

**Minutes of the
Planning Committee Meeting
Troy City Council
Wednesday, May 11, 2016 - 6:00pm**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Committee Chairman Dean Bodnar.

Roll Call: Committee Members Ashe-McPherson and Kopka were present. Committee Members McGrath and Gulli were absent. Mr. Gulli arrived at 6:30pm.

Also in attendance were: Council Members Sullivan-Teta and Doherty, Deputy Mayor Monica Kurzejeski, Andrew Petersen and Chris Brown from the Planning Department, John Salka, Deputy Director of Information.

Chairman Bodnar noted that the purpose of the meeting was to review the following:

1. Little Italy funding – Sam Chiappone
2. Transport Troy
3. Update on City projects – Deputy Mayor Kurzejeski
 - Convenience Store Moratorium
 - Downtown Revitalization Initiative Submission

1. Sam Chiappone thanked the committee for allowing him time to give his presentation and proceeded with an overview of the Little Italy funding projects. The focus is on street scaping on Fourth Street, north of Canal Street. They have obtained signatures on petitions and supporting documentation to justify the need for this project. Fourth Street acts as a main gateway from the south to events such as the weekly Farmer's Market and the annual Flag Day Parade. The condition of the sidewalks and the number of vacant buildings is of concern. The hope is that with the newly hired fulltime Grant Writer, the City of Troy will be successful in securing grant money to further the Little Italy initiatives.

Chairman Bodnar noted that there may be savings realized from CDBG funds for the Powers Park project and maybe that money could be used for the Little Italy projects. The estimated cost for the needed repairs from Canal Street to Jackson Street is \$225,000 per city block. The hope is for three blocks to be completed this year. Suggestion was made that the Land Bank be approached about the vacant buildings.

2. Will Malcolm from Transport Troy, Capital Roots, 594 River Street, spoke about the Complete Streets Program. The goal is to make the city "walkable", with trails to encourage and promote safe biking and walking throughout the city. Mr. Malcolm's group holds public meetings the second Tuesday of each month at Capital Roots. They have secured grant funding in the amount of \$70,000 thus far and hope to obtain signs and markers to make the trails bike and pedestrian friendly. The neighborhoods would like to see Creative Crosswalks created.

Discussion followed regarding \$30,000 for the CDTC Linkage Trails that is sitting idle and unused. Deputy Mayor Kurzejeski will check into this.

The Riverfront Trail (\$1.4 million) project has been reactivated. The contract for the architect for the design is on Corporation Counsel's desk for approval.

Chairman Bodnar requested a summary of the \$70,000 in grants be emailed to the Council members. Councilman Doherty noted that he has been a strong advocate of the Uncle Sam Trail and hopes that all the rumors of the trail being crime ridden, dirty and unsafe will be dispelled and that data will be made public on the economic impact the bikers have on our city.

Councilman Gulli suggested that possible simple signage on the trails could direct bikers to local convenient stores, restaurants, etc.

The Deputy Mayor noted there was a six hour educational session on June 7th for the Complete Streets initiative.

The Convenient Store Moratorium is ending June 30, 2016 and the legislation to amend the code regarding this issue will be on the June Council agenda. Basically, Andrew Petersen and Chris Brown have worked on cleaning up the definition portion of the code. Discussion followed on the various categories – retail, corner, grocery, boutique, convenient – and what changes are proposed.

Councilman Gulli suggested that the sale of tobacco and drug related paraphernalia be limited for convenient stores. Enforcement is seen as a problem with doing that.

Discussion followed on the “distance” factor between convenient stores. There are blocks that have multiple stores within a short distance. The Hoosick Street Overlay indicates permitted and non-permitted design criteria for each zone. Parking is determined on a square footage basis.

Discussion followed regarding “Barber Shops” being opened as a front to other activities as are convenient stores. Hopefully with the passage of the new legislation in June, more of these issues can be stopped or regulated. Councilman Doherty requested that a moratorium on pornography be legislated in the near future.

Discussion followed regarding the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. There will be one municipality that will get a \$10 million investment. The City has just hired a Grant Writer, Laura Welles to work on our application.

The Marina district (Federal Street to Ingalls Avenue) has been identified as an area that could use an influx of funding for improvements. The geography of the area from River Street to Sixth Avenue is a consideration in any planning. One of the criteria for the \$10 million is that shovel ready projects in the first year must be available in the city. The submission is due for June 1, 2016 and the Council will generate a letter in support to accompany the application. Eleven cities in eight counties will be submitting applications in this competition. The Deputy Mayor will send the links to the Council Members for the information on the competition.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.