PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

April 18, 2025

Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Cincinnati City Planning Commission for Friday, April 18, 2025, was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 801 Plum Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 and virtually on Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 121 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code enacted by Ordinance 298-2021, the Cincinnati City Planning Commission held its meeting on April 18, 2025, in-person and via videoconference (on Zoom). The manner of remote participation complied with all requirements of the Open Meetings Act. The meeting could be watched in real time on CitiCable or by livestreaming the meeting at www.cincinnati-oh.gov/media. Members of the public were invited to participate in-person by registering online to receive the Zoom link. Public comments and questions to be shared with the City Planning Commission could be submitted to the Department of City Planning and Engagement in advance of the meeting.

Present:	Mr. Jacob Samad, Chair Ms. Daniella Beltran, Vice Chair Mr. Darrick Dansby, Commissioner Mr. John Eby, Commissioner Vice Mayor Ms. Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, Commissioner Ms. Anne Sesler, Commissioner (Zoom) Assistant City Manager, Mr. William “Billy” Weber, Commissioner
Staff Present:	Ms. Katherine Keough-Jurs, City Planning & Engagement, Director Ms. Stacey Hoffman, City Planning & Engagement, City Planning Division Manager Ms. Emily Burns, City Planning & Engagement, City Planner Ms. Carly Evans, City Planning & Engagement, Administrative Specialist Mr. Andrew Halt, City Planning & Engagement, Senior City Planner Mr. Jesse Urbancsik, City Planning & Engagement, Senior City Planner Mr. Kevin Tidd, Law, Legal Counsel

Mr. Samad called the meeting to order at 09:02 a.m. and asked that everyone join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

<u>Minutes</u>

Commission Action:

Approved the minutes from the March 21, 2025, meeting.

Motion:	Ms. Kearney
Second:	Ms. Beltran
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Mr. Samad, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None

Commission Action:
Moved Item 3 to the Discussion Agenda to be discussed last.

Motion:	Ms. Kearney
Second:	Mr. Eby
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None
Abstain:	Mr. Samad

Mr. Samad advised that Items 4 and 5 are related so they will be taken together. This makes the new order of Agenda as follows: 1, 2, 4, 5, 3.

Consent Agenda – Legislative

ITEM 1
A report and recommendation on the proposed dedication and acceptance of Boudinot Avenue right-of-way in Westwood. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff recommended that the City Planning Commission:

1) **APPROVE** the proposed dedication and acceptance of Boudinot Avenue right-of-way in Westwood.

Consent Agenda – Quasi-Judicial

ITEM 2
A report and recommendation on a proposed Development Plan and Final Plat for the subdivision of land located at 2025 Vine Street, including relief from the Subdivision Regulations, in Mt. Auburn. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff recommended that the City Planning Commission:

1) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement findings that the proposed division of land is generally consistent with the General Provision Purposes outlined in Section 100-03 of the Subdivision Regulations as detailed in this report; and
2) **APPROVE** the variance requested from the City Subdivision Regulations as detailed in this staff report; and
3) **APPROVE** the proposed Development Plan and Final Plat for 2025 Vine Street in Mt. Auburn including relief from the Subdivision Regulations, as the proposed subdivision is substantially consistent with Section 300-09(a)(6) and Section 300-09 (c)(1) of the Subdivision Regulations.

Commission Action:
Adopted the staff's recommendations for Item 1 and Item 2 on the Consent Agenda.

Motion:	Mr. Weber
Second:	Ms. Kearney
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Mr. Samad, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None

Discussion Agenda – Legislative

ITEM 4:
Mr. Urbancsik presented a report and recommendation on a proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #67, University Station, located at 3701 Montgomery Road in Evanston. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff recommended that the City Planning Commission:

1) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement Findings as detailed in this report; and

2) **APPROVE** the proposed Major Amendment to the Concept Plan and Development Program Statement for Planned Development #67, University Station, located at 3701 Montgomery Road in Evanston.

Discussion Agenda – Quasi-Judicial

ITEM 5
Mr. Urbancsik presented a report and recommendation on a proposed Final Development Plan for Planned Development #67, University Station, located at 3701 Montgomery Road in Evanston. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff recommended that the City Planning Commission:

1) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement Findings as detailed in this report; and

2) **APPROVE** the proposed Final Development Plan for Planned Development #67, University Station, located at 3701 Montgomery Road in Evanston.

Mr. Tidd swore in the speakers in as Item 5 was a quasi-judicial item.

Speakers and Discussion:
Mr. Dansby asked who would be operating the venue. Mr. Nestor Melnyk, from MSA Design and member of the applicant team, presented some background information about the proposed project and noted that the Major Amendment was more of a clarification as the intent was always to have this be a business/retail corner. Mr. Melnyk did not know who would be operating the venue, but stated that they had been working with the University and that the University had been looking for a good tenant for the location. Ms. Kearney expressed support for the project.

Commission Action:
Adopted the staff's recommendation for Item 4 on the Legislative Discussion Agenda.

Motion:	Mr. Weber
Second:	Ms. Kearney
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Mr. Samad, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None

Commission Action:
Adopted the staff's recommendation for Item 5 on the Quasi-Judicial Discussion Agenda.

Motion:	Mr. Weber
Second:	Ms. Kearney
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Mr. Samad, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None

Mr. Samad recused himself from Item 3 and left the meeting at 9:18 a.m.

Ms. Beltran chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Discussion Agenda – Quasi-Judicial

ITEM 3
Mr. Urbancsik presented a report and recommendation on a proposed Development Plan and Final Plat for the subdivision of land located at 294-302 McMicken Avenue and 301-307 Mohawk Street, including relief from the Cincinnati Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Code, in Overthe-Rhine. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff recommended that the City Planning Commission:

1) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement findings that the proposed division of land is generally consistent with the General Provision Purposes outlined in Section 100-03 of the Subdivision Regulations as detailed on pages 1-4 of this report; and

2) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement findings, analysis, recommendation, and conditions of the zoning variances as outlined in the Zoning Relief Staff Report (Exhibit F); and;

3) **APPROVE** the variances requested from the City Subdivision Regulations as detailed in this staff report; and

4) **APPROVE** the variances requested from the Cincinnati Zoning Code as outlined in the Zoning Relief Staff Report (Exhibit F); and

5) **APPROVE** the proposed Development Plan and Final Plat for the subdivision of land located at 294-302 McMicken Avenue and 301-307 Mohawk Street, including relief from the Cincinnati Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Code, in Over-the-Rhine.

Mr. Tidd swore the speakers in as Item 3 was a quasi-judicial item.

Speakers and Discussion:
Mr. Dansby asked if this project would be subject to the conservation guidelines. Mr. Urbancsik confirmed that the subject properties were not within a historic district and therefore would not be subject to any specific conservation or design guidelines.

Mr. Joe Hansbauer, from Habitat for Humanity and a member of the applicant team, presented an overview of the project and detailed the community engagement that took place. With regard to parking, there are four on-street parking spaces on McMicken Avenue and five on Mohawk Street. Mr. Hansbauer noted an average of just under one vehicle per household for Habitat for Humanity homeowners. The applicant team hopes to break ground late in 2025 and begin the homebuyer selection process within a month.

Mr. Dansby shared his excitement about the project and inquired about the screening process, eligibility, and timing. Mr. Hansbauer replied that applicants must be a first-time home buyer, fall between 30-80% of the area's median income based on family size, and have a debt-to-income ratio of less than 40%. The home buyer must complete 60 hours of homeowner education, financial education and home maintenance education. Additionally, in lieu of a down payment, the home buyer must volunteer two hundred hours in the home building process. In return they receive a 30-year, 0% interest mortgage on the hard costs of the home and Habitat for Humanity protects the subsidy through a second mortgage that is recouped if they need to move or decide to sell the property within the first five years of ownership.

Mr. Weber expressed excitement about the project. He acknowledged that the properties were not within a historic district and inquired about the siding material proposed. Mr. Hansbauer replied that they would be using fiber cement Hardie board on the front façade.

Ms. Beltran agreed that she appreciated the details in the construction. Ms. Kearney voiced appreciation for the work of Habitat for Humanity in the area.

Ms. Tammy Barnett, property owner in the Mohawk neighborhood, shared concerns about illegal activities that had been taking place on the property. She suggested that the neighborhood deserved better development and that low-income housing was not ideal for the site.

Mr. Denny Dellinger, an architect and property owner in the Mohawk neighborhood, shared his support for Habitat for Humanity but opposed the proposal. He suggested that more density, such as a large multi-family building, and more parking were needed.

Ms. Julie Fay, president of the Mohawk Neighborhood Community Development Corporation, stated that she had been involved in rehabbing properties in the Mohawk neighborhood and is currently rehabbing the Imperial Theater. She shared concerns about the compatibility of the house designs and suggested more parking was necessary. Ms. Fay was pleased that Habitat for Humanity had revised some of the plans to make them more compatible.

Ms. Kearney asked for clarification about the incompatibility. Ms. Fay suggested that the scale of the proposed single-family homes was incompatible with the four-story building across the street. Additionally, the designs of the houses, with gable roofs and a cottage look, were incompatible.

Ms. Fay read a letter from Deborah Johnson, co-owner of Robin Imaging Services. Ms. Johnson was not in favor of the proposed development due to the lack of parking.

Adam Nelson, from Habitat for Humanity and a member of the applicant team, stated he was available to answer any questions. He spoke about changes made to the design based on community feedback, such as the roofline concerns, and noted additional small adjustments had been discussed. Mr. Nelson shared that he had researched the property and pointed out that buildings faced both McMicken Avenue and Mohawk Street in the past, and that the proposal is in line with historical development patterns for that area.

Ms. Kearney asked for clarification on the small adjustments. Mr. Nelson replied that more brick would be incorporated on the front façade, as well as some corbelling. Additionally, more trim would be added to make for a more distinct cornice and the small gables over the projecting bays would be removed.

Mr. Dansby asked if there was a cost-effective way to design the homes to more closely match what exists. Mr. Nelson reiterated that the property was not located within a historic district and suggested that Habitat for Humanity had done the best they could without increasing the housing cost.

Mr. Weber asked about Habitat for Humanity's future intentions for the area. Mr. Hansbauer replied that their intent is to house more people. Mr. Hansbauer concluded by saying that he loves Over-the-Rhine and the Mohawk community, and that his desire moving forward is to continue to engage with the community and make it the best that they can for all. He noted that the average Habitat homeowner stays for 19 years.

Ms. Beltran suggested that it is important to bring more people into the Mohawk neighborhood and that it is important that they care about the neighborhood. The homeownership model that Habitat uses should help with that.

Mr. Weber acknowledged that this was incremental progress and stressed the importance of homeownership, especially accessible homeownership opportunities. He shared his appreciation for the applicant and community having healthy discussions about the design and stated that the design was not under the City Planning Commission's purview. He recommended that the applicant team continue to collaborate with the community on those plans.

Mr. Dansby stated that infill housing was important in Over-the-Rhine. He encouraged the applicant and community members to continue working towards a design that was more in line with some of the current properties in the area.

Commission Action:

Adopted the staff's recommendations for Item 3 on the Quasi-Judicial Discussion Agenda.

Motion:	Mr. Weber
Second:	Ms. Sesler
Ayes:	Ms. Beltran, Mr. Dansby, Mr. Eby, Ms. Kearney, Ms. Sesler, Mr. Weber
Nays:	None
Recused:	Mr. Samad

Director's Report

Ms. Keough-Jurs thanked the Commissioners for their time and reminded them that the next City Planning Commission meeting was scheduled for May 2, 2025, and wished those who celebrated a happy Easter and end of Passover. She wished all a wonderful weekend.

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

April 18, 2025

The minutes for the April 18, 2025, Regular Meeting are approved as distributed.

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Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director Department of City Planning and Engagement	Jacob Samad, Chair City Planning Commission
Date: ________________________	Date: ________________________