

Minutes of a Meeting of
The Liberty Planning Board
Held on February 8, 2023 5:30PM

Chairman: Marty Bare
Board: Jason Collins, Gail Emerson, David Staley, and Chris Turner
NC Fellow: Brice Dalke
P & Z Consultant: Reynolds Neely
Town Clerk: Jessica Brown
Town Manager: Scott Kidd

To Order

Marty Bare called the meeting to order at 5:35PM and thanked everyone for coming.

Minutes

Gail Emerson made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2023 meeting. David Staley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

(Old Business, Continued) RZ-23-3-2- R. Lineberry - South Side East Lowe Avenue between 801 S Garden St. and 216 East Lowe Ave - rezone R12 Residential - R6 Residential

Planning and Zoning Consultant Reynolds Neely came forward to give the staff report. He asked Jason Collins, Board Member and applicant if he wanted to continue until the next meeting since the full Board was not there. Mr. Collins said to carry on. This is a request by applicant Jason Collins to rezone the South Side of East Lowe Avenue between 801 South Garden Street and 216 East Lowe Avenue from R12 Residential to R6 Residential. He went over the analysis in the staff report. There are no R6 nearby and not having a finely tuned ordinance or plan right now the staff recommendation is to deny this request. This would be a duplex (two family dwelling.) Marty Bare asked about the difference between R6 and R12. Mr. Neely said it is a single family versus two family dwelling. David Staley asked what makes it inconsistent with LDP. Mr. Neely said it is inconsistent based on the map. He then read the statement of inconsistency. Mr. Bare said he did not see much difference between this request and the one made by Mr. Moore. Mr. Neely said Mr. Moore wanted to put two duplexes on the lot and did have a contiguous R6. Chris Turner asked if the field across the street was still vacant and for sale. Mr. Neely said yes it is. Mr. Collins came forward and said he has owned the property since 2018. Most properties on those streets are rentals. He did speak with Buck and Jeff Ferguson adjoining property owners who said they did not have a problem with it. Chris Turner asked what could be built on the industrial property and Mr. Neely said that is wide open to most industrial and commercial uses. Mr. Bare asked if they approved would that change any past denials and Mr. Reynolds said no. Chris Turner said if nearby zoning is industrial then why not R6? Mr. Neely said there options are to: 1) accept recommendation to deny the request, 2) approve the request and deny the staff report, or 3) agree but think things will change in future and approve amending the plan to direct this decision for the one lot.

David Staley made a motion to continue to the next meeting. Chris Turner seconded the motion. Chris Turner, David Staley and Marty Bare voted yes to continue. Gail Emerson voted no. The meeting will continue until next month.

Jason Collins said the Board asked him last time to talk to neighbors about what they thought but asked if it was someone they did not know, from out of town, who was the applicant would they ask the same question.

LDP Update Discussion

Mr. Neely asked the Board what they thought about the community meetings. Chris Turner said people are concerned about how Liberty will develop in relation to the megasite. Scott Kidd said we have not had a Public Meeting since 2019 and they came from all directions but did not want to shut them down. Brice Dalke came forward and said he is entering the paper surveys and gave some highlights: Downtown Revitalization, more businesses but no chains, anti game room, overwhelmingly wanted to see more single family homes, traffic in front of the showcase, sidewalks near Freedom Park and the community.

Mr. Neely read some of GS 160 D 501 to the Board. We must have a Land Use Plan which considers goals, policies, programs, and social economic jurisdiction. It will use text and maps to coordinate. We must engage citizens in preparation and adoption of the plan. We need to have a range of types and affordability of housing and mitigate natural hazards.

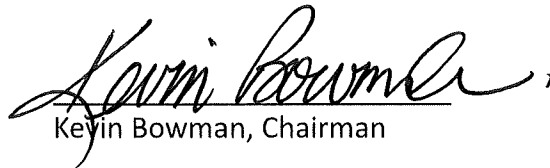
Jose with the PTRC sent a final version of the data package. It uses census data to compare Liberty to other towns. The population rose in 1990 and then flattened. Our Hispanic population has been decreasing. Most of our residents work out of town.

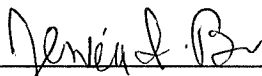
Manager Report

Town Manager Scott Kidd gave the report. We are currently under a Special Order of Consent (SOC) from the state due to fines and violations due to sewer overflow. We have three major grants and could buy out of this in the future if a large industry were to want to come to Town. We only have seven months left in the special order. Growth is coming and we may need to expand. He thanked everyone for the LDP meetings and feels we are moving in the right direction.

Adjourn

There being no further Planning Board business to discuss Gail Emerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Staley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.


Kevin Bowman, Chairman

ATTEST: 
Town Clerk