

Planning Commission Meeting
 Thursday, April 7, 2011
 6:00 p.m. Town Hall

Edinburgh Planning Commission met in a meeting at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, April 7, 2011

Members Present:

John Drybread, Chairman
 Keith Sells
 Mike Graham
 David Long
 Glenn Giles
 Rhonda Barrett, Secretary

Members Absent:

Ray Walton
 Stephanie Taylor
 Richard Pile
 Curtis Rooks

Also Present: Brad Teter, Building Commissioner
 Dustin Huddleston, Town Attorney
 Courtney Owen with Houseal and Lavigne

John Drybread opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

John Drybread did roll call of the Planning Commission. Present were Keith Sells, Mike Graham, David Long, Glenn Giles, and John Drybread. Absent were Richard Pile, Stephanie Taylor, Curtis Rooks, and Ray Walton.

John presented the minutes of the January 5, 2011 and December 2, 2010 meeting minutes. Keith Sells motioned to approve the minutes. Dave Long seconded. Motion passed minutes approved.

John then presented the next item on the agenda, which was the review of the new Comprehensive Plan for the town. He then asked Dustin Huddleston, Town Attorney to give the board some direction on what their role is in the process of getting the Comprehensive Plan approved.

Dustin Huddleston, Town Attorney informed the board that the town had received a grant, which paid for a significant part of the Comprehensive Plan. This grant stipulated that the comprehensive plan be approved by the end of May 2011. The process for the comprehensive plan includes having tonight's meeting to review the draft and then having another meeting where the planning commission certifies the comprehensive plan. Once the plan is approved by the planning commission it is then submitted to the Town Council for approval, after the Town Council approves the comprehensive plan, then it is adopted by the town.

John Drybread then asked Courtney Owen with the consulting firm, Houseal & Lavigne, to present the draft of the Comprehensive Plan that they had written for the town.

Courtney Owen explained to the board that what they were looking at was a draft of the updated comprehensive plan that her firm had completed. This plan consists of approximately 6 months of work, starting with an existing conditions analysis to understand where the Town is today, and make recommendations as to where the town wants to be in approximately 15 or 20 years from now. Courtney then explained that the typical shelf life of a comprehensive plan is around 15 to 20 years, stating that most municipalities make major updates to their comprehensive plan about every 5 years and the plan is reviewed on an annual basis to look at what has been done and to see if any changes need to be made, whether it be adding items to or taking items out of the comprehensive plan. Tonight's meeting is the public hearing to allow for any public comments. Courtney commented that there had been a lot of community participation with workshops, meetings, an online component, which had surveys and a mapping tool, and there had been approximately 15 key person interviews to hear about in-depth issues that are going on. The steering committee for the comprehensive plan unanimously supported the plan after doing a detailed walk through of it. The plan meets all of the statutory obligations, following everything that the town wanted out of the plan, specifically clearly defined land use descriptions, so that when a new development comes before the planning commission, every staff member and every elected or appointed official is operating from the same policy document. This plan is separate from the zoning ordinance; this is the document that tells the town where it wants to go in the future. The zoning ordinances are more specific oriented, whereas the comprehensive plan is a guide for decisions about land use and change in the future.

John Drybread further explained to the board that there had been several meetings at the sports complex concerning the comprehensive plan. Those meetings had been pretty well attended, with a lot of input and discussion concerning the comprehensive plan, basically going over the plan page by page. The meetings were good to help the community understand that a comprehensive plan is more of a vision for the town rather than an economic development plan for the town.

Dustin Huddleston explained to the board that once the plan is adopted, it will be a good tool for the planning commission to use if somebody wants to petition the board to do a rezoning or platting of a piece of property. This plan will be a good tool to use to verify that what the petitioner is requesting adheres to the comprehensive plan for the town. If the petition does not adhere to the plan then that is a good reason to deny because that is not part of the towns plan.

Keith Sells commented that he hoped that when the planning board and zoning boards receive their meeting notices that there would be references to sections of the comprehensive plan concerning the petitions the board will be hearing, to help guide and prepare them in making decisions that are in line with the desires

of the town.

Dustin Huddleston then asked Brad Teter to include this type of references as part of his staff report to the board.

John Drybread stated that the plan is more of a guide and a vision of where the town wants to go and the decisions made by the boards need to coincide with the plan to keep the town moving in the direction it wants to go.

Courtney Owen stated that it is like a form of protection for the board to be consistent in making decisions based on following policy and laws of the town. It further protects the board as individuals and is legally defensible if there is ever a lawsuit against the town. It is also a good marketing item in seeking federal grants, as most of the grants require an up to date comprehensive plan before administering any funds.

Glenn Giles asked about Courtney's comment concerning the shelf life of 15 – 20 years, for example: Would this plan be up to date 25 years from now if this plan has been revised every 5 years?

Courtney Owen explained that as long as the town had not made any major changes in their plans or if there has not been any major growth of the town, as long as it is revised every 5 years that it would probably only require a formal amendment process with as little as one meeting.

Glenn Giles then asked about adding to and taking from the plan other than just changing language of the plan for example something new comes up that is not included in the plan?

Courtney Owen said yes that the plan is considered a living document and needs to be revised to stay up to date with changes in the future, for example the difference in telecommunications today compared to 20 years ago. Items like that and new developments are what the town needs to look at and consider in the future.

Keith Sells asked about a process to measure meeting the goals of the town.

Courtney Owen stated that the implementation section of the comprehensive plan is currently in narrative form and could be changed to be more of a checklist style form.

Keith Sells asked about the wording on page 31 concerning the use of the word to aggressively pursue annexation of the Outlet Mall.

Courtney Owen stated that was a good concern to be looked at as that was a consultant recommendation and if that is not the desire or plan of the town then it should be altered.

Keith Sells commented that he is from Bartholomew County and he is also on the joint Columbus/Bartholomew County/Edinburgh planning board for the outlet mall and that he had never heard any comments or plans from the town to pursue annexation, and that the wording to aggressively pursue annexation had surprised him.

Courtney Owen commented that this is a good conversation to have tonight, whether the town is prepared or interested in ever annexing whether aggressively or not. She will take any changes tonight and at the next meeting a revised draft would be presented for approval.

Keith Sells commented that the plan should state what the plan for the town really is and if the plan is to aggressively go after the outlet mall then the plan should state that.

John Drybread commented that aggressive could be too strong of a word but he did not feel that the council would want the annexation taken out of the plan as they do have visions of annexation of the mall at some point.

Glenn Giles asked if they would want to annex both sides of US 31.

John Drybread commented that only the east side, which is covered by the inter-local agreement. John further stated that he did not think the council would ever want to take out the annexation plan, but take out the word aggressively.

After some further discussion Dustin Huddleston commented that the town council would be the board to pursue the annexation, and suggested that the language could be amended or when the planning commission certifies the plan that they want the council to focus in on that language and verify that is their plan.

After more discussion and a suggestion from Courtney Owen to use the words "explore opportunities" rather than "aggressively pursue" concerning the annexation, Keith Sells made a motion to change the wording on Page 31 section 4 under commercial from:

"The Town should aggressively pursue annexation of the Edinburgh Premium Outlet Mall and similar areas where utilities are currently provided"

to:

"The Town should explore opportunities for annexation of the Edinburgh Premium Outlet Mall and similar areas where utilities are currently provided"

Mike Graham seconded. After a vote all were in favor. Motion carried.

Courtney Owen commented on two other helpful items in the plan including the market study that is in the appendix, that the committee found this information helpful to understand the demographics and the market changes and that this information could be used by several departments and different boards. Also there is the zoning map that can be transmitted electronically or in hard copy, so inquiries concerning zoning can be emailed. At the end of the process Houseal and Lavigne will submit all of the digital files to the town to keep updated.

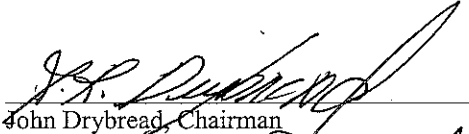
Keith Sells commented that it is a great document for the board to use as a guide in making decisions concerning planning and zoning appeals.

John Drybread asked if there were any other comments or questions.

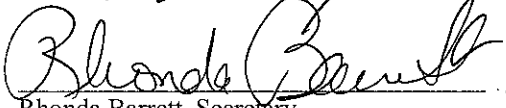
Courtney Owen commented that the nice thing about the plan is the amendment process gives lots of flexibility if something comes up later.

After some further discussion, Glenn Giles made a motion to authorize Brad Teter to communicate with Houseal & Lavigne to meet again for a final draft approval. Mike Graham seconded. After a vote all were in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Mike Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Glenn Giles seconded. After a vote all were in favor. Meeting adjourned.



John Drybread, Chairman



Rhonda Barrett, Secretary