

**: OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS :****: OF THE CITY OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS :**

A regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting was held on June 15, 2011, at approximately 1:35 p.m., City Hall, Council Chambers, Room 400, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois, with Chairperson Davis presiding.

**ROLL CALL**

The following Planning Commissioners were present: Chairperson Davis; and Commissioners Anderson, Breede, Heard, Lawless, and Richey – 6; Absent: Lawrence and Miller – 2.

**City Staff Present:**

Economic Development Department: Rachael Parker and Susan Schlupp  
Planning & Growth Management Department: Josh Naven and Polly Stainback

**WELCOME, NEW COMMISSIONERS**

Chairperson Davis welcomed newly appointed Commissioners Jason Breede and Eric Heard and asked them to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Heard indicated that he has worked with Coldwell Banker Commercial-Devonshire Realty for the past seven years. He said he was working on some interesting projects and was glad to be a part of the Commission.

Commissioner Breed commented that he currently works with the OSF Engineering Division; and in the past, worked with Ameren as an Energy Efficiency Engineer; and as a Caterpillar supplier, worked on some Caterpillar designs. He said it was a pleasure to be on the Commission.

**MEETING PROCEDURES AND SWEARING IN**

Chairperson Davis explained the meeting procedures. Ms. Stainback administered the swearing-in for testimonies.

**MINUTES****Motion:**

Commissioner Anderson motioned for approval of the minutes of the regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting held on April 20, 2011, as printed; seconded by Commissioner Richey.

Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 6 to 0.

**REGULAR BUSINESS****CPC 11-D**

**PUBLIC HEARING on the request of the City of Peoria for approval of an Enterprise Zone expansion for properties zoned commercial and office along Brandywine Drive and bounded by University Street, Glen Avenue and War Memorial Drive.**

Chairperson Davis read Case No. CPC 11-D into the record.

Josh Naven Senior Urban Planner, City of Peoria, Planning and Growth Management Department, displayed a map showing the general location of the proposed Enterprise Zone expansion, close to Brandywine Drive and War Memorial Drive. He also displayed a larger version of the proposed area, which he had distributed to Commissioners. He entertained any comments from the Economic Development Department regarding the proposal.

Rachael Parker, Development Specialist, City of Peoria, Economic Development Department, explained that this request originated from some developers who visited the Economic Development office and asked about opportunities in this particular area to open a restaurant on University Street. The developers also have ties on the other side of Route 150, where the Golden Corral is being built, which is already in the Enterprise Zone.

Ms. Parker explained that Staff learned there were other development possibilities in the same area. Since the Enterprise Zone expansion is a lengthy process, it was decided to cover the entire area to incorporate other developments that hopefully will occur should this Enterprise Zone expansion be approved.

In answering Commissioners' questions, Ms. Parker verified the following main points:

- A previous Enterprise Zone expansion was done along the Sterling side of Northwoods Mall. It helped businesses, such as Fresh Market, Five Guys Burgers and Fries, Golden Corral, along with McDonald's, which recently finished its redevelopment in that area.
- There are approximately 17 vacant lots in this area, which is another reason that Staff hopes to get some businesses there. The vacant properties are located in the vicinity of Buescher Chiropractor and Dane's Restaurant (the old Ned Kelley's).
- The Enterprise Zone is a sales tax exemption on renovations, so it is an up-front incentive and is not continuous. Therefore, an existing business located outside of an enterprise zone is not missing out on a benefit, unless it is doing some remodeling or expansion to their facility. So by doing this Enterprise Zone expansion, it is not necessarily taking away anything from other businesses.
- Regarding if businesses would want to move to the subject area to obtain the sales tax incentive: If their business is at a place where they need to move or expand, then it might be attractive to them. If they are doing well, this Enterprise Zone expansion would not matter to them, as they would not be missing out on anything.

- The property tax abatement is based on the NAICS Code. It would depend on what type of business it is, and it is fairly limited; but there are some eligible businesses.
- Staff is trying to get more development in the core of the City. Staff does not randomly choose areas for the Enterprise Zone. It is based on need, through a request from a business owner, developer, or a particular City Council Member.

Ms. Parker referred to the Enterprise Zone Act and stated the following: The Illinois Enterprise Zone Act was signed into law in December of 1982. The purpose of the Act is to stimulate economic growth and neighborhood revitalization in economically depressed areas of the State.

Ms. Parker explained that the Enterprise Zone expansion involves "areas"; they do not have to be dilapidated. Some people think the subject area does not need the Enterprise Zone because development is going to occur. However, when there are properties that have been vacant for a long time or there are businesses rotating in and out, and there are issues there, Staff wants to offer something that will hopefully help those businesses stay in that Zone, once it is created.

Chairperson Davis stated it was his understanding that the Glen/University area is the population center for the City and the highest traffic count intersection is at University and War Memorial. He pointed out that the traffic count along War Memorial which goes along the west perimeter of the subject property is probably one of the highest traffic counts all the way up to Glen and Sterling. He pointed out that it is probably like an inner urban renewal, which was developed 50+ years ago.

Chairperson Davis pointed out that the Enterprise Zone expansion in 2008 with the area along Sterling helped develop some new businesses there. He said he thought part of the reason was the interchange with Sterling on I-74, which also made a big impact.

Commissioner Richey asked about plans beyond 2013, when the Enterprise Zone expires. Ms. Parker indicated that Ms. Schlupp attended an Enterprise Zone Conference and asked her to respond.

Susan Schlupp, Senior Development Specialist, City of Peoria, Economic Development Department, indicated that the State of Illinois is not looking at doing a mass Enterprise Zone life extension; they will review zones individually and determine if there is a need for their zone to continue. She said she has been working with the Illinois Enterprise Zone Association and they would like to see a more comprehensive approach to extending the life of the Enterprise Zone. The City will be called to a hearing sometime this summer to present our case regarding why we think the life of our Enterprise Zone should be extended.

In discussion with Chairperson Davis, Ms. Schlupp said it is the City's Enterprise Zone that is expiring in 2013, not the State's. Ms. Schlupp explained that the City's Enterprise Zone had reached the 30-year maximum, having been one of eight original Enterprise Zones. She said they had been working on extending the Enterprise Zone for more than three years. She indicated that a bill went through the Senate and was in the House, where it

was turned into a "shell" bill for something else; so they are back to "square one" and continue to work on it.

Chairperson Davis commented on the Enterprise Zone being a good tool for prospective buyers. He also stated appreciation that Staff included the tax savings on \$100,000 on their communication to help Commissioners in their analysis.

Roger Sparks, Peoria resident, expressed concern that the City was extending the Enterprise Zone on over the City. He said if they want to make this area an Enterprise Zone, he would like to see accessible sidewalks and bus stops in this area.

In discussion with Commissioner Lawless, Ms. Parker said that the Christian Center is included in this Enterprise Zone expansion. Ms. Parker mentioned a gap in the map, where an apartment complex (Seven Oaks) and First Assembly Church are located, both of which were not included in the Enterprise Zone expansion.

During discussion about bus routes, Mr. Naven displayed the CityLink bus route. He went over the subject area and pointed out various bus stops. He said he was not aware of any dedicated bus stops that have a shelter on Brandywine, but he would assume anyone on that route who waves a bus down, would be picked up.

Commissioner Heard questioned if there had been any specific conversations with the City from the property owners of the 17 vacant properties, as far as what they thought might help or what the problem had been. Ms. Parker responded neither she nor Ms. Schlupp has spoken directly with the vacant property owners. She mentioned that if this gets approved, this would be a good time to send letters out to all of the vacant property owners so they could use it as a marketing tool to help get businesses there.

In discussion with Chairperson Davis, Ms. Parker concurred that she had a data base of the vacant property owners. He concurred that should the Zone be approved, communicating with the vacant property owners would be a good idea.

There being no more testimony, Chairperson Davis closed the public hearing portion of the Commission Meeting.

#### **Deliberation:**

Commissioner Lawless commented that she had observed the subject area over the years, and it is not what it was. She said if this is an impetus to help them, she thought it was a good idea.

#### **Motion:**

Commissioner Lawless made a motion to approve Case No. CPC 11-D, the Enterprise Zone expansion application for properties zoned commercial and office along Brandywine Drive and bounded by University Street, Glen Avenue, and War Memorial Drive; seconded by Commissioner Anderson.

The motion was approved unanimously by viva voce vote 6 to 0.

**CITIZENS' OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION**

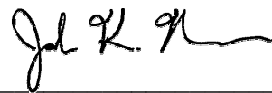
There was no one who wished to address the Commission.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Anderson motioned to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Richey.

The motion was approved unanimously by viva voce vote 6 to 0.

The Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:55 p.m.



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Joshua Naven, Senior Urban Planner  
Planning and Growth Management Department

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