

Request for Joint session with council and planning commission

Members of council, as Mayor Slater suggested at the last meeting, we need to reach out to the planning commission and have an open discussion about future land use in Troy. I request we do this immediately as there are many projects on the horizon, and developers need fairness and consistency to depend on, when making land purchases and plan developments in the city of Troy.

It is not my intention to rubber stamp every development that comes our way, but we have to respect the work, study and negotiations that go into our planning department and commissions as they guide developers through the lengthy and expensive process that is our development plan.

By the time a project gets to council, it has already been vetted, planned, scrutinized, modified, and negotiated with the city and the neighbors. All this is done to make sure we get the most balanced project possible with all land owners rights in mind. In my view, developers and home owners hold the same property rights, and as such, all should have a seat at the table for discussion and planning. If it is our intention as a body to turn down every project because it gets push back from a neighborhood, we are essentially telling developers that we are closed for business. In my view, it is better to tell them that up front rather than lead them down a costly dead end path.

We appoint the commission, we hire the city manager who manages the planning department, we represent the people who surround a property that is slated for development. That is not a process that is lost on me, we need the wisdom of Solomon most times, especially as we find ourselves developing the last "frontiers" of Troy.

The planning commission and management have the unique pleasure of being redirected every two years as councils come and go, and differing opinions dominate decisions. I think our process is terribly wrong in that light. A developer needs to know earlier on in the process if he/she is going to be denied their project. I'm not sure how we accomplish that under our current rules, but we owe it to property owners to not cost them a fortune to navigate our system.

I thought I'd share my opinion before we decide to meet jointly. It is my understanding watching the last meeting they would like to meet, and they made mention that an hour may not be long enough. I suspect they are right.

Dave Henderson