

**MINUTES OF RAVENNA CITY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**January 23, 2012**

The Meeting of the Ravenna City Planning Committee was called to order by Chairman, Scott Rainone at 6:00 P.M. Present were: Frank Seman, Amy Michael, Sharon Spencer, Fred Berry, Jack Ferguson and Bruce Ribelin. Also in attendance was City Engineer, Bob Finney.

Mr. Rainone said that the first item on the agenda are the downtown signs.

Mr. Finney said the downtown signs is that they want to make a change to the historic review district, a procedural change. They want every sign permit to come through the engineering department, approve the application and then pass it on to the design review secretary to schedule a meeting. Ms. Macomber took over. The building official is the mayor's liaison to this board. Ms. Macomber said this is the downtown business and she'd take it over. There have been some issues with people not getting permits. The owner of the copy center called him and told him what she was doing. She came to the Design Review for permission. He had already said that it was fine what she was doing. But they wanted renderings of what the sign was going to look like. They made her come back. The design review commission felt that somebody needs to review these prior to and make sure everything on the application fits.

Mr. Rainone asked if the design review wants an expert opinion before they make their decision.

Mr. Finney responded in the positive. They want it to come through the building department prior to them even hearing it.

Mr. Rainone asked what they want from council.

Mr. Finney said he has no idea. He didn't put it on the agenda.

The clerk noted that Mayor Bica had sent out an email in December asking that it be put on the next committee agenda.

Mr. Finney said he would assume they would want a policy change. He doesn't know that they need any legislation. Unfortunately, he did not discuss it with the mayor and he had three conversations with Ms. Macomber.

Mr. Rainone suggested that the issue be left for next month and he'll try to get with Ms. Macomber and Mayor Bica to see what it is they need.

Mr. Rainone said the next item is the tree fund.

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Mr. Finney said currently the ordinance is written that when a person builds a new home, there is a tree fund that was established. The current fee is \$4.50 per linear foot of frontage. It's his understanding that the intent was to take the money and plant trees. For instance, in Annevar, if you have a corner lot, your tree fund is expensive. There hasn't been a new home built in the city for a couple of years. It was brought to his attention recently, and this person has 300+ linear feet of frontage and it was just under \$1,000.00 for his tree fund. He pointed that he has 30 plus year old trees along the right of way line, as it is; where are they going to plant trees. He looked into it and there is nobody left in the administration who can discuss the tree fund with him; why it was established and what purpose it serves. He knows at one time, it was considered to be a tree city.

Mr. Rainone asked if the money that goes into it has to do with planting trees in someone's particular lot, it doesn't go into a citywide fund?

Mr. Finney responded that is a good question. He really doesn't know where it goes. What he does know is that the tree fund is nearing the same cost as a building permit, when it's all said and done, minus the utility portion. By the time they factor everything in, the tree fund is close to what the building permit is.

Mr. Rainone said that it sounds like even if it was for a citywide fund, the volume of home building is so small, the fund would also be pretty small.

Mr. Finney responded in the affirmative stating the price hasn't been raised since 2004. He doesn't know what it would cost to plant trees today.

Mr. Finney said they need to establish why they have this tree fund and then they need to decide whether or not they want to continue with it.

Mr. Seman said he thinks that was put in when they were a tree city. They had to plant so many trees for that designation.

Mr. Finney asked if they want to continue.

Ms. Michael asked what has been happening with the Shade Tree Commission. She got another phone call from Mr. Plough about that.

Mr. Berry said the last time he talked with Mayor Bica, he had not appointed that committee yet. He asked if individuals who are building new homes are required to have trees in their yards.

Mr. Finney said that according to the city ordinance, yes. The city will collect the tree fund and they have to collect it as part of building new. There is a provision if the house burned down and it's being reconstructed, they won't have to charge but again, that's a limited case.

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Mr. Rainone said it sounds like they have three options: to continue it; put a moratorium on it or eliminate it outright.

Mr. Finney asked what the moratorium would be for.

Mr. Rainone said he doesn't know if they'd do it for maybe three years. Right now the city's tree planting fund is dead so he would guess to go in line with that.

Mr. Finney said the owner of the house on Coe Road that was built has already complained to him. He could easily direct him to send a letter and then submit it back to the committee. He thinks they need to first determine the reason for this before he gives this person an opportunity to ask for his money back.

Mr. Rainone asked if Mr. Finney would mind discussing this with the mayor and see what he thinks about it. Then they'll take it up again at a later date.

Mr. Seman said he would prefer to see a moratorium than dropping out altogether.

It was decided by those present that Mr. Finney would discuss the issue with Mayor Bica and then return to committee.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:12 P.M.

**ATTEST:**

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Clerk of Council

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Scott Rainone, Chairman  
Planning Committee