MEETING MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 14, 2018
7:00 P.M.
Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle Council Chambers

Members Present:  Colby Lewis (Chair), Terri Dubin, Carol Goddard, Andrew Pigozzi, Peter Isaac

Members Absent: Jennifer Draper, George Halik

Staff Present: Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner  
Scott Mangum, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Presiding Member: Colby Lewis, Chairman

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: October 10, 2018

Commissioner Goddard made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Isaac. The Commission voted unanimously, 5-0, to approve the minutes of October 10, 2018.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Text Amendment 18PLND-0094

Residential Care Homes

A Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment pursuant to City Code Title 6, Zoning to modify regulations regarding Residential Care Home uses (Section 6-4-4) including potential related amendments within the Residential, Business, Commercial, Downtown, Transitional Manufacturing, Special Purpose and Overlay Zoning Districts (Sections 6-8 through 6-15).

Ms. Jones provided a brief presentation of the proposed text amendment which was an aldermanic referral.

Chair Lewis opened up the hearing to questions from the public and invited Alderman Fiske to speak.
Alderman Fiske explained that the reason for her referral was concern that Springfield had not adequately defined why they had a distance requirement in place and she wanted Evanston to more clearly define its reasoning before there are any issues. She also wished to extend regulation to include residential care homes with fewer than 4 residents.

Sue Loellbach stated she has no issues looking at the distance requirements but she does have concerns about exacerbating issues by making a Special Use where they currently are not. It would discourage affordable housing options.

Chair Lewis then opened up the hearing to questions from the Commission. There were several, including:

- Commissioner Pigozzi asked for further clarification on the goal of the text amendment. The goal is to more successfully defend distance requirement justification for group home uses as well as extend regulations to include residential care homes with fewer than 4 people.
- Commissioner Goddard asked if what is discussed is a different text amendment. Ms. Jones responded that with clarification, the text amendment could be decided upon as is or altered to include more details for distance requirements and extending regulations.
- Commissioner Isaac inquired about the reference to Transitional Treatment Facilities. Ms. Jones responded that those are not within the purview of the proposed text amendment. Commissioner Isaac then asked if the use of residential care homes is a newer phenomenon and if there was an update to the Springfield case. Alderman Fiske stated that the use is not new and many exist within the 5th Ward with some newer ones within the 1st Ward. She believes care homes with fewer than 4 residents should be included within the text amendment. She added that the City of Springfield did not appeal the Circuit Court’s ruling.

Jackie Eddy stated that rules for how close the residential care home use can be are made at the state level if state funding is accepted.

Chair Lewis reviewed the different options the Commission could take for the proposed text amendment. Commissioner Isaac stated that the Commission has not fully gone over the appropriateness of the text amendment and that it should go to committee.

Keralyn Keele of Rimland Services explained that Rimland Services has 13 homes used for adults with autism and she came to the meeting to hear more about what is proposed. She was hoping that there are no hurdles to the work being done. She clarified that the state has a 800 foot distance requirement. She added that their smallest homes consist of only 2 residents and the largest consist of 8 residents.

Commissioner Pigozzi stated that he does not like the idea of making all Residential Care Homes a special use but he would like clarity within the zoning ordinance. He
inquired if the goal could be to redefine the ordinance to not get hung up on the distance requirement.

Chair Lewis expressed that he does not believe this to be an issue and that the proposed amendment seems exclusionary.

**Commissioner Goddard made a motion to recommend that the item be brought before the Zoning Committee for further research and discussion. Commissioner Goddard seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was approved, 5-0.**

**Ayes:** Dubin, Goddard, Isaac, Pigozzi, Lewis.

**Nays:**

4. **Discussion**

   **A. Text Amendment**

   **Public Benefits for Planned Developments**

   Discussion of existing public benefits required of Planned Developments and direction for a possible text amendment to update those requirements.

   Mr. Mangum provided an overview of the discussion item which is a referral from City Council. He explained current regulations and reviewed public benefits from more recently approved planned developments.

   Chair Lewis asked if there are issues with the current regulations and if the preference would be to redraft an incentives section on a whole or just the sections addressing public benefits. Mr. Mangum responded that there are questions that have been raised regarding what is appropriate for different projects and that there is a disconnect between the code and past practices. He then provided details on the City Council’s discussions and stated that both revising certain sections and the whole incentives section are options.

   Commissioner Isaac asked if staff had reached out to other municipalities. Mr. Mangum responded that this has not happened but is a good suggestion. Commissioner Dubin stated that Evanston is a unique area for development. Oak Park and Arlington Heights were suggested as possible comparable cities to review.

   Chair Lewis stated that this is an opportunity to provide regulations that will be better able to be enforced. Commissioner Isaac stated that he would like to see broadness and specificity at the same time. This would enable flexibility for any changes that occur with regards to community or site needs.

   Commissioner Pigozzi stated that the list within the staff report is good and
suggested that streetlight replacement be added as a possible benefit to be more inline with new lighting standards. Chair Lewis responded that lighting could be added to a broader list of improvements or possible benefits so as not to get too specific with regards to a public benefit list. Ms. Goddard suggested that staff do some research and return with a list that generalizes the list included in the report.

Ms. Jones confirmed what the Commission would like staff to do. Chair Lewis replied that clumping the detailed list together into different categories would be a start. He stated that it would be good to list overall goals then provide examples on how to reach them through specific public benefits. Commissioner Pigozzi added that it will be good for developers to have a list that shows what Evanston values.

The Commission requested that staff draft possible amendments based on the points brought up during the discussion. The amendment will be brought back to the Plan Commission at a date to be determined.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was one comment to make sure that public benefits of a planned development benefit the public and not just the development’s tenants.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Goddard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pigozzi seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved by voice call 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Meagan Jones
Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Community Development Department