

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

A regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting was held on September 21, 2011, at approximately 1:32 p.m., City Hall, Council Chambers, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois, with Chairperson Davis presiding.

ROLL CALL

The following Planning Commissioners were present: Chairperson Davis and Commissioners Anderson; Breede; Heard; Lawrence; Miller; and Richey – 7. Absent: Lawless – 1.

City Staff Present: Susan Schlupp, Josh Naven, and Polly Stainback

MINUTES**Motion:**

After pointing out a typo, Commissioner Anderson motioned for approval of the minutes of the regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting held on August 17, 2011, as amended; seconded by Commissioner Lawrence.

Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7 to 0.

CPC 11-F **PUBLIC HEARING on the request of the City of Peoria for approval of an Enterprise Zone expansion for Springdale Cemetery.**

Ms. Stainback administered the swearing-in for testimonies.

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

Josh Naven, Senior Urban Planner, City of Peoria, Planning and Growth Management Department, indicated that Susan Schlupp of the Economic Development Department would explain the proposed expansion of the Enterprise Zone. He displayed the overall map of the subject property proposed to be expanded into this Enterprise Zone, as well as the GIS aerial map.

Susan Schlupp, Senior Development Specialist, City of Peoria, Economic Development Department, explained the City of Peoria is seeking an Enterprise Zone expansion for a 223-acre Springdale Cemetery parcel, located at Prospect and Forrest Hill. The primary purpose of the expansion is to create a DZO (Designated Zone Organization) project for Springdale Cemetery. She pointed out that since Springdale Cemetery is a not-for-profit, it is not eligible for the sales tax exemption; and being owned by the City, it would not be eligible for property tax abatement.

Responding to Commissioners' questions, Ms. Schlupp commented as follows:

- A qualified corporation making a contribution to a DZO project is eligible for a double state income tax deduction.
- DZO is an incentive provided through the Enterprise Zone for not-for-profit organizations.
- In addition to City Council's approval, the Enterprise Zone application, as well as the DZO application, will have to be approved by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).
- The Enterprise Zone currently has 8 square miles. The City is allowed a total of 12 square miles for the Enterprise Zone. If approved, this expansion will add 223 acres.
- Contributions have to be made to the City of Peoria DZO, the fiscal agent for the DZO; then the City submits an application to DCEO for review and approval. Contributions are received by the City and kept in a special account for Springdale. Springdale will submit eligible expenses to the City for payment.
- Currently, the only DZO project is the Museum. The first DZO project was the Riverfront, which had substantial donations.
- The City has provided Springdale with interns from Bradley University to assist with a marketing campaign for the DZO in an effort to increase potential contributions.
- The City is the owner of the Springfield Cemetery land.
- The DZO can accept cash or in-kind contributions, e.g., if someone wanted to donate putting up a fence or donate infrastructure improvements.

Allen H. Andrews, a member of the Springdale Cemetery Management Authority, spoke in support of the Enterprise Zone expansion. He explained that the City of Peoria took ownership of Springdale Cemetery after the Springdale Historic Preservation Foundation paid off the mortgage and some liens, so the City took it over debt free. He stated that he is also a member of the Foundation Board. The Authority discussed this process at its meeting yesterday, and he was asked to attend today's meeting. Its members unanimously endorsed the proposal.

During further discussion and response to Commissioners' questions, Mr. Andrews spoke as follows:

- The City, County, Peoria Park District, and the Springdale Historic Preservation Foundation, under the State's Intergovernmental Agreement Act, joined together to create the Springdale Cemetery Management Authority.
 - The City owns the cemetery land, and the Authority was created to operate the property.
- Annual donations vary from \$500 to \$10,000 in cash, but they have received hundreds of thousands of dollars of in-kind contributions; e.g., practically all of the major operating equipment has been donated.
- There has been 50 years of zero capital reinvestment in the cemetery, and the deteriorating condition of the roads is of primary concern.
 - The trust funds required by law to be established are not there, having been misappropriated by the last private owner of the property.

- The Operating Budget is burdened by trying to maintain 223 acres with 160 acres of burial land, and 70,000 estimated graves, without any of the income that the trust funds were designed to pay. So, there is a huge need to repair and maintain great portions of the cemetery, reset monuments, and maintain the grounds.
- This expansion would be a tremendous incentive to businesses during these hard times to make in-kind contributions, which would significantly benefit the City and the Authority in carrying out its responsibilities.
- Springdale Cemetery receives revenue from usual cemetery services; but the City, County, and the Park District make up any operating deficit through their budget appropriation process.
- Over the last 10 years, the Foundation has contributed over a million dollars received from sources donated by private citizens.

Ms. Schlupp again addressed Commissioners' questions as follows:

- Businesses must be incorporated to be eligible to make contributions.
- Regarding in-kind contributions: A value is placed on the donation, and documentation of the contribution is submitted to DCEO for approval. Ultimately, the Department of Revenue will be the determining entity for the donation. Should the Department of Revenue have questions regarding the donation, they will notify the City and donor.

Again responding to Commissioners' questions, Mr. Andrews spoke as follows:

- The Authority is trying to adhere to the original establishment of the cemetery when it was established in 1854, which was the public park for the City. The Authority tries to make the Cemetery a place which can be part of community life, such as for runners, picnics and all kinds of things.
- Springfield Cemetery will probably survive to the extent it is part of the community life and has volunteers.
- Springfield Cemetery is unique in terms of challenges versus other cemeteries because:
 - It was created by the Legislature, one of only two such in the State.
 - It consists of 223 acres.
 - The original 20-acre hilltop prairie, located within the property, is basically undamaged.
 - The history of Peoria is exemplified in the monuments of the people who are buried at Springfield Cemetery.
 - It is a museum of the people who established Peoria, and there is nothing quite like it in Peoria and probably never will be.

Chairperson Davis asked about the marketing strategy. Ms. Schlupp explained that a Bradley intern began working with the City on Monday, September 19, and that the intern would be working with Springdale Cemetery to develop a marketing strategy for the Cemetery to include the DZO. Meetings with the intern and Springdale will begin on Monday, September 26, to develop the marketing plan.

Deliberation:

Commissioner Breede stated he was familiar with Springdale Cemetery, and it definitely has some infrastructure issues. He said it is a wonderful place and serves Peoria well.

Motion:

Commissioner Lawrence moved that the Planning Commission approve the proposed expansion of the Enterprise Zone to include Springfield Cemetery; seconded by Commissioner Breede.

The motion was approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7 to 0.

Chairperson Davis stated appreciation for all the efforts of the Foundation.

CITIZENS' OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

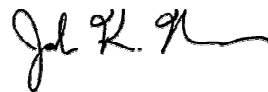
It was determined there were no citizens who wished to address the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Miller motioned to adjourn the Regular Planning Commission Meeting; seconded by Commissioner Anderson.

The motion was approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7 to 0.

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



Joshua Naven, Senior Urban Planner
Planning and Growth Management Department

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