Joint Public Hearing Minutes
City Council Ordinance Committee / Planning Board
Zone Change – Amend the Special Permit Application Process for Auto Related
(meeting is being recorded)

On Tuesday, March 10, 2015, the Holyoke Planning Board held a Joint Public Hearing with the Ordinance Committee of the City Council regarding revisiting the Zoning Ordinance to amend the Special Permit application process for auto-related uses. The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers, 536 Dwight Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts at 6:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Planning Board

Mimi Panitch	Chairman
Christian LaChapelle.....	Vice-Chairman
Mark Joy.....	Secretary
John Kelley.....	Member

Planning Department

Marcos Marrero.....	Director
Jeffrey Burkott	Principal Planner
Claire Ricker	Senior Planner
Sharon Konstantinidis.....	Head Clerk

Ordinance Committee

Rebecca Lisi	At Large Councilor
Linda Vacon.....	Ward 5 Councilor
Kevin Jourdain	At Large Councilor

City Council

Joseph McGiverin.....	At Large Councilor

Others Present

Kara Cunha.....	2nd Asst City Solicitor

MIMI PANITCH, at 6:43 p.m., called for a motion to reopen the Public Hearing for a Zone Change Amendment to re-craft the application process for Special Permits for auto-related uses. A motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by MARK JOY. The motion carried 4-0.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that a checklist for the application process had been submitted by the City Clerk. MIMI PANITCH responded that she had reviewed the document and asked if amendments to the process were best discussed at the Ordinance Committee level with the Planning Board, as the City Council was the Special Permit granting authority. There are factors in the section [7.2.13(a), (b), and (c)] that have to be reviewed; the Planning Department can not be the consultant. Tasking the Planning Department with an extensive review of the application where they are not the final authority to determine if a site plan is acceptable, may be a waste of time. The City Clerk or City Council Administrative Assistant may be the entity to collate the information received and forward to the respective parties for a review.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that perhaps there should be a reorganization of the existing Auto-Related Ordinance by separating the technical review to be done by the Planning Department and the Special Permit review done by the City Council. MIMI PANITCH concurred and added that the technical review from the various departments should be coordinated through the Planning Department.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that cuently the Planning Department was processing the application to the various departments and working closely with the applicant to assist in presenting a complete application before the Ordinance Committee. The Applicant inadvertently interpreted the technical requirements as giving advice which is outside the Planning Departments purview.

COUNCILOR VACON asked if the intent was to change the order of the tasks and not the tasks to be done. MARCOS MARRERO replied yes.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that the Ordinance could be separated into three check list sections: Clerk, Planning Department, and Ordinance Committee. COUNCILOR VACON asked the Planning Department if the reorganization of the process was sufficient. JEFFREY BURKOTT replied that there was always room for improvement as there are many contradictory areas; checklist for sections 7.2.13(a), (b), and (c) was a good beginning. There will always be a breakdown between a complete application and the

Ordinance Committee as many of these applicants are not capable of producing a "scalable" plan and the Ordinance Committee's purview to wave some technical requirements.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that a request will go out to the City Clerk to participate in a working meeting with the Planning Board and Staff to address amendments to the process. She requested to keep the Public Hearing open in order to determine if the Ordinance needed to be reorganized or overhauled.

MIMI PANITCH, at 7:19 p.m., called for motion to continue the Public Hearing until May 12, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. A motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by MARK JOY. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Joy, Secretary
Holyoke Planning Board