

Plan Commission Comments from the Meeting of July 12, 2010 -- Excerpt from the Minutes of the meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Brad Murphy noted the two communications provided to the Plan Commission. The first communication, dated June 30, 2010, is a memorandum from Tim Cooley, Economic Development Division Director, regarding the City Development Review and Approval Initiative. The second communication is a memorandum from Brad Murphy providing questions to guide the Plan Commission's discussion of the development review and approval process, scheduled for the July 26, 2010 meeting. Mr. Murphy also provided the Commission a copy of "Participating in the Development Process- A Best Practices Guide for Developers, Neighborhoods and Policymakers." Chair Fey noted that the Urban Design Commission and Landmarks Commission will also be providing comments, and she recommended that the Plan Commission focus specifically on its role in the process. There will be an opportunity to consider how the recommendations made by different boards and commissions fit together after the recommendations have been made.

Ald. Kerr noted it is a good idea to review the process, though she noted that the review and approval process for the Edgewater Redevelopment was atypical and she did not believe it is representative of the development process being broken. She raised concerns about the proposed schedule to review the development process because it does not provide the Plan Commission an opportunity to review and comment on final recommended process changes, including those related to the work of the Plan Commission. Mr. Murphy responded that a comment could be provided to the Economic Development Committee recommending that proposed changes relating to the processes administered by the Plan Commission, as well as other boards and Commissions, be referred back to those bodies for consideration. She also requested that Planning staff invite members of the Economic Development Committee and their staff to the upcoming Plan Commission discussion on this item. Chair Fey noted that joint meetings between different bodies were considered, though it was decided that input should be provided by the individual committees. Ms. Bowser inquired about the materials and feedback provided to applicants prior to making an application. Mr. Murphy indicated that there are a variety of materials that are available, with different materials provided based on the type of project and application. He further noted that during pre-application meetings, staff provide information related to plan consistency and other considerations such as landmark or urban design commission requirements that may apply to particular proposals.

Ald. Cnare questioned whether the Plan Commission should review the approval standards guide prior to the upcoming discussion. She further inquired whether staff anticipated many ordinance changes resulting from this process. She asked how much should the Commission focus on the planned unit development process considering that one intent of the zoning ordinance is to limit the number of new planned unit developments. Finally she inquired as to whether staff would be providing additional recommendations in addition to comments from the Plan Commission. Mr. Murphy responded that standards document could be reviewed and that it is possible that ordinance changes may be proposed for consideration by the Common Council. The development of future planned unit developments and frequency to which they are used depend on the success of the new zoning districts. He indicated that the Plan Commission may want to consider process changes to the planned unit development process as part of the zoning code rewrite. Finally, he noted that staff could consider additional recommendations in addition to other changes that have been previously recommended.

Ald. Kerr requested that members of the Economic Development Committee be provided copies of the approval standards guide and sample staff report materials to provide information on the different elements considered by the Plan Commission. She also noted that consideration should also be given to improving the role of Alderpersons in the development review process.