

Present: Chairperson Jensen; Members: Freedman, Liberty, Ostrowski, Wayne and Walter

Absent: Borowski, Landsman, Liberty, Tillman

Also Present: Building Official, Byrwa  
Planning Consultant, Wenzara

Chairperson Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

### **APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Ostrowski, second by Freedman, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Wayne, second by Ostrowski, that the minutes of a Planning Board meeting held on Wednesday, November 10, 2004 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

### **PROPOSED 2005 PROJECTS FOR DISCUSSION**

At its last meeting, the Planning Board discussed a proposed work program for 2005. The planning consultant was asked to prioritize the components under consideration and present ideas on how to approach the projects as well as provide cost estimates.

Wenzara outlined her memo to the Planning Board dated December 1, 2004 on the subject of proposed 2005 projects and how they could be approached. Potential projects discussed at the November meeting were organized into a prioritized list for discussion purposes. Cost estimates will need to be finalized after reviewing the scope of the work elements.

### **Obtain and review results of Southfield Road Visioning Exercise (prepared by Dr. Hirshorn)**

The members were in agreement that the Board should not move forward on a Southfield Road Corridor plan until receiving and reviewing a written report from Dr. Hirshorn. The Village engaged a facilitator to work with the Village to establish common goals and a vision for how the business district should look. Hirshorn was partially through his assignment when he was asked to suspend his work. Dr. Hirshorn conducted surveys and interviews and generated notes in an effort to establish common goals and a vision for the business district. The Planning Board maintains that the findings would provide a good stepping stone for establishing an approach to the project.

Building official Byrwa related that Council President Dave Domzal has contacted Dr. Hirshorn and asked for a summary of his findings. Hirshorn is preparing a report based on his involvement with the Village. Byrwa will follow up on receipt of that report and information on whether the facilitator received full payment for his services.

Wenzara's memo indicates that the next steps for the Southfield Road Corridor Plan will be determined based on the results of the Hirshorn report along with consideration of the Strategic Planning Committee report. Because of new plan adoption procedures, the most efficient approach would be to incorporate a Corridor Plan into the Master Plan update as a sub-area study. Wenzara will review results of the visioning exercise and offer recommendations on next steps and will assist in preparation of Southfield Road Corridor Plan if that is determined to be the appropriate step.

Jensen commented on the importance of setting goals before proceeding with a study. The first stage of the Southfield Road corridor study was gathering data, which was accomplished by the Planning Board. It was the intent that the data would be turned over to a consultant who would assist with developing the corridor plan. Before the planning takes place, there needs to be an objective established that would identify what we are trying to do.

#### **Obtain and review results of Strategic Planning Committee report**

Based on the draft report of the Strategic Plan, the Planning Board's review of the report may include tasks such as identification of new development opportunities, involvement in community outreach efforts, and addressing setback and "big foot" home issues. How the Strategic Plan will impact the Master Plan update will be determined following the Board's review of the document.

#### **Lot Size and Setback Issues**

This project involves conducting a thorough analysis of existing lot sizes, building setbacks, and presence of non-conformities throughout the Village. Based on the results of the analysis, modifications may be proposed to the minimum lot size requirements and setback requirements for all residential districts as applicable. Wenzara stated that this project could be taken on while the first two items and initial stages of the master plan update are initiated. This element could be a joint effort between Village staff and the planning consultant.

Board members discussed nonconforming lot issues in the Village and how to approach the project.

Jensen stated that he looks at this as a larger problem having to do with housing stock and the fact that the homes in the Village were built largely in the 1920's to 1950's without much development since the 60s and 70s. Beverly Hills is facing a whole new generation of people with different needs and different thinking. If we study this from a housing point of view in terms of what we have in the Village and how it meets the needs of a changing world, then we might be able to answer the question of how to help these changes take place over the next 20 years. Jensen thinks that this is a village that needs to understand its future, and this should be a high priority.

Jensen remarked that one component of resolving nonconforming lot issues is to address lot size and setback issues. He thinks that the bigger issue is the Village's housing stock.

Wenzara stated that, ultimately, the reason people request variances is because they want to expand or renovate their homes to meet the changing need in housing stock. Variances are required for non-conforming structures or lots where the setbacks are too restrictive for the lot size. The final product in terms of this work program would be changes to the lot size and setbacks and possibly discussion in the non-conforming section that allows administrative approval of some of these situations. The Village would be dealing with some reduction in lot sizes and loosening of the setbacks, lot coverage requirements, and language relating to existing non-conforming structures that could be handled administratively or through other options.

Jensen proposed that the Planning Board do a study of housing types and housing stock in the Village. It would include non-conforming lots, changing trends in demographics, and would offer conclusions about future housing needs. He maintains that it is critical to provide some understanding of the nature of the market that is driving the expansion and renovation of homes. There should be an understanding of why we need to do this before we do it. The Planning Board is not trying to initiate something that comes from a motive other than concern about the long term future of Beverly Hills.

There was agreement that this is an important study and one that addresses the concern about lot coverage and setbacks as a component. Wenzara will provide some data for discussion and lay out a plan and a budget so that the Planning Board can recommend this to Council as a priority.

### **Master Plan Update**

Wenzara commented on the new master plan adoption process noting that it will take at least four months to adopt the plan after the draft is completed. She recommends doing the master plan update and adoption after completion of any sub-area plans.

Jensen expressed the view that there is a need to update the Village Master Plan at a minimum. The Planning Board has some serious work to do on the Southfield Road corridor. The strategic initiative and Hirshorn's report should be a basis for the Planning Board to work on the Southfield corridor from the master plan point of view. He thinks that the housing stock study as it relates to lot sizes, setback issues and non-conforming lots should be part of this Master Plan. Jensen does not think the Board should do a simple master plan update. He thinks the Planning Board should propose what is needed to Council.

Wenzara suggested in her memo that, at a minimum, the Village should complete its original goal of updating the outdated text, data, and general goals of the Master Plan in 2005 with minimal changes to the majority of the text. Over the past year, however, there have been several other items that have been discussed that would warrant additional chapters or sub-area studies in the Master Plan. These additional options include a neighborhood plan section, incorporating safety recommendations from the Pathways Plan, public involvement efforts, and a Southfield Road corridor plan.

Wenzara suggested packaging the proposal for the Master Plan as a menu of services whereby Council can approve a basic master plan update and negotiate with the Planning Board on adding additional elements. If there are cost considerations with respect to the master plan update, the lot size and setback analysis could be done as a separate study. There is already a basis to look at some of those changes in the current master plan.

Jensen asked Byrwa to provide the members with information at the next meeting on the annual Planning Board budget over the last three years as well as the actual expenditures for this year.

Wenzara will prepare a more detailed proposal for the master plan update based on the Planning Board discussion at this meeting. It will include various options in a menu format with separate and bottom line costs. Jensen suggested that the proposal clarify that any additional elements of the plan should be studied first and considered for inclusion and approval as part of the entire master plan update.

**PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS**

None

**PLANNING CONSULTANT'S COMMENTS**

None

**PLANNING OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS**

Byrwa related that, at its last meeting, the Village Council referred an item to the Planning Board for review and recommendation. There is a request before the Village from Consumers Energy for modification of its existing control building and for various site improvements to property located at 30319 Lahser Road. The Village Ordinance states that any additions or increases in non-single family residential use requires site plan review and special approval. Public hearings are required at the Planning Board and Council level. This will be scheduled as an agenda item for the first Planning Board meeting in January.

The Planning Board will continue to meet once a month. The next meeting of the Planning Board will be held on Wednesday, January 12.

Motion by Walter, second by Freedman, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Motion passed.

David Jensen, Chair  
Planning Board

Ellen E. Marshall  
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard  
Recording Secretary