

City of West Branch

~A Heritage for Success~

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PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, September 22, 2015 • 6:30 p.m.

West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 N. Poplar St.

Council Quorum May Be Present

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approve minutes from the July 28, 2015 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting/Move to action.
4. Approve minutes from the August 13, 2015 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting/Move to action.
5. Discussion on Update to the West Branch Comprehensive Plan
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Next Regularly Scheduled Commission Meeting – November 24, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
9. Adjourn

Planning & Zoning Commission Members: Chair – John Fuller, Vice Chair - Gary Slach, LeeAnn Aspelmeier, Sally Peck, Ryan Bowers, Clara Oleson, Liz Seiberling, **Zoning Administrator:** Paul Stagg • **Deputy City Clerk:** Leslie Brick
Mayor: Roger Laughlin • **Council Members:** Jordan Ellyson, Colton Miller, Brian Pierce, Tim Shields, Mary Beth Stevenson
City Administrator/Clerk: Matt Muckler • **Fire Chief:** Kevin Stoolman • **Library Director:** Nick Shimmin
Parks & Rec Director: Melissa Russell • **Police Chief:** Mike Horihan • **Public Works Director:** Matt Goodale

(These minutes are not approved until the next Commission meeting.)

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

July 28, 2015

West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Chairperson Roger Laughlin opened the regular meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission at 6:30 p.m. welcoming the audience and following City Staff; Zoning Administrator Paul Stagg, City Administrator Matt Muckler and Deputy City Clerk Leslie Brick. Commission Members, LeeAnn Aspelmeier, Ryan Bowers, John Fuller, Clara Oleson and Gary Slach were present. Sally Peck arrived at 6:38 p.m.

Approve minutes from the May 26, 2015 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting./Move to action.

Motion by Oleson, second by Slach. AYES: Oleson, Slach, Laughlin, Aspelmeier, Bowers, Fuller. NAYS: None. Absent: Peck Motion carried.

Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment to Sections 165.04(44) (47), 165.07(2), 165.12, 165.24, 165.26(1) (3), 165.27(1), 165.28(1), 165.30(1), 165.31(1) (2), 165.32(1) (2), 165.37, 165.44(7) (8), and 165.49 of the West Branch Zoning Ordinance.

Public Hearing postponed until August 13, 2015.

Approve recommendation to the City Council for the passage of Ordinance 734, amending Chapter 165 "Zoning Regulations."/ Move to action.

Postponed to August 13, 2015.

Approve amendment to the West Branch Comprehensive Plan, adopted April 1, 2013 by adopting an updated future land use map./Move to action.

Motion by Oleson, second by Aspelmeier. AYES: Oleson, Aspelmeier, Fuller, Laughlin, Bowers, Slach. NAYS: None. Absent: Peck. Motion carried.

Discussion on potential changes to sections 165.38 through 165.48 of the City Code.

Commission members agreed that no additional changes were needed.

City Administrator Matt Muckler- TIF Presentation

Muckler opened his presentation by advising the commission that all TIF agreements were listed on the City's website and could be reviewed at any time. He explained that TIF agreements are an economic tool available to Iowa Municipalities to attract new businesses to the City. Muckler went on to explain the purpose of TIF, scenarios for entering into a TIF agreement, length of time for which a TIF agreement may last.

Old Business.

Nothing to report.

New Business.

A special Planning & Zoning meeting will be held on August 13, 2015 to hold the Public Hearing and approve a recommendation to the City Council for the passage of Ordinance 734. Laughlin also advised the commission that he would be resigning his seat effective immediately due to his mayoral appointment and that at the next meeting on August 13, 2015, the commission would vote for a new Chairperson.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting by Oleson, second by Fuller. Motion carried on a voice vote. Planning & Zoning meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

(These minutes are not approved until the next Commission meeting.)

City of West Branch Special Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

August 13, 2015

West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Vice Chairperson John Fuller opened the special meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission at 6:31 p.m. welcoming the audience and following City Staff; Zoning Administrator Paul Stagg, City Administrator Matt Muckler and Deputy City Clerk Leslie Brick. Commission Members, LeeAnn Aspelmeier, Ryan Bowers, John Fuller, Sally Peck, and Liz Seiberling were present. Absent: Clara Oleson and Gary Slach.

Introduction of New Commission Member- Elizabeth (Liz) Seiberling .

Muckler introduced and welcomed Liz Seiberling to the Commission. Liz is an architect and works at Shive-Hattery in Iowa City. She has lived in West Branch for one and a half years.

Approve _____ as Chairperson of the Planning & Zoning Commission./Move to action.

Peck nominated Vice Chair John Fuller as Chairperson of the Planning & Zoning Commission. No other nominations were given.

Motion by Peck, second by Aspelmeier. AYES: Peck, Aspelmeier, Bowers, Fuller and Seiberling. NAYS: None. Absent: Oleson and Slach. Motion carried.

Approve _____ as Vice Chairperson of the Planning & Zoning Commission./Move to action.

Fuller nominated Gary Slach as Vice Chairperson due to Gary's length of time on the Commission. No other nominations were received.

Motion by Bowers, second by Peck. AYES: Bowers, Peck, Fuller, Aspelmeier, Seiberling. NAYS: None. Absent: Oleson and Slach Motion carried.

Public Hearing on Proposed Amendment to Sections 165.04(44) (47), 165.07(2), 165.12, 165.24, 165.26(1) (3), 165.27(1), 165.28(1), 165.30(1), 165.31(1) (2), 165.32(1) (2), 165.37, 165.44(4) (7) (8), and 165.49 of the West Branch Zoning Ordinance.

Public Hearing opened at 6:36 p.m. Muckler commented that he appreciated the work the Planning & Zoning Commission did on reviewing Chapter 165. Stagg noted that many of the changes the commission is recommending is to provide consistency and clarity to the language within the Chapter. Stagg also mentioned that Section 165.44(4) was revised to add language that would lessen the restrictions for fences located at the rear of a corner property to make them more consistent with the requirements of neighboring properties. No comments were made by the public. Public Hearing closed at 6:38 p.m.

Approve recommendation to the City Council for the passage of Ordinance 734, amending Chapter 165 “Zoning Regulations.”/ Move to action.

Motion by Bowers, second by Peck. AYES: Bowers, Peck, Fuller, Laughlin, Aspelmeier, Seiberling. NAYS: None. Absent: Oleson and Slach. Motion carried.

Old Business.

None to report.

New Business.

Fuller suggested that the group review the City’s Comprehensive Plan to determine if any revisions would need to be requested. He asked that this be added a future agenda item for discussion.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting by Bowers, second by Aspelmeier. Motion carried on a voice vote. Planning & Zoning meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

WEST BRANCH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Amended April 1, 2013

WEST BRANCH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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West Branch Comprehensive Plan Public Input Survey Results – 401 surveys submitted

I am a West Branch resident: 336

I am not a West Branch resident: 65

1). What are your opinions about the current appearance of the West Branch community?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. The City's appearance through tree plantings, flowers and landscaping is adequate.	35	218	30	102	12
b. The City's signage and Main Street façades are adequate.	40	231	39	74	10
c. The City's efforts to preserve and enhance historic preservation are adequate.	64	229	38	54	10
d. The City's building and zoning codes to maintain the character of the community are adequate.	33	163	109	61	27

Comments: enforce codes, area around Interstate 80 needs improvement, revitalize and rehabilitate buildings and houses

2. How do each of the following affect your quality of life in West Branch?

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	No Opinion
Many Diverse Shopping Opportunities	68	169	135	15
Vibrant and Active Downtown Area	112	214	57	8
Incentives for Small Businesses to Improve their Buildings/Properties	123	200	49	18
Sustainable or "Green" Community	91	183	93	20
Sidewalks	193	161	38	2
Bicycle Paths/Bikeways	196	143	42	10
Road Repair and Maintenance	240	143	8	2
Sewer and Water	225	147	9	10

Comments: incentives for businesses, water quality, sidewalks, need more businesses

3. How would you prefer the City of West Branch spend public funds for transportation improvements over the next 10 – 20 years?

	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority	No Opinion
Sidewalks	208	124	55	5
Trails	76	135	164	13
Streets	232	130	20	7
Other: _college street, intersection of Johnson and Cedar, school bus, shuttle service to Iowa City	9	14	0	1

4. What types of services or retail establishments would you like to be located closer to your home or elsewhere in the City of West Branch?

	Closer to Home	In the City		Closer to Home	In the City
Pharmacy	68	202	Clothing Store	67	81
Assisted Living Center	63	170	Florist	48	143
Convenience Store/Gas Station	65	137	Recreation/Community Center	71	189
Book Store	63	94	Bakery	58	143
Hotel	59	122	Deii	53	118
Hardware Store	68	194	Laundromat	57	153
Grocery Store	59	169	Dry Cleaner	55	93
Health Club/Fitness Center	68	134	Restaurant, if yes what kind: family restaurant	38	151
Entertainment	63	135	Bank	45	116
Specialty Stores	55	100	Big Box Store	65	68
Other: banquet hall, in city food delivery, feed store, movie theater, dollar store	61	115	Other: _____		

5. Do you agree that the following services adequately meet the needs of the residents?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Police Protection	165	183	18	19	4
Fire Protection	235	128	11	9	1
Services provided at City Office (water bills, pet licensing, building permits, etc.)	115	202	48	9	6
Snow Removal	146	189	19	10	6
Street Sweeping	85	201	52	32	7
Street Repair and Maintenance	39	181	39	87	25
Activities for Senior Citizens	8	50	190	98	29
Activities for Adults	10	69	127	126	37
Activities for Teenagers	9	49	113	125	77
Activities for Youth	25	92	91	98	64
Library Services	121	193	41	25	3
Parks (Lion's Field, Baranek Park)	58	182	68	54	9
Park and Recreation Programs	38	151	90	68	25
Trails	39	131	90	76	23

6. Please list new services, or improvements to existing services, that you think should be provided for residents?
Sidewalks, shuttle service to Iowa City, trails, community-recreation-senior center

7. What kinds of municipal, social, or educational facilities are not currently located in Town, but should be?
More activities for youth and teens, pool, movie theater, community-recreation-senior center, splash pool and adult education programs

8. Based on your observations of the City of West Branch as it is now, what is your opinion of the amount of land devoted to each of the following types of uses?

	Too Much	About Right	Need More	No Opinion	I Don't Know
Single Family Residential Homes	5	234	69	34	19
Condominium Residences	60	175	53	56	18
Commercial Uses (shopping, services, food/beverage establishments, offices)	3	122	200	31	9
Mixed Use Development (commercial and residential uses)	11	134	93	92	22
Hotel and Motel Units	7	125	135	88	12
Natural Areas, Open Space and Wildlife Habitat	23	180	109	45	9
Apartment Buildings	34	155	92	105	20
Civic Spaces (parks, pedestrian plazas, outdoor entertainment)	16	141	174	34	7
Elderly/Assisted Living Facilities	9	114	143	57	24

9. Should the City enhance its code and other ordinances? Yes (97) or No (160)
If yes what area(s): Sidewalks, enforce existing codes, review and update existing codes, less restrictive codes, property maintenance

10. What are your opinions about the park and recreational services in the City?

	Agree	Disagree	I Don't Know
There are enough recreational facilities for families	108	209	45
There are enough programs and services for teens and children	74	214	77
There are enough programs and services for senior citizens	48	167	148
There are enough organized activities for singles and adults	59	196	105
The facilities are adequately maintained	189	86	80
More park space and facilities are needed	185	130	46
The existing trail system is adequate	186	130	50
The existing trail system is adequately maintained	211	75	78
More trails are needed	151	147	64

11. Is there a specific area in the City where safety should be improved for pedestrians? Yes (210) or No (92)
If yes, where: College Street Bridge, College Street, Poplar & Oliphant, add sidewalks where they are missing, Downtown, Cedar Street, Johnson Street, steps

12. What are the most important housing problems in the City? (Please indicate a maximum of three reasons, ranking them from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most important)

	1	2	3
Not enough rental	45	51	48
Property maintenance	94	65	32
High purchase prices	56	68	39
Not enough housing for single people	35	45	46
Not enough housing for young couples/families	43	63	45
Not enough senior housing	76	39	57
Not enough choice in moderate price ranges	51	97	53
Not enough affordable housing	55	58	51
Other:	7	7	13

13. Why do you choose to live in the City of West Branch? (Please indicate a maximum of three reasons, ranking them from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most important)

	1	2	3		1	2	3
Lived here all my life	57	16	49	Small town atmosphere	99	74	61
Family and friends nearby	77	36	37	Scenic beauty	19	39	36
Convenience of services	10	31	43	Proximity to Iowa City	92	81	43
Close to work	64	38	56	Housing availability or cost	29	49	47
Quality of schools	69	59	33	Hoover Library and National Park	13	21	63
Other:	31	30	39				

14. Would you support extending the 1% local option sales tax to pay (or help pay) for the following projects?

	Strongly Support	Support	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Replacement of College Street Bridge	94	122	49	49	45
Paving Project on 4 th Street	49	83	116	65	45
Paving Project on County Line Road	33	79	118	70	49
Purchase of a New Street sweeper or Snowplow	32	78	108	89	53
Other Street Repair and Maintenance	57	156	70	42	31
Main Street Landscaping	40	103	67	87	52
Library Expansion	70	117	51	68	51
New Community Center	102	97	39	44	53
Trail Improvements	59	80	75	78	62
Capital improvements in our Parks	40	106	93	64	52

15. Would you support the city borrowing funds to pay for the following projects?

	Strongly Support	Support	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Replacement of College Street Bridge	67	126	51	67	49
Paving Project on 4 th Street	29	80	119	91	43
Paving Project on County Line Road	22	77	110	92	47
Purchase of a New Street sweeper or Snowplow	19	79	89	108	54
Other Street Repair and Maintenance	40	134	76	69	30
Main Street Landscaping	30	60	71	107	92
Library Expansion	57	97	62	80	54
New Community Center	110	88	42	59	53
Trail Improvements	36	102	67	115	70
Capital Improvements in our Parks	21	67	75	103	59

16. Do you think the city should establish a road between Pederson Valley and Greenview (from Greenview Drive in Pedersen Valley to Greenview Circle)? Yes (207) or No (112)

Why: Developers responsibility, safety traffic concerns, or need walk/bike path