

**Mt. Pleasant Planning Commission**  
**Minutes of Work Session**  
**July 9, 2015**

**I. Introductions/why are you here?**

Planning Commissioners introduced themselves and provided background on their interest in being a Planning Commissioner.

**II. Role of the Planning Commission (PC)**

Kain reviewed the role of the Planning Commission generally and in specific association with a variety of items that are under the PC's purview, including Site Plan Reviews, Special Use Permits, Ordinances and Text Changes, Rezoning and Conditional Rezoning, the Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and other long-term planning issues. Each item has different approval criteria and as such the PC's role differs in each case. Commissioners are encouraged to speak up if they have questions about the level of discretion available to them in making a decision or the criteria on which a decision should be based. Kain also discussed the role of the Public Hearing in the decision making process.

**III. Role of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**

Role of the ZBA is different. They operate under very narrow criteria.

They are not a legislative body - they cannot make text changes, but can bring a request to the PC.

ZBA considers

- appeals of PC decisions - ZBA is very limited in what they can consider
- variances to the ordinances (must show a hardship)
- consideration of non-conforming use (Our ordinance has a unique approach to non-conformities which allows us to consider these requests)
- Decisions are based on specific findings that are entered into the record.

**IV. Effective meetings and decision making**

1. Read packets before the meeting.
2. Call or email if you have questions or concerns about the information prior to the meeting.
3. Attendance is important. Let us know if you are going to miss a meeting (if possible).
4. Keep discussion to pertinent topics and relevant to the decision.
5. If you disagree with the applicant's answers or with staff's recommendations, speak up. We need to know what it is that you disagree with.
6. If you support an action, speak up and make a motion/support a motion.

Staff is here to support the Board and help you understand the process and ordinance language.

## **V. Training needs**

Let staff know if there are training needs.

## **Closing remarks:**

Commissioners were provided a copy of and encouraged to review the appeal brief submitted by Attorney Joseph Barberi regarding the 714 S. Main case. Kain encouraged the PC to follow the outcome of that appeal as it will likely illustrate many of the concepts discussed tonight with regard to effective decision making.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.