



Design Guidelines Steering Committee
Wednesday, November 20, 2024 - 5:30 PM
MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Heather Green called the Ad Hoc Design Guidelines Steering Committee to order for Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 5:30 pm.

Committee members present: Heather Green, Franz Stein, Craig Bohning, Andrew Hale

Staff members present: Sean Staneart - City Manager, Trevor Traphagen - City Planner/MKSK, Janco Swart - MKSK, Kristen Asiedu - MKSK

Public present: Lewis Coppel, Keith Meyers, Heather Sharp, Dustin Gerkin, Nick Hubbell, Janet Piper

2. Work Session - Johnstown Design Guidelines

Sean Staneart had the steering committee and audience members introduce themselves.

Trevor Traphagen with MKSK said they have been hired to develop the Design Guidelines for Johnstown in association with input received from the steering committee. Also in attendance for MKSK were Janco Swart and Kristen Asiedu. Trevor said that MKSK was brought on board to take a look at the current design guidelines and help listen to them as to what they want the community to look like in the future as development occurs. Trevor said the agenda tonight is a high level overview of what they plan to do, talk through the process, what the expectations are for them and the committee and talk about a little bit of homework.

Trevor said the city currently has some design guidelines, they have been in place for several years and the Design Review Board was created because of those guidelines. He said what they have heard is that the current guidelines do not accomplish what they would like to achieve and they don't work the best for the board or for staff, so they are here to understand what is needed and update the design guidelines to reflect that. He said they plan to do this in three phases, the first of which is what they are in now, the discovery and alignment phase, it is them listening to what they would like to see. After this, they will take everything they heard from this group and the other participants and consolidate it into a set of design guidelines for review by this committee, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, and the public in general. After that, it will move to the adoption phase.

Trevor reviewed a schedule for the workshops, he said this is advisory committee meeting one, there will be three more of these and each workshop will have a specific topic, after each meeting, committee members will get some homework which will be addressed at the next meeting. After the fourth advisory committee meeting, MKSK will present the findings and what they have heard to City Council. He added they are hoping to be done with a final draft by April of next year.

General discussion on what the steering committee would like the new guidelines to be. There is a desire to have some criteria built in for decision making, that the guidelines are clearly written so the public can also access and easily interpret them, to look at the scope of what the board sees and what can be simplified for staff. There is a desire to have some architectural guidelines with visuals and examples. Some discussion on demolitions and criteria for review, a desire to address this also in the new guidelines. Discussion on facades and preservation of character in a historic or gateway district. Committee expressed a desire to have a better defined process and clear requirements for applications being submitted for review, so the board gets everything needed to evaluate the first time. A mission or vision statement for each design area was discussed and would be helpful. Areas of focus will be downtown, the corridors, residential neighborhoods and parks, recreation and open space.

Trevor discussed homework for the next meeting; in an effort to narrow and focus what Johnstown is, he would like them to go out and get pictures to capture what they like about Johnstown, or a neighboring community, to help them understand what they like and begin building a photo library. He said his guidance would be to focus on things they like in the corridors and downtown, focus more on commercial and maybe things we don't have currently. If they focus too heavily on residential, they will be focusing where they will have the least amount of impact because these guidelines will only affect new things coming in. He asked that the photos be emailed to him.

Some further general group discussion on other Ohio cities; Google Earth was suggested as an option to capture photos. Also briefly discussed was regulation by narrowing undesirable materials.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 18th.

3. Adjourn

Heather Green moved to adjourn, Andrew Hale seconded and all were in favor. The meeting ended at 6:45 pm.