

**Wednesday, November 8, 2023**

**St. Louis**

A regular meeting of the St. Louis Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Doecker at 5:30 P.M.

Present: Doecker, Giles, D. Kelley, S. Kelly, Messer, Palmer, Horvat

Excused: Reed, Whitford

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Doecker.

Motion by D. Kelley, supported by J. Horvat, to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2023, meeting. All ayes. Motion Carried

**New Business:**

**5a. Former Velsicol Re-use Plan Update and Discussion**

Kurt Giles provided the members with some background regarding the reuse plan and discussion for the former Velsicol site. The previous concept plan was prepared many years ago and as cleanup work has proceeded on the site, the need to consider the property re-use options and ideas is again coming to the forefront. The land has been transferred to the Michigan Land Bank, so the State of Michigan currently owns the property. They are interested in productive uses which could also provide a "revenue stream" to help fund the operations and maintenance of the site.

EPA and State Land Bank officials, along with the land planner (SKEO) for the EPA will attend the next CAG meeting on Wednesday, November 15, at 7 pm at City Hall, to discuss the site and its potential future use.

All members of the Planning Commission were invited to attend this meeting.

**5b. County-Wide Master Land Use Plan update and Discussion**

Kurt Giles provided the members an update on the activities regarding the County Master plan. An on-line survey is now available for residents to complete. At this time, we expect that the planners will be setting up public informational meetings to discuss the updating of the County Master Plan, in early 2024.

There was no other business to report.

There were no public comments.

Motion by D. Kelley, supported by Horvat to adjourn at 6:10 P.M. All ayes. Motion carried.

Keith W. Risdon  
Acting Recording Secretary

Wednesday September 13, 2023  
Saint Louis

A regular meeting of the St. Louis Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Doecker at 5:30 P.M.

Present: Doecker, D. Kelley, Giles, S. Kelly, Messer, Reed, Palmer, Whitford, Horvat

Also Present: Bryan Grasso-Shonka-owner 214+220 N. Mill Street, Keith Risdon-Public Services Dir. City of St. Louis

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Doecker.

Motion was made by Palmer, supported by D. Kelley to approve the minutes from June 14, 2023. All ayes. Motion carried.

Kurt Giles advised the Planning Commission that the plans have changed for site modifications at 220 N. Mill Street. The initial site plan that received approval on 7/15/20 has not been finished and is therefore null and void. Bryan Grasso-Shonka, one of the owners, attended the meeting. Bryan stated the delay in modifications was due to issues with contractors. He stated they tried for 6 months to get quotes, but no one would offer any. Repairs were put on the back burner. Bryan stated they obtained 214 N. Mill Street (Children's Baptist Home) due to needing more space. Now that they have 214, 216 and 220, they have added more changes to better utilize their space and update the parking lot and areas. Kurt advised that the City is not ready to recommend approval this is optional sketch review. No action was taken on the sketch submittal for 214 N. Mill St.

**Other Business:**

**Item 6.a. Annual Review of Gratiot County Hope House**

Kurt advised the Planning Commission that it was nearing time to do the annual review for the Gratiot County Hope House. They were issued a Special Use Permit for three years with it expiring on 9/2024 with annual reviews. Kurt stated that one of the concerns was the amount reported "drop offs" because Hope House is in the city. Chief Ramereiz submitted a report of calls from 2022 to the present. There were roughly 30 calls in more than 18 months for minor items. Kurt stated that the City/Code Enforcement has not received any complaints of activity from the Hope House. Jake Gregory sent a review of the individuals the Hope House has served since 2021 along with positive and encouraging words. Jake stated that the organization continues to grow, and they hope to enhance services to those served by Hope House.

**Item 6.b. Former Velsicol Re-Use Plan Update**

Kurt stated that there have been a lot of discussions of the Re-Use plan for the site. He stated that SKEO will be updating the plan. Ownership of the site is up for discussion as well. Interest from developers as to what to do with the site as well. Solar energy has been interested in it.

**Item 6.c. County-Wide Master Land Use Plan update**

The county wide plan needs to add features of cities and townships. The former Velsicol site use needs to be updated as well. Kurt asked the Planning commission to advise if they see things in the current Master Plan that are not useful or need to be added.

**Item 6.d. Transitional Zoning District follow up discussion.**

Kurt stated the city has talked about expanding the uses and detailing the zone more. For example, the district doesn't allow auto sales. 502 W. Washington is in the T-Zone and was previously an auto sales business. There is a possible new owner that would like to continue this use. It would be a continuation of a pre-existing non-conforming use. Article 4 states that there is no expanding allowed and that 3 parking spots are required. Kurt stated this continued use could be allowed but with restrictions.

**Item 6. b. Alma-St. Louis Police Department Consolidation**

Kurt stated that the St. Louis and Alma Police Departments have been in discussion of merging together to become one department that would service the Alma and St. Louis areas. Both departments have been offering mutual aid for years. The main concern right now is attracting officers. There is a huge issue with attracting and retaining officers. It is happening all over the state as well. With the two departments consolidating there would be more officers available, coverage for vacations, sick time etc, more opportunities in training and advancing and the possibility of more grants. Kurt stated there is more discussion to go on but wanted the planning commission to be aware of this and provide feedback.

There was no other business to report.

There were no public comments.

Sue Whitford was excused from the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Motion by D. Kelley, supported by Reed to adjourn at 6:40 P.M. All ayes. Motion carried.

Dori Foster  
Recording Secretary

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 14, 2023**

**Saint Louis**

A regular meeting of the St. Louis Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Doecker at 5:30 P.M.

Present: Doecker, D. Kelley, Giles, S. Kelly, Messer, Whitford, Horvat, Palmer

Absent: Reed (excused)

Also Present: Bill Leonard-City Council Member, Pam Howe-East Street area resident, Mindy Martinez-Gratiot Animals in Need (GAIN), Deb and Jim Martin-GAIN

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Doecker.

### **Item 4.a.: Approval of March 8, 2023 Minutes**

Motion made by D. Kelley, supported by Horvat to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2023 meeting. All Ayes. Motion carried.

### **New Business:**

#### **Item 5.a.: Public Hearing for Special Land Use Permit at 405 E. Washington**

Chairman Doecker opened the Public Hearing at 5:32 p.m. Pam Howe of 115 N. East Street inquired about the whether animals would be housed at the facility. GAIN Representative Mindy Martinez explained that the proposed use of the building at 415 E. Washington would include hosting spay and neuter clinics, providing a site for pet adoptions in the building's offices and storage and distribution of pet food and supplies to pet owners who need assistance. Deb and Jim Martin were also in attendance and provided further information about the programs including volunteering opportunities with GAIN. With no further questions or public comments, Chairman Doecker closed the Public Hearing at 5:40 p.m.

#### **Item 5.b.: Consider Special Use Permit for Animal Rescue at 405 E. Washington**

Discussion was held and a motion was made by D. Kelley and supported by Horvat to approve the Special Use Permit for the proposed animal rescue facility located at 405 E. Washington. All Ayes. Motion carried.

### **Item 6: Other Business:**

There were no other business items for the evening, however, Giles updated the rest of the Planning Commission Members on an upcoming item. Giles reported the County-Wide Master Plan is due for updates after five years of use. Efforts have been led by Greater Development and the steering committee has selected Community Image Builders (CIB) to

facilitate public input and draft the updated Master Plan. Giles anticipates the opportunity for Planning Commission members to provide input on crafting this document shortly.

**Public Comment:**

There were none.

Motion made by D. Kelley, supported by S. Kelly to adjourn at 5:47 P.M. Motion carried.

Kurt Giles  
Acting Secretary

Wednesday March 8, 2023  
Saint Louis

A regular meeting of the St. Louis Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Doecker at 5:30 P. M.

Present: Doecker, Giles, D. Kelley, S. Kelly, Messer, Palmer, Whitford, Horvat

Absent: Reed

Also present: Keith Risdon-Public Services Director, Pete Lorenz-P.E., P.S. Representing Bader & Sons Properties

Chairman Doecker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by D. Kelley, supported by Horvat to approve the minutes of December 15, 2022. All Ayes. Motion carried.

City Manager Giles informed the Planning Commission of a recent request for an approval for the Community Parking Program, Section 20.6 of the City's Zoning Ordinance. Gemini Capital Management plans to rehabilitate the second story of a building located at 201 North Mill Street. There is on-street parking available but during the winter months when there is no parking from 2A.M-6A.M. they would need other options. Gemini would like to utilize the Community Parking Program and use the public parking that is located on Saginaw Street just west of the project address. This area is within the 300 feet mentioned in the Ordinance. Kurt stated the City recommends the approval of the request from Gemini Capt. Mgt. to utilize the Community Parking program.

Motion made by D. Kelley, supported by Messer to approve the request under Section 20.6 for Gemini Capt. Mgt. to utilize the Community Parking program. This community parking arrangement does not assure availability of parking spots or designate any specific parking spots for residents of 201 N. Mill Street. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Kurt advised that we received a request for a Parcel Split and Combine for 504 W. Prospect St & 511 Sharon St. These address's include lots 6,7, and 8. They would like to take lot #6 and have it by itself and combine lots 7+8. Bader & Sons Co. are looking to starting building duplexes on those lots. Kurt stated the city recommends the combine of lots 7 and 8 and splitting Lot 6 by itself.

Motion made by Palmer, supported by D. Kelley to approve dividing Lot 7 from 53-250-025-00 and combining Lot 7 with parcel 53-250-026-00. All ayes. Motion carried.

Kurt advised the Planning Commission that the city has been talking about updating the "T" Transitional Zoning District uses. He stated that it would be helpful to understand more of the uses allowed by the Special permit section. Defining some of the sections more clearly and adding more uses with stipulations. Kurt stated we are still working on this but wanted the Planning Commission's input as well to help clarify things.

Kurt stated that there was no other business to discuss at this time.

Motion made by D.Kelley, supported by Giles to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 P.M. All Ayes. Motion carried.