

NORTHEAST PLANNING COUNCIL #4 (Fermont/Verona/McKinley)

MEETING MINUTES

October 18, 2023

First Congregational Church, 342 NE Capital Ave

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS: JP Wilson, Mary Conklin, Mary Lusk, Roger Koning, Dave Salerno

GUESTS: Autumn Smith, Craig Long, Jim Haadsma, Jake Smith

After introductions BCPD: Officer Long handed out the Sept crime report. Drug enforcement raid netted a large quantity of money and drugs in the North Ave / Groveland neighborhood.

CITY COMMISSION: Jake Smith outlined what his focus on simplifying city government will entail. 1: reducing the water readiness fee. Wants to address the disconnect between the fee for usage and the readiness fee. 2: transportation: Taxation for a county wide program under discussion will fall disproportionately to the city unless other government entities opt in. 3: industrial facility tax exemptions: The job creation part is not enforced. Having an available workforce trumps tax exemptions in importance for considering building. Also commented on the former K Mart property being considered for rezoning to multi-family and the residents of the former Lakeview Hospital property preference of enforcing the existing covenant which limits the ability to sell it.

STATE GOVERNMENT: Jim Haadsma commented on a bill to consider raising the penalties for businesses that violate child labor laws, citing a serious injury and paltry penalty and another that would consider including mandatory staffing to the collective bargaining agreements for police and fire departments. He contrasted the big hurt that the UAW / automakers strike has on Michigan's economy with the Ford Marshall battery plant potentially being the largest boost to SW Michigan's economy since Kellogg opened.

MINUTES: We would like the city to send out the minutes to members prior to the meeting. Approval of the minutes from June, September, and October has been postponed due to the lack of communication from the city to the NPC 4 members.

COMMENTS: Mary Lusk said First Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a Halloween movie night on Oct 27, 6:30 pm. Mary Conklin finds the meeting informative. Autumn Smith solicited signatures for a freedom of information petition concerning state officials and commented on folks who felt they were being harassed by code compliance.

ADJOURN: 8:10

NEXT MEETING: November 15, 7pm