



LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ■ CITY OF BINGHAMTON

Teri Rennia, City Council President
Angela Holmes, City Clerk

MINUTES

Binghamton City Council & Planning Commission Joint Session Broome County Public Library, 185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY Monday May 12, 2014

Call to Order. A Joint Session of Binghamton City Council and the Planning Commission was called to order at 5:07pm by Councilwoman Lea Webb, Chair of the City Council Planning and Community Development Committee.

Present: Bill Berg, Councilman; Mark Bowers, Commission Member; John Chanecka, Commission Member; Nicholas Corcoran, Commission Member; Domenic Emilio, Commission Member; John Matzo, Councilman; Joseph Mihalko, Councilman; Jerry Motsavage, Councilman; Michelle O’Loughlin, Commission Member; Teri Rennia, Council President; Zachary Staff, Commission Member; Lea Webb, Councilwoman

Absent: Juliet Berling, Commission Member; Chris Papastrat, Councilman; Robert Pompei, Commission Member

Also Present: Peggy Benz; Nick Cecconi, Mobile Management of South Central NY; Thomas Costello, Supervisor of Building Construction, Zoning & Code Enforcement; Edward Crumb, Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Board Member; Richard C. David, Mayor; Melissa Enoch, Sustainable Development Planner; Kenneth J. Frank, Corporation Counsel; Gerald Graham, South Side Neighborhood Assembly; Fiske Hanson, South Side Neighborhood Assembly; Carol Hawley, South Side Neighborhood Assembly; David Hawley, Preservation Association of the Southern Tier; Allan Hochberg, Sierra Club; Angela Holmes, City Clerk; Jared Kraham, Executive Assistant to the Mayor; H. Peter L’Orange, Historical Preservation Planner; Tito Martinez, Planner; Leigh McCullen, Senior Planner; Sabina Mora, Economic Development Specialist; Robert Murphy, Director of Economic Development; Sandra Ohlsen, Catholic Charities; Cyndi Paddick, Broome Metropolitan Transportation Study; Scott Page, Interface Studio; Scott Reigle, Broome Metropolitan Transportation Study; Betty Ryan, South Side Neighborhood Assembly; Jenny Skeadas-Sherry, Director of Planning, Housing and Community Development; Jeffrey Smith, Commission on Architecture and Urban Design Member; Carole Somers; Meg Sowell, Real Estate Strategies, Inc./RES Advisors; Jennifer Taylor, Grants Administrator; Mindy Watts, Interface Studio; Earl Westerlund

ITEMS CONSIDERED

Introduction. Councilwoman Webb introduced City Council, the Planning Commission and the consultants, and gave a brief history of the development of the City of Binghamton’s Comprehensive Plan and Form-Based Code, an initiative collectively referred to as *Blueprint Binghamton: Forward Together*.

Process for Decision-Making. Kenneth J. Frank noted for the record that the purpose of this Joint Session, and of the Joint Session to be held on Wednesday May 14, 2014, is to provide an opportunity to City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission to come to a consensus as to which recommendations should be included in the final version of the Comprehensive Plan. Council members will consult the Planning Commission for advice, and will take a “straw poll” at these Joint Sessions to decide whether a recommendation should be included or struck. The Mayor will provide feedback as to whether or not he is in support of a recommendation. Mr. Frank noted for the record that these straw poll votes do not bind City Council or the Mayor to a decision, and they may change their vote in the future. He further clarified that Council must adopt the Comprehensive Plan as a whole document. If the Mayor wished to veto any recommendation, he would have to veto the document as a whole. Council would have an opportunity to override the veto on the whole document, or remove the legislation’s sponsoring signatures in order to return the Plan to committee



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for changes. Mr. Frank noted that further changes could require a new public hearing and referral to Broome County. In addition, the Form-Based Code would be considered as separate legislation.

Public Comment. Mr. Frank and Councilwoman Webb noted for the record that there would be no public comment during the Joint Sessions. Comments can be submitted in writing to Melissa Enoch, Sustainable Development Planner. In addition, the City would hold a second public hearing on Wednesday June 18, 2014 at 6:30pm in the City Council Chambers, during a regularly scheduled City Council Business Meeting.

Review of Blueprint Binghamton Process. Scott Page, Meg Sowell and Mindy Watson (collectively “the consultants”) noted for the record that municipalities are mandated by New York State to adopt Comprehensive Plans. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to look at the big-picture initiatives and changes that should be considered in the coming years. However, the details of those initiatives would be worked out during implementation. The adoption of a Comprehensive Plan does not mandate a municipality to take action on any of the recommendations included therein. The consultants noted that there are several types of amendments to recommendations proposed by City Council, the Mayor and Planning Commission, which have been divided into three groups:

- “Redline Changes”. These represent minor amendments that do not affect the scope of the recommendation. These changes will be made to the recommendations without requiring any further discussion or review during the Joint Sessions. A document outlining all redline changes was distributed during the meeting.
- “Proposed amendments, pending Council approval”. These represent additional minor amendments and corrections, in response to comments received from the Mayor, Planning Commission and Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Board, which do not affect the scope of the recommendations. These amendments will be made upon receipt of Council approval. A document outlining all such amendments was distributed during the meeting.
- “New proposed recommendations”. These represent additions and new recommendations developed in response to comments received by the Mayor and Planning Commission. These new proposed recommendations will be included in the Comprehensive Plan upon receipt of Council approval. A document outlining all such proposals was distributed during the meeting.

Chapter B, “Housing”. The consultants outlined all recommendations within Chapter B which had been identified as items requiring review at a Joint Session. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor, the Planning Commission and Broome County are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **General Comments/Questions.**

Questions/Comment from City Council: How many students will Broome Community College be able to accommodate once the new student housing complex is completed? Will the expansion of student housing at BCC affect the student housing figures presented in this chapter?

Response from consultants: The proposed housing will accommodate approximately 325 students on campus. There will probably be an effect on the figures presented in the chapter, but it is likely to be small. An estimated one-eighth to one-fourth of current students in Binghamton would be taken from Binghamton.



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- **1.5. Consider a land trust to assist seniors with maintenance and repairs in exchange for ownership of the land.**
Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Can this be accomplished by Broome County Land Bank? The City probably does not have the money. Does the City want to own property? Why would elderly people donate their property?

Questions/Comments from City Council: Provide examples of other municipalities who have implemented a Land Trust program for seniors. What are the successes and barriers in these types of programs? Is this similar to the “cooperative” model?

Response from consultants: There is a difference between a “land bank” and a “land trust”. A land bank is responsible for the assembly and disposition of parcel to foster redevelopment. A land trust is designed to hold the land for a specific purpose. Most land trusts are non-profit organizations. The land trust owns the land, the owner owns the building. There are an estimated 250 land trusts nationwide. For seniors who live in their homes, maintenance of the home and property can be an issue. The land trust would take care of the maintenance, enabling the seniors to stay in their homes longer. When the seniors move on, whether to assisted living, etc., the housing would be sold to someone looking for homeownership. There are many land trusts nationwide, though none are currently dedicated to senior housing. We recommend that the land trust be a non-profit organization. The challenge is getting the land into the trust. The land trust would own the land and receive a fee for leasing the land back to the building owner. The non-profit status would enable the land trust to apply for grants. The non-profit land trust would be a tax-exempt organization, but the land and the building owners would not be tax-exempt. Land trusts are governed by boards. Membership is generally composed of 33% of people who live on the leased land, 33% of people who are community members around the land trust area, and 33% of people from City agencies, local experts, etc. Our understanding is that the tax you receive today is the same amount of tax you would receive once a land trust is established. Some land trusts operate as LLCs, seeking to take in vacant land to build homes or businesses. While some focus on development, this recommendation focuses on something different.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Webb

Council members opposed: Matzo, Berg

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: Opposed.

Determination: Recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

- **2.4. Develop new market rate rental housing for general occupancy, but include a component (20%) of affordable units.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Remove 20% affordable units in future housing projects.

Questions/Comments from Broome County: Ensure this will not impede development of market-rate housing, shift development costs to renters, and conflict with their Comprehensive Plan finding that “the affordability of housing makes Binghamton attractive to prospective buyers and renter but at the same time, places constraints on new residential construction because rents higher than now are typical in the city are required to support today’s construction costs.”

Questions/Comments from City Council: Provide examples from other municipalities who have incorporated the mandate to include a certain portion of affordable units in all new developments.



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Response from consultants: Student housing has made sense for Binghamton when other housing types haven't worked. This recommendation was intended to provide an incentive for development, not to create any kind of mandate. The purpose was to create an incentive for other type of housing developments. In New York City, the incentive is to allow them additional units. We agree that the recommendation should be reworded to clarify that this is to be an incentive, not a mandate.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Webb

Council members opposed: Berg, Matzo, Mihalko

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: Need to see the revision before making a determination.

Determination: Consultants will provide the revised recommendation.

- **3.1. Devise a new Urban Village/Mixed Use classification to legalize and better regulate rental housing.**

Questions/Comments from Broome County: The City should ensure that the Comprehensive Plan recommendations for the new Urban Village/Mixed Use Zone where rental and student housing is an allowable use would not run contrary to the concerns expressed in the Residential Market Analysis that the larger number of student rentals in Downtown Binghamton is an issue, the supply of rentals in the city may exceed current demand, and additional student rentals are being added at a more rapid pace than increases in BU enrollment.

Questions/Comments from City Council: The new Urban Village/Mixed Use Zoning classification needs to be revisited in the land use discussion. What will be the effects on existing student housing located outside of this area?

Response from consultants: The issue the City is facing now is that the New York State definition of functional family does not work, but it applies to all residential zones. Our solution is to make the Urban Village a new zoning category. This would effectively skirt the functional family problem, because the underlying use would be commercial. When the time comes to write the legislation for this recommendation, you would need to discuss what types of uses would be allowed, such as doctors, dentists, or other home-based businesses. This would protect some of the homes from illegal conversions. We also expanded this to other areas in the City that could use the new investment. This takes the pressure off of downtown. The City needs to balance student housing and market-rate housing. The impact of this recommendation on areas outside of the Urban Village is that what is legal would continue to be legal, and what is illegal would continue to be illegal. The continued chopping-up of homes makes it impossible to bring back homeowners to these properties. This recommendation would help preserve the homes for homeownership. To the homeowners within the new zoning classification, this would open up the possibilities for a broader range of investments. This recommendation provides more flexibility to protect both the homes and the homeowners. Refer to the map of home sales that have occurred between 2011-2013 and the number of owners not living at their properties. There is a lot of data that shows that homeownership helps to produce a stable neighborhood. Because the City can't enforce functional family, neighborhoods are becoming destabilized. The City can control the uses, but not whether or not a property is a rental or owner-occupied. Part of our concern is illegal conversions across the City. Turning the Urban Village into a new zoning category is not the ideal solution, but it's the best way that we have to legally protect the housing stock. You can never completely control the number of rentals in the City, but you can control the externalities, parking on the street, noise, etc. Those things need to be done in the context of what you are legally allowed to enforce. Property owners have said that they want to know what the rules are. The purpose of this recommendation is to provide certainty and stability. Most details of the



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legislation can only be determined during the development of the legislation. We can note these concerns in the recommendation.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to note the concerns indicated and specifying an emphasis on addressing parking, bulk table requirements, etc.?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

- **3.2. Identify opportunity sites and incentives for new student housing development.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: How would the City “direct” the development of student housing? What are the incentives for new student housing?

Questions/Comment from the Planning Commission: Recommendations related to student housing outside of the Urban Village District such as downtown—strengthen and explore creation of development standards, such as density limitations, limiting number of permits/year, for multi-family projects involving dwelling units with more than four bedrooms per unit.

Response from consultants: The incentive could be something as simple as a statement like “we would look favorably upon student housing in this area”. We’re trying to expand the opportunity for development, providing more opportunities in different places allows different kinds of developers to come to the table. We’re not saying no or limiting this development. Recommendation can be amended to note the Planning Commission’s comments.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended to note the Planning Commission’s comments?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended. The Planning Commission would like to add a note to review density limitations when developing the legislation for this recommendation.

- **3.3. Strengthen code enforcement and follow up to improve rental properties.**

Any there any examples of Code Enforcement strategies utilized by other municipalities that we might incorporate?

Determination: Council members and the Mayor collectively agreed that this recommendation should remain in the Plan, and that this matter does not require further review.

- **3.6. Develop incentives for conversion of obsolete rental housing to owner-occupied (multi-family/single-family) housing.**



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Questions/Comments from City Council: What kind of incentive could the City of Binghamton offer? Tax incentives? What kind of zoning amendments would need to occur to make this happen? Provide examples. What action would City Council have to take in order to implement this recommendation?

Response from consultants: This would simply be a matter of identifying the incentive package. Refer to Holland, Michigan for examples. This could also be an employer-driven incentive. Many large institutions have employee-assisted housing programs, encouraging employees to live closer to their work. Other institutions like universities focus on the conversion of old rental properties for staff and faculty. The City of Pittsburgh, PA provides special financing to developers who do these conversions. Their incentive is for the developer instead of the buyer. There are organizations who train municipal officials in how to develop such incentive packages, such as the Council for Urban Economic Development and the National Economic Council.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to list some examples?
Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb
Council members opposed: None
Council members absent: Papastrat
Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter F, “Land Use/Zoning”. Several of the recommendations included within Chapter F correspond to similar recommendations found in other chapters. The consultants agreed to address such recommendations within Chapter F whenever the discussions on the similar subject matter took place. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **2.4. Permit home-based businesses in R-3 zones and as a conditional use in R-1 and R-2 zones.**

Questions/Comments from City Council: What is the benefit of defining a home-based business? Is it necessary to regulate this, or should we let people to continue having home-based businesses without regulation? How many requests for home-based businesses have we received, and what are some examples? Review either (a) clarifying the language to provide a special use permit or variance in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts, or (b) removing this recommendation entirely. What is the difference between a special use permit and a special use variance? What constitutes a “hardship”, and how does it impact this recommendation? Request clarification on the difference between “special use permit” and a “special use variance”.

Response from consultants: Many people stated that they were interested in a particular property, but they would want their business located there as well, and they weren’t sure if that would be approved. This recommendation would stipulate the range of businesses allowed, providing an incentive to renovate and occupy. Staff noted that there are two types of home occupation, major and minor. Minor is permitted by right. Major is only permitted in R-3 zones. The general difference between major and minor is that minor does not involve foot traffic, such as customers visiting the property to conduct business. A “hardship” would mean that there is a hardship in using the property in any other way allowed in the zoning district.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to note that the R-3



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zoning district option would be extended to R-1 and R-2 zoning districts?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat, Mihalko

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter B, "Housing". The consultants returned to Chapter B. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **4.5. Apply for a Choice Neighborhood Initiative planning grant for the demolition and relocation of Binghamton Housing Authority's North Shore Towers and village (and the adjacent, privately-owned Woodburn Court I and II).** Questions/Comments from City Council: Given the City's application to the New York Rising program, what are the additional details to be included in the recommendation? Which buildings would need to be demolished, and which would need to be elevated?

Response from consultants: We simply suggest that the City begins the process. Staff noted that the North Shore Towers and Woodburn Court high-rise were not intended to be included for removal, but for modification. They will be flood-proofed, moving the utilities to upper floors. The language needs to be amended to recommend the application for a Housing and Urban Development grant, at which time you would need to look at what needs to be done.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to note that North Shore Towers and the Woodburn Court high-rise are slated for flood-proofing only, along with clarification regarding the process?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

Chapter A, "Economic Development". The consultants outlined all recommendations within Chapter A which had been identified as items requiring review at a Joint Session. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **2.1. Create an Industrial Preservation Area within the Brandywine Industrial Corridor.** Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Developing industrial areas should include salt, water transport to PA for fracking.

Questions/Comments from Broome County: The City of Binghamton should ensure that the proposed Industrial



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Preservation area designation for the Brandywine BOA would not limit the development potential of this corridor or conflict with existing plans.

Response from consultants: The goal is to protect the land from other commercial interest. Industrial land would be quickly developed into something else. This proposed to keep land in the City available for job creation. This is an ideal location, with the freight rail and highway nearby. The Binghamton University Incubator will create jobs that will move out of the Incubator, and they'll need a place to go. The Industrial Preservation Area would provide that space. A small portion is located within the one-mile tax incentive area. This is more than zoning. Zoning states that the land is industrial, but also allows a lot of other uses. An Industrial Preservation Area states that the only use allowed is industrial. This protects the land values. Some cities have implements a split zoning/commercial district, but this is usually done when a city is already transitioning from industrial to commercial. Everything generally turns commercial in those areas. We suggest that the entire Brandywine Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) be included in this Industrial Preservation Area. When it comes time to develop legislation, you would have to decide if the stretch of Robinson Street within that area could be mixed use. Staff noted that the City was involved in litigation concerning fracking at the time the Comprehensive Plan was developed, and so the issue was not addressed. An additional statement should be included in the Comprehensive Plan noting that further student is required, and we may want to refer back to this recommendation. One of the comments most frequently submitted during the development of the Comprehensive Plan was the need for more jobs. The jobs that come with industrial development are more valuable than jobs that come with retail. This is the City's opportunity to save a spot that will create higher-wage jobs from industrial use. The City of Seattle, WA set a time limit for their Industrial Preservation Area of 5-10 years, at which point the legislation would sunset.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to include a sunset clause?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: Recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

Chapter F, "Land Use/Zoning". The consultants returned to Chapter F. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **4.1. Identify and code an industrial preservation area within the Brandywine industrial corridor.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Is it better to lease a rail yard vacant use that may/may not happen if a development can go in today?

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to include a sunset clause?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat



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Mayor: In favor.

Determination: Recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

- **1.3. Incorporate a special purpose classification for key sites.**

Questions/Comments from City Council: Regarding Site A, Regarding Site A, the Charles Street Business Park, is it possible to connect the site to the nearby highway exit? Should this be added to the recommendation? Regarding Site F, the flood-prone portions of Court Street, did the installation of flood walls on the East Side exacerbate the flooding in that area (like at Michelangelo's)?

- **3.1. Change mix of uses permitted within the Urban Business Park (UBP) zoning classification.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: How would impacts be calculated?

Questions/Comments from City Council: What is the benefit to allowing housing and industrial use in the same area? Does this recommendation conflict with the recommendation in 4.2? Is this considered "spot zoning"?

Straw Poll: Should both recommendations be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amending where appropriate to note that the Greater Binghamton Health Center does not lie entirely within the City of Binghamton?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: Both recommendations will be included in the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

Chapter A, "Economic Development". The consultants returned to Chapter A. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **4.1. Create a Business Improvement District (BID) to build on the successes and momentum in Downtown Binghamton.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: More regulation. Will it draw people to open new businesses in downtown Binghamton? Level of taxation?

Questions/Comments from City Council: What are the necessary steps in order to establish a BID? What does City Council need to do?

Response from consultants: It's always a challenge to convince people to form a BID. It would increase the capacity of the City's services, since less services would need to be dedicated to the BID area. It has been noted that vacant storefronts decrease dramatically when in a BID. Refer to Ithaca, NY for examples. Staff noted that Binghamton is one of very few municipalities who have adopted a homestead/non-homestead tax, so looking to other municipalities for comparison is difficult. Business owners would have to opt-in to a BID, and the boundaries of the BID would be defined in consultation with the business owners.



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Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan, amended to state that the City should “explore” the creation of a BID, with a need to identify potential boundaries and interest from property/business owners?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Webb

Council members opposed: Mihalko, Matzo, Berg

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: Opposed.

Determination: The recommendation will be removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter E, “Environment”. The consultants outlined all recommendations within Chapter E which had been identified as items requiring review at a Joint Session. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **3.1. Improve existing Riverwalk.**

Response from consultants: Recommendation was amended, per Council comments. See “Proposed amendments, pending Council approval”.

Straw Poll: Should the amendments to the recommendation be approved?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat

Mayor: Opposed.

Determination: The amendments to the recommendation are approved.

Chapter G, “Community Building”. The consultants outlined all recommendations within Chapter G which had been identified as items requiring review at a Joint Session. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **1.1. Create a Binghamton Neighborhood Development Corporation.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Not in favor.

Questions/Comments from City Council: Can a Community Loan Fund be established with CDBG funds? What needs to happen to establish this Community Loan fund?

Response from consultants: Right now, the City does not have a Community Development Corporation that has muscle. They raise funds in a number of different ways. Some charge development fees. In other places, they create partnerships with foundations. In Binghamton, you have some major employers. We recommend that you look at foundation dollars currently available. The salt district in Syracuse, NY may be an example of this. A CDC is focused on economic development. This does not create more bureaucracy, as a CDC is allowed to access funds that a



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municipality can't. What the City doesn't have is a broadly empowered organization. The important thing is to have a number of hands out applying for funds. If you don't apply, someone else will get the money. Refer to the Foundation Center website. You can look at all kinds of foundations and fundraisers available, organized by what types of projects they like to fund and their geographic target area. CDCs could compete against each other or collaborate. It's up to them.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Council members absent: Papastrat, Matzo

Mayor: Opposed.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter F, "Land Use/Zoning". The consultants returned to Chapter F. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- 2.8. How does this recommendation differ from the urban agriculture legislation defeated by City Council? Council this take place in any district? Who would be responsible for testing the soil for contamination? How many properties would fall within this category, and in what zoning districts are they located?

Response from consultants: The biggest question is about continued maintenance. How do you keep a lot from deteriorating? A lot of cities improve those deteriorating spaces by making them places where the community wants to gather. This is one strategy to accomplish this. Staff noted that about 14% of the properties in Binghamton are listed as vacant, though not all would fall into this category. The Code department finds this to be a positive plan, as people tend not to dump garbage in community gardens.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan?

Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Mihalko, Matzo, Berg, Webb

Council members opposed: None

Mayor: In favor.

Determination: The recommendation will be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter G, "Community Building". The consultants returned to Chapter G. A summary of the original comments/questions from City Council, the Mayor and the Planning Commission are noted below, along with a summary of the discussion and the straw poll voting record, noting whether or not the recommendation is to be included in or removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

- **3.4. Revisit community food systems legislation drafted in 2013.**

Questions/Comments from the Mayor: Eliminate.

Straw Poll: Should the recommendation be included in the Comprehensive Plan?



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Council members in favor: Rennia, Motsavage, Webb
Council members opposed: Mihalko, Matzo, Berg
Mayor: Opposed.

Determination: The recommendation will be removed from the Comprehensive Plan.

Adjournment. Officials from the City of Binghamton collectively agreed to adjourn at 8:23pm.