

Rock Island Planning & Zoning Commission Special Meeting Minutes

City Council Chambers, City Hall, 3rd Floor
1528 3rd Avenue
December 11, 2024
5:30 PM



Voting Members Present	Bill Sowards Reshanda Johnson Maureen Riggs Sarah Wright Tanja Whitten Norm Moline Mike Creger Don Mewes Samuel Odeyemi
Staff Present	Eunice Amisah-Mensah, Urban Planner Tanner Osing, Planning & Zoning Manager Nichole Mata, Community Development Manager

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Riggs called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM and read the roll call.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present for a comment so the meeting continued.

New Business

Workshop on Strategic Housing Plan by PGAV Planners

Osing introduced Sarah Dyott and Lindsey Evans, consultants from PGAV Planners LLC, who have been working on the plan.

Sarah Dyott provided an overview of the plan's goals, which include creating a ten-year blueprint for housing development and priorities by understanding existing conditions, housing needs, and market dynamics. The plan will also include implementation strategies and recommendations. The project commenced in September and has completed three phases focusing on existing housing initiatives, demographics, and a housing inventory market analysis.

The consultants presented preliminary findings from their research and stakeholder interviews, highlighting key issues such as aging housing stock, underutilized sites, vacant and abandoned properties, confusion around administrative processes, and the need for strategic partnerships.

Commissioners inquired about the city council's priorities, leading to a discussion about balancing the quality of existing housing with the need for new construction. Initial recommendations proposed by PGAV included incentivizing rehabilitation and new construction, clarifying partnerships, efficient use of resources, evaluating incentives,

improving data collection, prioritizing limited sites, and marketing the quality of life in Rock Island.

Concerns were raised about negative perceptions of the Rock Island school system and potential strategies to address this. Commissioners emphasized the importance of rehabilitating older homes and considering annexation. Commissioners also suggested reviving neighborhood engagement efforts and prioritizing marketing the city's positive attributes.

Commissioners and staff shared their personal reasons for living in Rock Island, emphasizing its walkability, community spirit, stable neighborhoods, and diversity. They also discussed desired improvements, with a strong focus on increasing retail and restaurant options, addressing food deserts, and enhancing the perception of the school system. Commissioners also acknowledged the geographical challenges for attracting retail but stressed the importance of leveraging the diversity of the school system as a significant strength. The Consultants assured the commission that examples of successful housing initiatives from similar cities will be incorporated in their recommendations.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

Chair Riggs adjourned the meeting at 6:53 pm

Minutes submitted by Eunice Amisah-Mensah.