

III. B



**Memorandum**  
**Department of Planning & Development Services**

**To:** Michael O. Geisel, City Administrator  
**From:** Justin Wyse, Director of Planning and Development Services  
**Date:** August 23, 2018  
**RE:** Planning Commission Training

*Please forward to  
PPW for review &  
Direction  
JW  
8/17/2018*

**BACKGROUND**

The City of Chesterfield regularly provides training opportunities for members of the Planning Commission and the 2018 budget includes funding for this purpose. The form of training varies, but has been provided in three principal fashions in the recent history:

- Attendance of the University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL) Chancellor's Certificate Program in Planning and Zoning;
- Staff led, topic specific discussions; and
- Third party Facilitator led, topic specific discussions.

The UMSL program is offered annually in the fall and the City offers Commissioners, and generally City Council), the opportunity to attend this training which occurs weekly during the evening hours. Participants have indicated a high level of satisfaction from the offering; however, some members may not be able to attend the training due to other commitments.

Staff and legal counsel have also facilitated training events sporadically over the years. These have generally taken the form of presentations on specific topics where high level information can be discussed outside of a development proposal.

Similar to staff led trainings, the City has also occasionally sought outside experts to give presentations on specific items to be addressed. Again, this allows for high level discussion outside of a particular development proposal. Training and presentation by third party experts offer extensive perspective and benefits as compared to training by staff or appointed officials.

All three training avenues are an important element in ensuring the City's implementation of planning and zoning policy and regulation in the City and help to protect the City from actions that expose the City to legal action. Additionally, the trainings are an important element of members understanding their role and responsibilities so that they can perform the important task of serving the City.

**REQUEST**

Over the past several years, the City has been faced with a number of controversial development proposals. These, in combination with regular turnover of Commission members, have led to an increasing number of questions from Planning Commissioners, City Council members, other

Board/Committee members, and the general public. While the UMSL training is a valuable tool, I am of the opinion that a more detailed and Chesterfield specific training needs to occur.

While we believe the 2018 training is essential, Staff is currently not in a position to facilitate the training session due to obvious project conflicts and current workloads (e.g. several private development proposals, Comprehensive Plan, Travel Demand Model...). As such, I have sought out and identified an expert to conduct a training with the Planning Commission. This training would focus on the role and authority of decision makers, discretionary versus non-discretionary reviews, and constitutional issues. As with prior trainings, City Councilmembers and other City committees (e.g. Architectural Review Board) that interface with the Planning Commission would be invited to attend and the meeting would be held as an open meeting. Such training is critical to protect the City as well as to assist in the orderly application of the land use code. Further, it is especially important and timely with the pending approval of a contract to initiate an update to the comprehensive plan.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

After identifying the topical expert, we developed a proposed scope of services and prepared a contract for these services. Based on the focus areas previously described, the cost would be \$4,400. No additional funding is requested or necessary. There are sufficient funds within the Planning and Development Services training budget to fund this training session.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Given the visibility and sensitivity to the planning and land use processes, I request that the Planning and Public Works Committee receive and review this information prior to formally engaging the third party facilitator for this training.