

## **STOW PLANNING COMMISSION**

Minutes of the Stow Planning Commission meeting held on Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Brauer, Ms. Harrison, Mr. Kohlmeier, Mr. Ross, Mr. Sprungle

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Planning Rob Kurtz  
Planning Commission Secretary Pamela Daerr  
Councilman-At-Large John Pribonic  
Councilman Brian D'Antonio  
CT Consultant Kristin Hopkins  
CT Consultant Dana Cohen

**PRESS REPRESENTATIVE:** Stow Sentry

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Mr. Sprungle called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6: 00 p.m. and asked the audience to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken.

### **STUDY ITEMS: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE Community Meeting #2**

Mr. Kurtz opened the meeting with a presentation on the Stow Comprehensive Plan Update which included:

What to expect at the meeting.

The Planning Process

Where are we now?

Where do we want to be?

How do we get there?

The history of the update process.

The 2016/2017 Schedule for the completion of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goals

City Wide Policies

Quality of Place – Enhancing our built environment.

Economic Development – Planning for a strong tax base and job creation.

Retail Policies – Planning for the places where we shop and entertain.

Residential Policies – Planning for the places where we live.

Parks and Recreation – Ensuring we have quality places to play.

Environmental Protection – Making the most of our natural systems.

Transportation and Connectivity – Promoting all modes of travel.

Ms. Hopkins: Focus Area A – Seasons Road & State Route 8 – This is 140 acres of industrial land to develop.

As new development occurs it will add to the City's tax base and when it does occur those developments will be able to take advantage of the new water and sewer improvements installed by the City. It's good management of storm water runoff and to preserve the sensitive natural area. We know those two things are goals whenever development is proposed in the Seasons Road / State Route 8 interchange area.

Focus Area B: Is a residentially zoned portion of Steels Corners Road at the west end butting up against Cuyahoga Falls. Right now it is a very low density single-family area. There are about three or four houses that aren't that old.

The assumption is there is no development pressure at the moment to redevelop those Stow parcels. In the event there is an interest in redeveloping, the area across the street on the south side of Steels Corners Road is a condominium development; that is a much higher density than the single-family. Plus you have all the business development at the Steels Corners / State Route 8 interchange area.

The expectation is there could be some pressure for redevelopment. What we hope to achieve if redevelopment were to be proposed, is managing the storm water runoff; preserving the natural areas and features shown on the map on the right [pointing to the screen]. The red areas and blue areas [pointing to the screen] are flood prone and could be wetland areas.

Another goal for this area is to alleviate traffic congestion and to make sure any new development is compatible with the surrounding area.

Focus Area C – Is a combination of lots that are on Gilbert Road behind the Stow-Falls Shopping Center. The area is currently zoned for single family but the assumption is that new development or redevelopment is also likely to be proposed in this area.

Our goals for this area are to make sure new development does occur to add to the tax base but when it does occur there are no adverse impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and that the sensitive, natural areas along Mud Brook are also preserved.

Focus Area D – Is the Stow Falls Shopping Center. This area has had a large portion of the shopping center vacant for a number of years.

The goals for this area are to revitalize the existing shopping center with new development which will add to the tax base, but to make sure it is done in a way that brings about quality development.

Focus Area E – Is the northeast quadrant of State Route 8 and Graham Road. It is a small 5-acre parcel left over from the former Carter Lumber Site. There are concerns it is a small site right at the entrance ramp to State Route 8.

The goal with this property, if development were to occur, is good traffic management and preservation of the sensitive natural areas.

Focus Area F – Is the Hudson Drive Corridor from the Steels Corners intersection to the north and south to the State Route 8 overpass. This area is a mixture of zoning and land uses.

The goal and expectation for this is that this area will be an attractive place for new development. When new development does occur it is done in a way to preserve the lower

density character with the wider front lawns with more greenery. It should also preserve the sensitive natural areas here as well. Recognizing the parcels to the west butt up against State Route 8, we want to make sure we leverage that location for high-quality development with good traffic development.

Focus Area G – Is the Darrow Road Corridor north of the City Center. This is primarily a residential area except for some scattered business uses along the way.

When promoting in this area it is really important to preserve the property values and enable the property owners to develop their property in a way that is compatible with the character of a busy street; and in a way that does not have adverse impacts on the existing residential development.

Focus Area H – Is the City Center area. We've heard from a number of people there is still interest in making sure this is a mixed-use City Center public gathering space. This area should be built up with high-quality, well-designed new development that entails streetscape improvements.

Focus Area I – Is the Darrow Road/Kent Road Area mostly to the west along Kent Road. This area has buildings that are already closer to the street and nonconforming with the current zoning requirements.

We are viewing this as a good location for a mixed-use neighborhood center with a compact, walkable environment that we know attracts millennials. Underscoring all that, any new development should be a high-quality design.

Focus Area J – Is the Stow Road/Fishcreek Road Area. It is the triangular area with Call Road to the north. This area has been zoned commercial for a long time and some of the parcels are rather small and may be difficult to develop for commercial purposes.

The thought is to limit retail development and ensure development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods and done in a way to alleviate traffic congestions.

Ms. Hopkins: Let me give you the ground rules for this evening. The tables match the display sheets above them on the wall, in terms of the topic areas and focus areas. This gives you a lot of the same information we showed on the slide with a little more observations and existing conditions. The sheets on the table include all the strategies and action steps we have developed to carry out the objectives.

What we hope you will do tonight is take the dots you were given and use them to identify the policies or action steps you think are most important for the City to achieve. There are about 100 of them so you are going to have to pick your top one-third of the things you think are important.

It is a lot of reading and that is why we took the time to go over these in general. The hope is you will get to every single table, but we recognize that some things may be more important than others.

Focus Areas are Stations 1 through 5 and then our City Wide Policies are at Station 6 and 7 behind Mr. Kurtz.

Mr. Kurtz: There are also post-it notes if you want to make a comment. Feel free to stick them anywhere on the sheet or the table. We are here tonight to get your comments.

Ms. Hopkins: Each of the policies and strategies have a number attached to them; i.e., 4.5 or 8.1. So if you do write a comment on one of those please include the number of the strategy or action step.

Mr. Kurtz: We will have the consultants, a Planning Commission member or Councilman Pribonic at each of the Stations to answer any questions we can.

Ms. Hopkins: We will not be getting back together this evening so you are free to leave when you have visited the Stations you are interested in.

Mr. Sprungle: I think it is important for everybody to realize the City of Stow is not a developer. It is not the intention of the City to actually develop the property. It is to make it developable for the desired purpose. We zone it and designate it for a certain type of development but the City of Stow doesn't actually develop. We don't bring businesses in; we try to make it attractive for the type of businesses that we are talking about.

Mr. Kurtz: You will note on the screen the web address of our Comprehensive Plan page which will have updated information and an opportunity to make comments. You can select the comment button and we will receive an email directly to our office. If something occurs to you after tonight, hopefully you will send us those comments as well.

Community participation began at 6:23 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

**The next scheduled meeting is scheduled January 17, 2017.**

With no further business to discuss, it was moved and seconded to adjourn. It was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

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Richard Sprungle  
Planning Commission Chairman

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Pamela H. Daerr, CPS  
Planning Commission Secretary