



**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2022  
5:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

Members Present: Jonathan Elmore, Mayor  
Brian Fisher, Mayor Pro Tem  
Lisa Shortell, Commissioner  
Lionel Laratte, Commissioner  
Dee Merriam, Commissioner

Staff Present: Patrick Bryant, City Manager  
Shannon Powell, Asst. City Manager  
Harry Hess, Police Chief  
Ellen Powell, Communications Manager  
Gina Hill, City Clerk  
Stephen Quinn, City Attorney  
Marcel Jackson, Public Works Director  
Don Huff, Sanitation Supervisor  
Adrian Langston, Greenspace Manager

Item #1 Meeting Called to Order

Item #2 Adoption of Agenda  
Commissioner Laratte moved to adopt. Commissioner Merriam seconded. All ayes.

Item #3 **Commissioner Comments**  
Commissioner Laratte said he played the new town green bocce ball court over the weekend. Commissioner Merriam promoted a survey linked in the e-news about Covington Highway as well as meetings seeking public input about the redevelopment of the Kensington Marta station. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher suggested everyone check out the town green at night with the lights on if they haven't already. City Manager Bryant gave an update on the North Woods project.

Item #4 **Approval of Minutes**  
August 24<sup>th</sup> regular meeting  
Mayor Pro Tem Fisher moved to approve. Commissioner Shortell seconded. All ayes.

Item #5 **Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend Section 21-2.1.3 of the Zoning Code to Reduce Required Streetside Side Yard Setbacks for Corner Lots in the R-12 and R-24 Zoning Districts.**  
Commissioner Shortell made a motion to amend the draft ordinance to change the section that says front yard width 90 feet or less and 28 feet high or less in

R-12 from 10 feet to 15 feet and change the front yard width bigger than 90 feet and 28 feet high from 15 feet to 20 feet. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher seconded. Four ayes, one nay (Laratte)

City Manager Bryant remarked that this has been discussed in the past several meetings and recounted the process leading to his point. Assistant City Manager Powell said the goal was to discourage tear downs and prevent overly large structures without being too burdensome. Mayor Elmore repeated the change with this motion and asked if it affected any projects currently underway. Ms. Powell said it did not. Mr. Elmore offered that in his experience, zoning does change and he sees this as a tweak. Commissioner Shortell is comfortable with where the group has landed. Commissioner Merriam thanked everyone involved with this effort. Commissioner Laratte was concerned about the long-term impact, especially on the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Powell responded to his specific concerns. Mr. Elmore felt like measures to protect the character were already incorporated into the new zoning code. Mr. Laratte believed intent was never articulated when the new zoning code was written. Mr. Bryant disagreed and believed intent was clear, the new zoning code was formulated through a lengthy public process, and it is not uncommon to make changes to a zoning code after its adopted. Mr. Laratte mentioned the difference between the Planning Architecture and Zoning Board's recommendation and the staff's recommendation was evidence of a lack of a guiding document. Ms. Merriam felt the original setbacks in the new zoning code were out of character for the historic district. Furthermore, she believed the addition of front porches help build community. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher said he's probably the least of the group concerned with tear downs. He also noted that it would be difficult to write a zoning code to cover every situation. He was comfortable with what's before them. Ms. Shortell added that intent was originally there but proved unworkable and that's why this change is needed.

Lyda Steadman spoke against the change and urged the BOMC to take more time to consider the measure. Jan Hover agreed and also mentioned climate change as a consideration. Klaus van Den Berg also spoke against the change and urged the BOMC to take more time. Paul Dorroh had issues with the process of making this change, among many other concerns which he shared for nine minutes. He asked the board to take take more time before passing this. Mr. Elmore believed they are not overreacting to a couple of variance requests and he explained why. He also felt it's been considered by the BOMC and staff much more thoroughly than they're given credit for. Liz Goodstein asked the group to pause to consider this for more time because the public is still confused. Ms. Shortell clarified that what they are proposal is actually more conservative than the PAZB or staff recommendation.

#### Item #6

##### Public Comment

Lyda Steadman said the BOMC always seems to be in a rush and she's frustrated because she felt they are not listened to. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher remarked that there will not always be agreement and this topic has been considered and discussed for four or five months. Ms. Steadman felt more issues like this should be in the newsletter. Paul Dorroh suggested the agenda be written differently to be more informative. Jan Hover urged more people to come to the meetings or listen to them online if they want to be informed. Klaus van Den Berg asked why the consultant on this change did not do a map of the whole city and Mr. Fisher

answered.

Item #7

Adjournment

Lisa Shortell moved to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher seconded. All ayes.

APPROVED SEPTEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

  
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Gina Hill, City Clerk