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July 9, 2019

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Urban Land Institute Cleveland

ULI Cleveland applauds City's efforts to encourage growth, remake zoning code

Urban Land Institute Cleveland, the local chapter of the world's oldest and largest network of cross-disciplinary real estate and land-use experts, today officially congratulated the City of Cleveland on an important milestone in its urban planning efforts, which includes the selection of an innovative consulting firm to help the city revise its zoning code, which was originally enacted in 1929.

"We salute the City of Cleveland, Mayor Frank G. Jackson, the Cleveland City Planning Commission and the Cleveland City Council, for taking this important step for our city's future," said Mackenzie Makepeace, district chair for Urban Land Institute Cleveland. "Our organization has proudly partnered with the City Planning Commission in recent years to have important conversations on how to foster sustainable, inclusive growth in Cleveland, and will continue to offer our support in any way we can."

The City of Cleveland began a partnership with The Urban Land Institute, Cleveland in 2014 to host an educational event about zoning. The one-day symposium featured city planner Jeff Speck, author of the book "Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time," and other industry leaders to explore how the community needs for building and development have changed since Cleveland's current zoning code was enacted in 1929.

The event brought together a broad spectrum of voices from the public and private sectors and fostered in-depth conversations on the challenges to development under the current zoning code and best practices in zoning from around the country. The speakers discussed the principles and mechanics of what is known as form-based codes, which provide regulations that are more flexible and less complicated than traditional, prescriptive zoning laws. Form-based codes can better address issues related to building placement, mass and scale, promote walkability, and provide for clarity, efficiency and predictable for those going through the development process.

The symposium, made possible by support from the Cleveland Foundation, Urban Land Institute Cleveland, and the City of Cleveland, focused on bringing form-based codes into the public discourse as a tool to promote inclusion, sustainability and economic development.

In mid-2018, the City of Cleveland accepted proposals from accomplished consultants to lead the development process for Cleveland's new form-based zoning code. The approved, selected consultant, Code Studio, is based in Austin, Texas. Code Studio works on plans and codes that yield vibrant, mixed-use, walkable communities through creative urban infill and redevelopment strategies.

Upon implementation, the City of Cleveland will pilot the new form-based zoning code in two to four to-be-determined geographies. Plans call for the new code to fully replace the present Euclidian zoning code being used in these areas. Over time, the City will expand the geographies covered by the form-based code, once the efficacy of the code has been demonstrated in the targeted areas.

About ULI Cleveland

ULI Cleveland is a non-profit organization of practicing land use professionals and community leaders, founded to share information and experience, showcase new projects and examine trends and innovation in the entire region of Northeast Ohio.