

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA,
HELD A COUNCIL WORK SESSION IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE
YMCA ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2016 AT 6:00 P.M.**

The meeting of the **New Albany City Council** was called to order by Mr. McLaughlin at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Council Members Mr. Caesar, Mr. Blair, Mr. Barksdale, Dr. Knable and President McLaughlin. Mr. Coffey, Mr. Phipps, Mr. Nash and Mr. Aebersold were not present.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Lorch, Mr. Streips, Mr. Wood and Mrs. Glotzbach

Mr. Wood introduced Mr. Chris Coffman with Beam, Longest & Neff and Mr. Chris Hamm with HWC Engineering. He stated that they would review the comprehensive plan with the council.

Mr. Hamm stated that the purpose of having a comprehensive plan is to set vision and direction in the community and statutorily it is a requirement to be able to have local zoning. He also stated that comprehensive planning by statute requires that you have a land plan and a little direction in regards to growth management. He said that one of the first places that they start in any comprehensive planning process is demographic and existing condition analysis to begin to understand where you are today. He explained that they look at economic component pieces, demographic pieces, housing types, population base, population growth trends, condition of existing schools, assets, infrastructure and a variety of different places to understand where you start from and establishing the strategies and paths on how you are going to get to where you want to go. He then reviewed the table of contents in the comprehensive plan with the council. He stated that the state of Indiana is starting to see two types of communities, which are the ones that are growing and the ones that are starting to die. He said that doesn't mean that you can't maintain population and still be successful but to sustain the types of services that have to be provided and the costs of those services, it is really important to find ways to grow your assessed valuation, tax base, population, etc. He also said that this plan is focused on how New Albany can continue to grow.

Mr. Blair asked if we have had a population decline.

Mr. Hamm replied there has been maybe a slight decline but really just a stabilization, which is not uncommon with many of the communities in the state of Indiana today. He said that he can offer that you can already see additional residential opportunities in the downtown area and he feels there are strategic opportunities to continue to grow the population base particularly given your strategic location with regards to Louisville.

Mr. Blair stated that he thought we probably fit in the declining category.

Mr. Hamm stated that you have declined a little bit but he thinks the important thing is that you are not hemorrhaging at this point.

Mr. Blair stated that he thinks hemorrhaging would be in rural communities versus metropolitan type communities.

Mr. Hamm stated that he could point to some industrial communities around central Indiana that have experienced hemorrhage. He said that he thinks the important thing is that he is not suggesting at all that New Albany is in a position of failure in this plan and is actually arguing the exact opposite. He said that there are tremendous opportunities in

this community to capitalize and grow on and he feels that sustaining a financial base and residential mix as well as possible population growth will be strong moving forward.

Mr. Caesar asked if he qualifies that with property values or just population.

Mr. Hamm replied both and stated that from a pure tax valuation perspective growing the assessed valuation base in communities is important. He said that the population component is important as well because having more people living here creates more demand for services here which further grows the downtown base. He also said that there is a niche for businesses that don't want to be in River Ridge to locate to other areas and New Albany is certainly in the position to service them. He stated that New Albany might also provide a workforce base for River Ridge but he thinks that in the same token you want to attack economic development from the two-pronged effort of building a quality place and the workforce here, but at the same time growing your job base if possible within the community. He stated that this won't just provide employment opportunities but also good corporate citizens in the community that give and contribute to charitable efforts and other pieces in the community which is very important to the base and sustainability in the long term. He then reviewed the remaining sections in the table of contents with the council. He moved on to page seven and stated that they had a steering committee of 14 individuals that met on several occasions over the last year that have really been interval to helping them understand the issues and opportunities facing the community and establishing the goals and visual objectives for the community. He explained that the steering committee was then supplemented and augmented when they reached out to a variety of different stakeholders in the community and had a public meeting. He stated that they also had a public survey online where they received 700 responses from citizens in the community that provided a broad range of feedback on a variety of issues and he was very pleased with the response.

Dr. Knable stated that is only 2% of the population and asked if he was happy with that.

Mr. Hamm stated that is a great response.

Mr. Wood stated that 2% is significant participation. He said that when they did the 1999 plan they had a total of 26 people from the public that gave input.

Mr. Hamm stated that if you do a targeted survey mailing to specific individuals and asked for their response, you typically get between a 10%-12% response rate so to have an open call for a public survey and receive the response that we did is pretty good.

Dr. Knable asked if he felt like there was demographically enough representation of youth within this process because we are looking at a 20 year plan.

Mr. Hamm replied that this plan is very much focused on millennials and baby boomers so he feels that they had broad public input in this process. He then flipped back to page 3 to review the 5 key themes that came out of the data they gathered in the process. He said that he wanted to spend time on key #5 which is to update development policies to shift from suburban standards to more urban standards because that does permeate the plan all the way through. He stated that the interesting thing about New Albany is that you don't have an awful lot of opportunity to grow geographically and are constrained by topography to the north, to the west, to the river, to the south and to the existing communities to the east so there is a defined urban boundary. He said that doesn't mean that there are not opportunities to annex outside your existing boundaries and development opportunities outside of your corporate boundaries but those opportunities are limited. He said that means that the future of your community is really more about what you do with development, redevelopment and infill development inside New

Albany as it exists today. He explained that the zoning ordinance and previous comp plan were written as a more traditional suburban growth oriented plan and this new plan has a much stronger focus on redevelopment opportunities as well as infill development opportunities. He also explained that the difference is that redevelopment is taking an area that has existing development on it and turning it into something different than it is today and infill development is really filling in missing teeth within the existing infrastructure. He said that both are really designed to create more of a sense of urban design within the community than traditional suburban outward growth. He also said that when you talk about these redevelopment opportunities you must be sensitive to the existing uses that surround them and how they relate, blend and buffer one another as well as connect to one another.

Mr. Caesar stated that we are dealing with that now because we have traditional neighborhoods that have been very quiet that now have cut through streets and those streets need to be widened and updated which the residents do not want to see happen in the neighborhood.

Mr. Hamm stated that humans do not like change and when that change brings about additional traffic, which people perceive as being less safe, he can understand that but in the same token the goal of this plan is to make the community better in the long term. He explained that you have great bones to build on as well as great momentum in this community already so it is about how you tailor the activities and the decisions that you make moving forward and in what direction you want to take those. He then went back to page 13 to discuss the overarching section goals, which are drawn from the elements that you found in those 5 key themes. He said that the overarching section goals are economic development and quality of place, land use, housing and neighborhoods, natural resources, transportation and utilities and infrastructure. He then went over each goal. He moved on to page 14 that shows the components of the strategy and implementation component pieces and how the overarching goals rest at the top of each chapter column with sub-goals underneath and strategies under those so the order is broad themes, overarching goals, sub-goals and strategies and actions to be able to move the process forward.

Mr. Barksdale asked if the word funky that describes our downtown could be taken out because it bothers a lot of people.

Mr. Blair stated that it is right there in the mission and feels that it should be taken out. He then asked what the reason was for that description of downtown.

Mr. Hamm replied that it is a word that means something to millennials and there are a few communities around the country including Louisville that have instituted “Keep Louisville Weird” campaigns and the whole purpose of that is to attract this diverse and liberal demographic into the area. He said that he is not tied to the word so it can be taken out.

Dr. Knable stated that he thinks the problem is that the word means something generationally whereas the word eclectic has the same meaning to all generations. He then stated that there were four times as many things that he liked versus what he didn’t like. He said he was a big critic of this process going in because he felt there should have been more elected officials brought into it earlier but he was very pleased when he read it and was very impressed with the detail. He said that there was some talk about substations and safety and he didn’t know whether there was any representation from the NAPD or NAFD on the planning committee other than relying on the mayor. He then went back to the vision statement and said that it will be really hard to get his support on this unless the word compassionate or something like that is in the mix of the city

especially regarding the treatment of the homeless, the afflicted, the addicted, etc. He said that there was really no mention in the document of how we are going to do that which he thinks should be in subsection. He stated that on all of the goals mentioned on pages 14-28, only rarely is the responsible party portion completed and we need some direction on who is going to be responsible for filling those in or otherwise they will float around indefinitely. He then said that in the transportation section he would love to see an emphasis on the word public. He also said that another deal breaker for him is to see in the utilities section something about the concept of utilization of renewable energy sources when the public sector is involved. He stated that he was a little disappointed that there was no mention in the plan of what he considers important city and county joint ventures such as the library, the jail and the animal shelter and what will happen to them in the next 20 years. He also stated that the cleanliness issue has to be addressed as far as trying to up our game with an emphasis on easier ways to clean, commit more equipment, commit more manpower, etc. He then went over the points that he felt were very good in the plan. He stated that he liked that fact that they acknowledged that this is a broad document with annual review but he would like to see mandated who is going to do that annual review. He also liked the idea of a 10,000-20,000 seat conference civic center and the description of the regional map as to how there is a big vacuum that cries out for that type of arena with a venue is fantastic. He stated that the possibility of a trolley between IUS and downtown is also fantastic. He mentioned that acknowledging that we need to have a shift toward advanced manufacturing and tech-oriented employment is very farsighted and he loves that concept. He also mentioned that Loop Island, Gallagher and Charlestown Road revitalization and acquisition is again fantastic. He said that acknowledging that we need to retain businesses as well as attract them is really smart. He also said that the zoning map is fantastic as well. He stated that he has about 8-10 more items that were really great but there are a lot of other people here with limited time so he would let someone else take over now.

Mr. Hamm what emphasis that he wanted on public under transportation.

Dr. Knable stated that on page three it talks about transportation and he thinks there needs to be an acknowledgement that we don't have the greatest public transportation system. He said that whether it is simplifying routes or working better in conjunction with TARC as well as Clark County, we just need to re-emphasize doing that. He added that whoever had the courage to put out there the need for decentralizing public housing, kudos to them because it has to happen if we are going to continue to grow and for it to be in black and white is the first initial step for that conversation to start taking place.

Mr. Wood stated that it has been underway for quite a while actually.

Dr. Knable stated that he knows but he has not seen it in black and white in something that is accessible to the public yet.

Mr. Blair stated that it is one thing to say that but to get everyone to buy into it is another thing.

Dr. Knable stated that if it is not in black and white then the conversation doesn't even happen.

Mr. Blair stated that he agrees.

Mr. Wood stated that in the State Street corridor the YMCA is an anchor on the south end of State Street and the hospital is an anchor on the north end with the commercial area and we have that area of chain in between those two anchors that is really broken. He said the reason that it is broken is because the housing authority has that mass at

Broadmeade/ Parkview sitting there and no one is going to really reinvest in the Broadmeade neighborhood while that volume of public housing is there. He said that this is very near and dear to Mayor Gahan's heart and was very insistent that be part of the plan.

Mr. Barksdale stated that he was very impressed with the plan. He also stated that he had a conversation with Mr. Wood this afternoon about historic preservation activities going on, preservation districts and even mentioned the seven registered national districts that we have. He also stated that there is need to get out and let people know that this is a community that is very heavy in preservation. He feels that there needs to be more attention brought to the Charlestown Road and Grant Line Road because they almost look like a desert zone in certain areas so he would like to see more emphasis put on redevelopment in those areas. He said that another area that he feels wasn't targeted enough was the Vincennes Street corridor because that was the commercial corridor for the uptown neighborhood which still has a lot of population. He also said that he is part of the redevelopment commission and they are really wanting to start focusing on that corridor and that would take you from E. Main Street all the way up to Charlestown Road. He then mentioned that the housing stock and the neighborhoods there are really beginning to hurt in that area because of Vincennes Street. He said that he thinks that the Vincennes corridor could really be a funky corridor.

Mr. Wood stated that he likes the term eclectic.

Mr. Barksdale stated that also he feels that we need to start the annexation process.

Mr. Blair stated that he thinks there definitely needs to be more emphasis and thoughts on annexation and talk more about the benefits of it.

Dr. Knable asked if he has looked at that numbers on what our growth would look like if we had those fringe areas.

Mr. Blair replied yes.

Mr. Wood stated that is not growth though. He said it is population increase as opposed to growth.

Dr. Knable stated that a lot of the inflow of population has landed in the fringe area.

Mr. Wood agreed. He stated that Mayor Gahan has been on him to get this done as well as the zoning ordinance so that we can get going on annexation so it is high on the list of priorities to get rolling. He explained that our population loss in the 2010 census came right after the 2008 housing bubble and there are two things about that. He said that because we stayed about the same, he thinks that the population that we had seen declining had been more an aging of the population and kids moving out from mom and dad's house. He pointed out that we went from four persons households in the 1960s to 2.3 persons in the households in 2010. He added that if we stay at that 2.3 he feels that we are actually growing because we are not losing population. He also added that the arc in the central area of city that Mr. Barksdale spoke of was the area that was harmed the most in the 2008 housing bubble because first time homebuyers weren't able to maintain their investments so now there are a lot of rentals there. He said that we need to focus on going in there to re-stabilize. He then explained that right now New Albany is 60% owner occupied and 40% rental, but when you come into the inner city those percentages flip flop and we want the inner city to be reflective of the city as a whole.

Mr. Blair stated that he thinks the plan is on the mark with the housing because he feels that is probably our biggest asset and there is opportunity for more dense housing. He also stated that income taxes follow people and that would help us with that. He really wants the word funky out of the plan. He then said that the emphasis he has is on housing and being a compassionate community because we have a lot of disadvantaged people that will continue to increase and we can't just turn our heads the other way. He stated that on page 14 he thinks the strategy to partner with Purdue Polytechnic Institute is duplicated but does feel that would be a huge advantage. He also stated that they could do adaptive readings on facilities such as Colonial Manor to possibly put some kind of an incubator program in there or use it as an extension of their campus.

Dr. Knable agreed and said we could partner with the school system and possibly put a Prosser extension there with the same sort of thing but it would probably be more profitable to go with Purdue.

Mr. Blair stated that page 17 says that indiscriminate annexation should be avoided; future annexation should not create municipal fiscal imbalance and asked what municipal fiscal imbalance is.

Mr. Hamm replied that is annexing areas that cost more than the revenue that comes out of it on the whole. He added that you should recognize the fact that residential especially single family residential very rarely pays for itself. He said that the purpose of this is to think about the fiscal impact analysis of every annexation that you do to justify and warrant the revenue component for the cost that will be incurred. He explained that if you are annexing existing residential areas that are already served by utilities, that may or may not be benefitting from police and fire service already, that are already using your parks and already using your planning component pieces there, the fiscal cost may be negligible compared to revenue that would be generated from property taxes from those uses. He also explained that annexing a vacant piece of property where all of the services have to be expanded and continued may be a different story.

Mr. Blair asked if there is a better way to word that instead of using should not. He suggested using the phrase "should be economically feasible" or something like that.

Mr. Hamm replied yes and stated that they could generalize that.

Mr. Blair stated that would help him. He then stated that we are quickly running out of sewer credits and asked what they would suggest to do in the next couple of years to help us.

Mr. Hamm replied that there should be some language in the utilities section that discusses that issue and maybe offer some strategy into that piece. He said that you certainly don't want to derail momentum and it is critically important that you have access capacities within your services to be able to do that.

Mr. Blair stated that he remembers somewhere in the plan mentioning that we have adequate sewer capacity and it is his understanding that we do have and he looks at it as in the future we can bring more users onto the system and then potentially lower the fees for everyone. He added that if you are a more affordable community to live in then you will attract more people.

Dr. Knable stated that if we get our infrastructure thing down right and bring more people in then there is less to pay on average but that doesn't happen until we are out from under the EPA.

Mr. Blair feels that in the next couples of years we have a problem but in the long-term it could be an advantage for us.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that he likes the idea of having an arena or something that would draw people. He used the example of the Louisville pro soccer team that is looking for a new home. He then moved to public transit and shared his idea of shuttles for downtown area tourism until we can do something with the trolley idea. He stated that he feels that we need to touch on the age group of 8-15 year olds as far as opportunities and things for them to do.

Mr. Caesar stated that he thinks they did a fantastic job on the plan and feels that we should meet next year and keep it an ongoing document. He also stated that for many years he has wanted a trolley downtown and feels that is an excellent idea. He said that he always wanted a community gathering place and feels that the plan has included downtown as being a big part of that. He also said that he always wanted a new library and cultural center. He mentioned the CSX train track and would like to move forward with some ideas on that. He also mentioned that it is very important for a community to be clean and safe and that is a major goal for him.

Mr. Barksdale suggested that responsible parties be filled in on pages 14-28 and then meet in a year. He feels that will put some pressure on the responsible parties to work toward their goals and feels that would be a good measuring stick as well.

Mr. McLaughlin asked if annexation of residential is not always that beneficial.

There was a lengthy discussion of the pros and cons of annexation.

Mr. Blair stated that he sees a difference in infrastructure in the incorporated and unincorporated so if you annex those areas then you can come in and improve the infrastructure in the fringe area around us and also provide better services like police and fire. He said that he feels that would increase the attractiveness and functionality of our community because he sees a huge difference where the city line is.

Dr. Knable stated that he has discussions with people who live in the fringe area and the majority of them want to be annexed and feel they don't have the representation in the whole government process.

Mr. Hamm stated that these are excellent points and explained that for several years at the state legislature there has been a kind of war on annexation that has made it much more difficult for communities to initiate annexation processes. He said that he thinks in some cases the legislators missed the fact that in some cases annexation is to the benefit to those that are being annexed for a variety of different reasons including enhances infrastructure and political representation.

Mr. Wood stated that people don't typically show up at city council meetings when an annexation ordinance is being considered because their neighbors are all there and they don't want to be annexed. He said they may show up but they aren't going to stand up and say they are for annexation. He also explained that the county has property maintenance in their zoning ordinance and we have it in our building ordinance so when people in the fringe have an issue with neighbors collecting things in their backyards, the county won't help them because they don't have zoning authority out there. He said that other than building inspections our building commission doesn't have authority out there either so Mr. Gibson met with Mr. Fox to tell him that the city would do an inter-local agreement and have our building inspector to property maintenance in the two mile fringe area but they were not interested. He added that whether we annex or not property

maintenance in that area is going to part of our new zoning ordinance so we will have the authority to go out there and help those people with that particular issue.

Mr. Blair stated that the glaring one is on Hausfeldt Lane.

Mr. Lorch stated that the plan sounds very nice overall. He said that earlier he heard mention of upgrading or expanding the jail but a lot of people may not be aware that there are changes coming to Indiana's laws about bail, bond, awaiting trial, etc. He explained that they are basically doing away with it except for violent offenders or people that are held for other reasons so that could end up reducing the jail population. He thinks it would make sense to see how that impacts the jail before doing a whole lot on that.

Dr. Knable said that there was no mention of it in plan that he recalls.

Mr. Wood said not specifically but they did say that downtown should be the county seat. He also said that the one thing he would caution about Mr. Lorch's comments is that the County Prosecution Association is pushing back very hard against that and they don't want to see people who are "petty criminals" go free but wants to see them locked up.

Dr. Knable stated that if he would have been solely in charge of writing he would have talked about combining the city and county governments in the next 20 years.

Mr. Blair asked if there should be something about city and county cooperation.

Dr. Knable said that is what he is getting at and thinks there should at least be a statement like the city will work with the county wherever we have mutual interests.

Mr. Blair asked if the plan could mention city and county cooperation or something to that effect.

Mr. Hamm stated that if it is not in the economic development section already then it definitely needs to be because it is critically important.

Mr. Blair stated that on page 56 under messaging it says that formal decisions made by local government officials must be made with transparency and residents be given an opportunity to weigh in and asked if there was a reason for that. He added that you would think that is just normal operations.

Mr. Hamm stated that it is just a general expectation and he doesn't think that it came from anyone specific. He added that he never got the sense that there is a public outcry about the way decisions are made and is just a standard operating procedure.

Mr. Blair stated that cooperation between city and county should be a standard operating procedure as well.

Mr. Hamm stated that they will add a paragraph including inner governmental cooperation particularly with diverse economic development efforts under keys to success.

Mr. Caesar brought up regions instead of counties.

Mr. Hamm stated that is the direction that the state is pushing in.

Dr. Knable added that they are throwing a lot of money at it.

Mr. Hamm stated that the reality of it is that you are technically part of the Louisville region and would say that you are infinitely more impacted by the Louisville market than the Indianapolis market. He said that there needs to be some sensitivity to the fact that you are an Indiana community that's directly influenced by the Kentucky metropolitan area. He also said that is to New Albany's advantage because you have a very strong economic development environment in the state of Indiana because of some of the policies and tax component pieces in place while still capitalizing on a market that is primarily influenced by areas inside of Kentucky which gives you a strategic advantage.

Mr. Caesar stated that he has mentioned clean and safe a few times and asked if there is enough in the plan about that because he thinks it is a fundamental part of a community.

Mr. Hamm stated that he thinks there is an underlying tenor to it throughout the plan but if you want a specific section that talks about that in the quality of place section then they could certainly do that.

Mr. Caesar stated that it is terribly important.

Mr. Barksdale stated that we are getting better at that.

Dr. Knable stated that he has been working with the mayor's end on a new litter ordinance and it should be ready to go on the agenda for the second meeting in January.

Mr. Blair asked what the next steps are.

Mr. Hamm stated that some of these elements are substantial enough to require a revisit to the plan commission.

Mr. Blair suggested taking it back to the plan commission and then bring it back before the council if there is no deadline on it. He added that it may even need to go back to the steering committee. He also added that the council should have been more involved in the beginning.

Mr. Wood stated that the council is the gatekeeper on adopting the comprehensive plan so you are always going to have input like you have tonight. He stated that the question is if the council is involved upfront will the public feel like their voice is being heard equal to the council's voice being heard. He said this effort has always been sort of driven by the public and interested citizens.

Mr. Blair stated that they are elected officials and represent the citizens. He said he feels that it is easier to take a plan that is 99% done and critique it than it is to start from scratch so he is fine with the process as long as there is enough time to implement it.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that he thinks this way was maybe more efficient because sometimes you can have too many chefs in the kitchen.

Mr. Hamm stated that to the steering committee's credit, they spent an awful lot of hours pouring through these items, reviewing these pieces and providing input. He said that he would probably tell the council that it is more efficient use of your time to review the piece and still have plenty of opportunity to add, edit or adjust the piece.

Mr. Wood stated that they would touch base a little more and see where we will go from here.

Mr. Blair stated that one of the council members really wanted something about disabled veterans in it and asked if they could add something about taking care of our disabled veterans.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Pat McLaughlin, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk