

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
PLAN COMMISSION

BOARD MEMBERS

Val Gomez, President
Anthony Serna, Vice President
Lilia Ramos, Secretary
Joanne Moricz, Commissioner
Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner
Douglass Sloss, Commissioner
William Allen, Commissioner
Lydia Lopez, Commissioner
Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

Regular Meeting Minutes
(Via Zoom Videoconference)
Monday, August 2, 2021 @ 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, Anthony Serna,
William Allen

Present Via Zoom: Lilia Ramos, Joanne Moricz,
Douglass Sloss, Lydia Lopez, Stacy Winfield

MR. GOMEZ: We do have a quorum.

STAFF: Present in Chambers: Richard Morrisroe, Douglas
Powers, Ateria Allen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

(Chanthini Fowler joined meeting)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting of Monday,
July 19, 2021

Comments/Questions: None

Motion to approve July 19, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes made
by William Allen. Second by Anthony Serna.

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

1 NEW BUSINESS:

2 CITY PLANNER'S REPORT:

3 MR. GOMEZ: We'll move on to New Business. City
4 Planner's Report. We have one item, Indiana Citizen
5 Planner's Guide, Chapter 3, Avoiding Pitfalls. Mr. Powers.

6 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Commissioners. First of all
7 what are planning pitfalls? The planning and development
8 process inherently contains potential problems. This section
9 offers advice to help Plan Commissions and Boards of Zoning
10 Appeals avoid creating more pitfalls.

11 Simply put avoiding pitfalls means being proactive
12 about planning. Too often Plan Commissions and Boards of
13 Zoning Appeals find themselves acting in a reactionary way.

14 It may seem easier and more expedient at the time
15 to stick to only addressing the cases before you. But
16 spending more group time upfront working on the big picture
17 will help lay a good planning foundation, having a good
18 planning foundation community and reducing problems you may
19 encounter down the road.

20 Planning pitfalls most typically happen when things
21 aren't well thought out and details aren't tied down.
22 Planning pitfalls can also happen when communities establish
23 rules and regulations, but they don't follow them.

24 The first piece of advice in this chapter is
25 obvious, but sometimes a disregarded general principle.

26 You are given a lot of freedom to craft rules and
27 regulations for your community. So your Board or Commission
28 needs to make sure you follow them.

29 Now, what else can you do to avoid pitfalls in your
30 community?

31 So there's a handful of things beyond this that are
32 discussed. For example communication and coordination. That
33 is not just between commissioners themselves. But inherently
34 with the public on various needs as needed.

35 A few things that are discussed in this chapter
36 that I'd like to address is, one, it mentions about refusing
37 incomplete applications.

1 The applications should be reviewed for
2 completeness and correctness prior to anything going in front
3 of the Plan Commission.

4 So Prepare for the Hearing, this is an important
5 section. It mentions about the seven habits for highly
6 effective application review as I mentioned these review
7 before.

8 But starting with an open mind, seek pre-meeting
9 expert review by multiple departments. That's where the
10 Technical Review Committee comes in reviewing these for the
11 technical aspects. Entrusting staff expertise,
12 recommendations follows with that. Read the staff report at
13 least once before the meeting.

14 This comes in that there's going to be different
15 types of reports or recommendations based on what the actual
16 meeting is for and what is to be heard. But it is imperative
17 that we do follow the due process.

18 The Giving Adequate and Timely Notice refers to the
19 public hearings. And the Planning Commission dealing with
20 rezoning applications is one of the most common that will
21 require a public hearing and 10-day notice to be sent out so
22 everyone can be apprised to what is going on.

23 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest or the Perception, I
24 know we just discussed this not too long ago in a previous
25 chapter. And this mentions Indiana Code 35-44-1-3 which says
26 that a public servant who knowingly or intentionally has a
27 pecuniary interest in or derives a profit from a contract or
28 a purchase connected with an action by the government entity
29 served by the public servant commits conflicts of interest, a
30 Class D Felony. Always important to keep in mind.

31 Keeping of Complete Records, any of these documents
32 pertaining to these meetings we not only have the minutes
33 which are publicly accessible. But the Planning Department
34 does also keep records of whatever applications are approved
35 or denied and whatever additional information we may have
36 pertaining to that use.

37 So the other thing it mentions about knowing your
38 rules. This has been recently discussed as well.

39 One other area, it says on page 50, that's where it
40 talks about the different uses, the rezonings as I mentioned.
41 That stipulates whether or why, the types of reasons you

1 should potentially approve or deny of that application.

2 The Subdivisions, if you're ever curious about that
3 this gives an idea about some of the factors to look into.
4 But the Subdivision Control Ordinance spells this out very
5 detailed.

6 Planning of Vacations, those generally are going to
7 the Common Council on the recommendation of what should or
8 should not occur based on various reasons.

9 And as I am sure you're aware that the majority of
10 variances will go in front of the BZA and Common Council.

11 The Administrative Appeal Process is something we
12 can discuss if it ever comes down to that. But it's
13 different depending on what those actions are.

14 And our fees are clearly spelled out on the
15 website.

16 Commitments and Conditions, that more pertains to
17 the Common Council and BZA. However we've discussed some of
18 the other areas that it mentions about the Zoning Ordinance.
19 The rules and procedures are written in there.

20 Does anyone have any specific questions that
21 pertain to this chapter or anything we've discussed?

22 MR. GOMEZ: Any questions or comments? Thank you, Doug.

23 OLD BUSINESS: None.

24 COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS: None.

25 PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

* Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, August 16,
2021 @ 4:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn was made by William Allen. Second by
Anthony Serna.


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

* Meeting ended at 4:40 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of
Monday, August 2, 2021
Approved and Signed August 16, 2021



Val Gomez, President



Anthony Serna, Vice President

Lilia Ramos / Zoom

Lilia Ramos, Secretary

Joanne Moricz / Zoom

Joanne Moricz, Commissioner

Stacy Winfield / Zoom

Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

Douglass Sloss / Zoom

Douglass Sloss, Commissioner



William Allen, Commissioner

Lydia Lopez / Zoom

Lydia Lopez, Commissioner

Chanthini Fowler / Zoom


Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner

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 6th day of August, 2021.



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

