



# OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

DAWN M. JONES, CITY CLERK

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

JULY 11, 2022, 4:10 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Rachel Tomas Morgan, Eli Wax

Committee Members Absent: Henry Davis Jr., Tomas Kurzhal, Kaine Kanczuzewski

Others Present: Dawn Jones, Victoria Trujillo, Justin LePla, Bob Palmer

Presenters: Tim Corcoran, Director of Planning, City of South Bend

Agenda: Bill No. 22-31 — Approving and Adopting Near West Neighborhood Site

Members marked with an asterisk (\*) are present digitally

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=355694>

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan called to order the Community Investment Committee meeting at 4:10 p.m.

## **Bill No. 22-31 – Approving and Adopting Near West Neighborhood Site**

Bob Palmer advised that if a quorum is not reached, the bill could be sent to the full Council without a recommendation, the meeting could be adjourned to continue the discussion at the next Committee meeting, or measures could be taken to obtain a quorum, such as locating other Committee members. Decisions would require ratification at the next Committee meeting and could be rescinded. Public comments could be entertained at both this and the next meeting.

Tim Corcoran, Director of Planning, City of South Bend, with offices on the fourteenth (14<sup>th</sup>) floor of the County City building, presented the Near West neighborhood plan. The plan encompasses a five (5) to twenty (20) year period and acts as a guide for decision-makers. It is based on community engagement and includes infrastructure, housing, parks and open spaces, zoning, and specifics requested by residents. The graphics are a representation only.

The engagement process commenced in March 2021 with more than thirteen hundred (1300) mailers distributed on four (4) occasions. Meetings were held with residents, and an online

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engagement platform was launched. The main principles identified were that the neighborhood should be urban, attractive, healthy, equitable, and sustainable. Some sites require remediation or repurposing. The plan includes traffic calming zones, trail expansions, bicycle infrastructure, preservation of historic character, and zoning proposals for diversity and expansion. Phase one (1) of the iron site's remediation was completed in 2019 when oil tanks were removed. Phase two (2), required prior to development, would involve further investigations.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan requested questions from the Committee and asked about the zoning timeline.

Tim Corcoran responded that the process would begin in 2022 but it is lengthy as all residents within three hundred (300) feet of the site must be contacted.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan requested questions from the Council.

Councilmember White expressed concern over the contamination from the old iron factory.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan asked if anyone from the public wished to speak in favor of the bill.

Anne Mannon, 724 West Washington, South Bend, Indiana, 46601, president of the Near Westside Neighborhood Association, advised that the neighborhood supports the plan and the potential new parks. Traffic-calming areas and new infill housing are needed, but the residents do not support high-density buildings. Environmental concerns at the 1500 Washington Street site must be investigated prior to presenting proposals to the Council.

Jim Bogner, 807 West Washington Street, South Bend, Indiana, 46601, advised that although he does not oppose the plan, it seems premature. The twenty-five (25) acres on the west side are under a search warrant order being completed by an environmental management agency. Twenty-four (24) samples have been taken that may determine a high level of lead contamination. The plan must address the investigation's urgency and staff must be assigned specifically to the project. There have been four (4) or five (5) plans presented in the past without progress, and changes in administration or the Council may again halt the project. Continued stakeholder engagement and reporting are required, as well as continuity across changes.

Micah Towery, 112 Laurel Street, South Bend, Indiana, 46601, advised that he supports the plan and the zoning changes addressing the infill housing. One (1) to four (4) unit structures would be adequate along Jefferson Street and the west side.

Rafael Morton, Saint Joseph County Council, advised he is in favor of area improvements but is concerned about the contamination.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan requested final questions from the Council.

Councilmember White asked if it is known what the twenty-four (24) samples contained and if the search warrants are complete.



Councilmember Hamann advised that the project references the 2016 comprehensive plan, which is outdated, and noted it would not be beneficial to complete the project piecemeal.

Committee Member Wax asked how many responses were received during consultations and if the process would be hindered for the next two weeks if the bill was sent to the Council.

Tim Corcoran responded that development will not move forward if there are environmental concerns. Industrial areas would remain as such. Waiting two (2) weeks on the Council would not affect the plan. One hundred twenty (120) consultation responses were received. The neighborhood plan presented is an amendment to the comprehensive plan, and the land use sections are regularly updated, as required by law.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan advised that she participated in most neighborhood meetings as a resident and that the level of engagement was high.

Councilmember White advised that further testing will be completed on July 20, 2022, and a report provided by August 26, 2022.

Bob Palmer recommended that the meeting be adjourned until the next Committee meeting on July 25, 2022, for the purpose of further discussing and voting on Bill No. 22-31, with a quorum present. A quorum is not required to adjourn the meeting.

Committee Chair Rachel Tomas entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting and to hold further discussion on Bill No. 22-31 until the July 25, 2022, Committee meeting.

Committee Member Wax motioned to adjourn the meeting and to hold further discussion of Bill No. 22-31 until the July 25, 2022, Committee meeting, which was seconded by Committee Chair Tomas Morgan and carried by a vote of two (2) ayes.

Committee Chair Tomas Morgan– <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Wax– <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Davis Jr. – <i>Absent</i>	Citizen Member Kurzthal– <i>Absent</i>
Citizen Member Kanczuzewski– <i>Absent</i>	

With no further business, Committee Chair Rachel Tomas Morgan adjourned the Community Investment Committee meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rachel Tomas Morgan, Committee Chair

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1875