR. MORRISROE: For housing subsidy.

MS. WINFIELD: For housing.

MR. MORRISROE: And all of that goes back to the death  
of Dr. King. And those changes in the law were passed within  
three months of his death to try to deal with some of the  
unfairness as so often was the case in cities for poor  
people.

They're not limited to African Americans. But poor

1 whites can apply as well as Hispanics and Native Americans,  
2 whatever.

3 But I just turned the corner. I saw the crowd.  
4 And I asked a man who was out there with a flag. I said is  
5 this Section 8 day.

6 I know somewhere there had been notice. There had  
7 been notice in the paper. But with relatively little notice  
8 it was packed.

9 And when I went by there again at 11:00, 11:15,  
10 there was nobody there.

11 I think it was an application day. So you were  
12 getting in line to get the Section 8 subsidy.

13 And the Section 8 subsidy is something that you can  
14 carry wherever. It's not limited to East Chicago.

15 And Chanthini and I are both displaced Chicago. So  
16 we kind of kid about people saying that all the problems of  
17 East Chicago, if we just didn't have these Chicago people  
18 with our Section 8 coming to East Chicago all would be well.

19 It's sort of like East Chicago has had to absorb  
20 the poorest of the poor from the projects in Chicago.

21 And while some of that is true on the other hand I  
22 think we've gained some pretty decent citizens through the  
23 migration from Chicago through these years.

24 I say these things because these are the background  
25 of Planning and Zoning.

Zoning was really put together in the '20s. It was  
found legal in Cleveland by the US Supreme Court, City of  
Euclid famous case.

What it did was it separated single-family homes  
from factories. That was the main line. The power of the  
municipality to set aside zones to separate for safety, for  
traffic, for other kind of considerations.

And yet East Chicago by 1920, mid 1920s most of it  
other than Prairie Park and Roxana, most of the City had been  
already cut up and diced and sliced.

You had stores next to housing. And on the same

1 block you might have a six-unit and a bunch of single-family  
2 units. That just happened. And so we have all these  
3 categories.

3 But they're kind of put together in East Chicago if  
4 you pardon the expression ass backwards because they were  
5 done before they even decided to use the planning tool to  
6 develop, have a Comprehensive Plan.

6 There was a very elegant plan put together in the  
7 late '20s by a major Chicago planning firm that just fell  
8 apart with the Great Depression and was the basis for putting  
9 East Chicago together in different ways and trying to bring  
10 together the Harbor and the so-called East Chicago part of  
11 the City that we live in.

9 So I have a lot that I could read to you from and  
10 about the chapter on zoning. What I'd ask you rather is that  
11 either this meeting or other meetings that you ask questions  
12 and try to deal with those.

12 Does anybody have any?

13 MR. GOMEZ: Any questions or comments for Mr. Morrisroe  
14 tonight? Thank you, Mr. Morrisroe.

14 MR. MORRISROE: I tried to pull this together in a way  
15 to do something different.

16 And Mayor Jeorse was Romanian. I heard there was a  
17 query in one of the department meetings not too long ago.

17 MR. GOMEZ: They probably were talking about that trying  
18 to figure out what his nationality was.

19 MR. MORRISROE: And actually in East Chicago was the  
20 first Romanian Orthodox Church in the North American  
21 Continent. It was a beautiful church on Elm Street 3600  
22 block.

21 There was no kind of lobby, no group to kind of try  
22 to get it to be saved. So it went down in the urban renewal  
23 parts over near Clemente Center and Nunez Park.

23 The Romanian Church ended up relocating to Lansing  
24 and is a much less dignified kind of building. But it's  
25 where people worship and where their contributions and their  
hard work were able to put it together.

1           But again the history of the City has so many  
2 different history some of which is interesting, some of which  
3 is past. But to not know the past sometimes is to be unable  
4 to deal with the future.

5           So thank you very much for your attention.

6           MR. GOMEZ: Thank you, Mr. Morrisroe.

7           MR. SLOSS: We learned something.

8           MS. RAMOS: Yes, we did.

9           OLD BUSINESS: None.

10          COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: None.

11          PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

12                   \* Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, August 15,  
13 2022 @ 4:30 p.m.

14          Motion to adjourn was made by Stacy Winfield. Second by  
15 Lilia Ramos.

16          Roll Call: "All in Favor": All           Abstain: None  
17 Opposed: None           Motion Carries.

18                   \* Meeting ended at 4:47 p.m.

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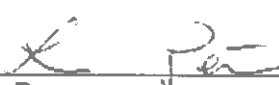
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa Pena, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 7th day of August, 2022.

  
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Lisa Pena  
Notary Public Porter County  
Certified Shorthand Reporter  
License Number 084-003483




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Approval of Meeting Minutes of  
Monday, August 1, 2022

Approved and Signed August 15, 2022

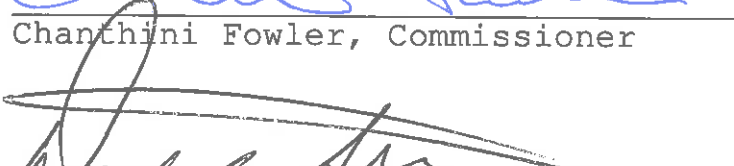
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Val Gomez, President

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Joanne Moricz, Commissioner

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