

Plan Commission Summary Minutes – March 10, 2025 - 5:30 pm

City of Bloomington Council Chambers – Room #115

Plan Commission minutes are transcribed in a summarized manner. Video footage is available for viewing in the (CATS) Department of the Monroe County Public Library, 303 E Kirkwood Avenue. Phone number: 812-349-3111 or via e-mail at the following address: moneill@monroe.lib.in.us.

The City of Bloomington Plan Commission (PC) met on February 10, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., a hybrid meeting was held both in the Council Chambers, located in Room 115, at 401 N. Morton Street, City Hall Bloomington, IN 47404 and remotely via Zoom. Members present in Chambers: Tim Ballard, Andrew Cibor, Ellen Coe Rodkey, Jillian Kinzie, Chris Smith, Hopi Stosberg, Brad Wisler and Trohn Enright-Randolph.

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Coe Rodkey moved to approve the November 4, 2024 and February 10, 2025 minutes, Kinzie seconded the motion, with correction of spelling of Mr. W Motion passes by roll call - 6:0

REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Stosberg announced the new Fire Merit Commission and they are looking for applicants to serve on this commission. You can apply online@bloomington.in.gov. This is a very important and special role for our fire department.

Enright-Randolph announced that he is happy to serve on the board for 2025 as per the vote from the last Monroe County Plan Commission admin meeting.

Jackie Scanlan, Development Services Manager, announced the annual UDO update is in March. Scanlan is working closely with the Council office and Clerk's office to see if there are more resolutions as that may delay the update due to the purpose of noticing.

PETITIONS:

USE2024-12-0070 / SP-47-24

Bledsoe Riggert Cooper James (William Riggert)

301 N College Ave

Parcel: 53-05-33-310-170.000-005

Request: Major site plan approval for Convention Center in the Mixed-Use Downtown Core zoning district. Case

Manager: Jackie Scanlan

Scanlan, Case Manager, presented SP-47-24. See the meeting packet for details. The Planning and Transportation Department recommends that the Plan Commission adopt the proposed findings and approve SP-47-24 with the following conditions:

1. The petitioner shall include compliant bicycle parking on the plans for the Site Development Permit filing.
2. The petitioner must include a lighting and photometric plan with the Site Development Permit filing.
3. The petitioner must show compliance with screening requirements in their building permit application.

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4. The petitioner shall continue to work with the Planning & Transportation and Engineering Departments on the best design for the right-of-way along 3rd Street. This approval does not approve a right-of-way design for 3rd Street.

PETITIONER:

Bill Riggert, Project Civil Engineer, introduced the project members. Riggert explained that the motor coach drop off needs to be located on 3rd Street due to how the side the doors open, which is the opposite side, like a school bus. Riggert explained that the 10 ft sidewalk will remain as is due to the water main and storm utilities placement. There will be 14 covered bike parking spaces within 50 feet of the front entrance. They are on getting LEED certification, which would include providing another 40 bike parking spaces. We have preliminary approval for the skywalk across the street.

John Whikehart, President of the CIB, addressed parking, analysis shows that there are approximately 770 parking spaces available in combination of surface parking and the 4th ST parking garage, as well as 3 other parking garages and 4 other parking lots in the downtown area. The Dora Hotel development is working with the city and the Redevelopment Commission to propose underground parking with the hotel as additional parking. Looking to the future, we're going to have to get creative. We have a parking garage at the former hospital site, a bus pull-off lane, and shuttle parking to meet the City Council's considerations and recommendations

Kinzie made motion to approve based on the proposed findings with the four conditions, Cockerham seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call - 7:0.

PETITIONS:

ZO-01-25/RZONE2025-01-005

City of Bloomington Planning & Transportation

Text Amendment

Request: Text Amendments to Unified Development

Ordinance: Affordable Housing Incentives.

Case Manager: Jackie Scanlan

Scanlan, Case Manager, presented ZO-01-25. See meeting packet for details. The Department recommends forwarding the petition to the April 7, 2024 Plan Commission hearing with at least one additional Special Hearing to discuss the topic further to be scheduled in the interim.

Anna Killian-Hanson, Director of HAND, presented the HAND Report on all services provided by Housing and Neighborhood Development. AMI was explained as the area median income and a key metric in affordable housing, defined as the midpoint of a specific area's income distribution, and it is calculated and published on an annual basis by HUD. Currently to qualify for WFH, a person must have an income between 80-120%, be independent (not on a parents FAFSA) and work at least 35 hours per week. The city's Workforce Housing challenges, many WFH units remain vacant and rent by the bedroom (student housing), zoning commitment language varies widely across all of the projects, with many advertising up to the 120% AMI only. (Meaning an individual's income is \$75,000 annually). Some zoning commitments have a clause that only allowed them to market WFH units for 6 months, then return to market rate. Bloomington is the most housing cost burdened metro area in the state. (High cost/low wage). 52% of the work force commutes from outside of Monroe Co. Is the current UDO targeting workforce or affordability? The annual wage

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distribution for all occupations in Bloomington suggests the AMI should be 70-90%. Currently, we have 254 WFH units of which 55% remain vacant.

Stephanie LaFontaine, Affordable Housing Program Manager, explained that in the Administrative Manual of the UDO, the rent is calculated based on an individual's AMI. LaFontaine explained that in the Zoning Commitment, the 6 month clause states that the leasing agents “make a good faith effort to lease the units”, then they can go to market rate. When asked to do a market plan, their legal representation stated they are not legally obligated, other than to make a good faith effort.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ryan Still, Bloomington Housing Authority, proposed that you accept vouchers along with payment in lieu. Landlords are not required to accept someone with a voucher, and if they do, then an additional inspection is required. This is sometimes viewed as a negative by the landlord.

Dave Harstad, local Real Estate Broker via Zoom, is critical of the proposed changes and the whole program in general. He feels the fund approach is not working, too much staff and commission time is spent on finding developers who won't do what they have agreed to do. Staff time would be better spent on pursuing for example a 4% low income housing bond deal for more affordable housing units. Doesn't feel we are getting a better built environment because of these programs. Focus should be on a policy that efficiently addresses the affordable housing crisis, and get the Planning Department and UDO out of the mission of trying to solve affordable housing by artificially lowering height, and in turn asking people for money.

Kevin Keogh, accountant via zoom, frustrated that the asset of the WFH units in the Relato, that were in contract with the City of Bloomington for 92 years, was allowed to be given away. The developer should be held to the agreement, and not be allowed to arbitrarily change the agreement. This was a missed opportunity that we had, and we lost it.

Jen Pearl, President of the Bloomington Economic Development Corp. Housing is important to attracting and growing quality jobs in the community as well as quality of life. Our data shows that our prime working age population is on a shrinking trajectory countywide. Our largest employers have indicated that around half of their staff commute from outside of Monroe County. Housing is a critical component of this data, losing great workers in our community due to housing availability and cost. The data findings are on their website, bloomingtonedc.com.

Christopher Emge, Chamber of Commerce, echoes Jen Pearl's comments, doesn't want undue burden on developers, and that WFH is probably not a good idea in large student centric complexes either. Proposes making constant changes on how we look at the UDO.

Commission Final Discussion

A subcommittee is suggested for this discussion. Wisler will take the initiative to work with Staff and the Mayor to form a working group, commission or subcommittee. And will work to include stakeholders and not just commissioners. Recommend this move ZO-01-25 to the March PC meeting.

Kinzie made motion to continue to March 10, 2025 PC meeting, Stosberg seconded the motion. Motion passed by roll call - 6:0.

Meeting adjourned 6:54 pm