

NORTH SALT LAKE CITY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2014

FINAL

Chairman Bruce Oblad called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. and welcomed those present.

PRESENT: Commission Chairman Bruce Oblad
Commissioner Robert Drinkall
Commissioner Lisa Watts Baskin
Commissioner Ted Knowlton
Council Member Ryan Mumford

EXCUSED: Commissioner Kim Jensen
Commissioner Stephen Garn

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Leetham, Assistant City Manager and Community and Economic Development Director; Ali Avery, City Planner; Jim Spung, Administrative Planning Technician; Andrea Bradford, Minutes Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

2. PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED ZONING PROVISIONS RELATED TO DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Ken Leetham reported that this project is in the draft stage and that this is an opportunity for City staff and the Planning Commission to work together in a formulative way to develop a comprehensive tool for future City planning.

Mr. Leetham also asked for recommendations to fill Chair Bruce Oblad's position on the Planning Commission as he has reached the end of his term.

Commissioner Oblad commented that he had taken a geology class in college in which the professor had pointed out homes and buildings throughout Salt Lake and how these buildings interacted with the land and the long term effects of how and where they were built. He

recommended that the Planning Commission continue to pay attention to the geology of the areas where buildings are constructed.

Ken Leetham commented that Brighton Homes had withdrawn their application for the Granite Ridge development indefinitely. The project had preliminary approval and Brighton Homes had submitted final approval for the first phase. Mr. Leetham stated that if the construction is not started within ten years, it will revert from a Planned (P) District back to the prior zoning.

Commissioner Drinkall commented that the landslide was not one person's fault but a convergence of events. Ken Leetham responded that City staff has a desire to assist any property owner or group that has questions. The City has held neighborhood meetings and is now aggressively involved in a remediation plan for the landslide.

Commissioner Baskin stated that she was relieved that the Granite Ridge development had been put on hold not only because of the geophysical issues but also the logistics and elevation of the site and the nearby blasting due to mining.

Jim Spung reported on some of the proposed changes for the Cutler Drive/Redwood Road area and said the current zoning is Commercial (C-G) Zoning but was Manufacturing Distribution (M-D) zoning in 2001. Some of the challenges of the area include: the built environment does not match the zoning, the close proximity to residential uses, outdoor storage and area aesthetics, and pedestrian design.

Council Member Mumford asked if all the buildings constructed since 2001 met the C-G standards or if they were built similar to what already existed. Jim Spung replied that the City has not had design guidelines for the C-G or M-D zones and that the procedures in place mainly regulate usage and not aesthetics.

Jim Spung said that this plan focuses on the central point of the Redwood Road district and that the General Plan outlines the following goals for this area: to encourage quality development, maximize economic opportunities for the Redwood Road 1-215 intersection, to create a village identity that ties in with the Foxboro residential area, improve the appearance of the district, increase transportation access, enable pedestrian and bicycle access and ensure general compatibility between buildings and uses.

City staff has determined that the main objectives for this project include shifting the zoning to a more "context-based" approach which emphasizes less on the use of the building and more on the appearance and functionality. Other objectives include improving urban design and the appearance of the area, considering alternative modes of travel design and simplifying the

development process. The City Code is currently organized in a way that is difficult for staff to review developments as the standards are not uniform or in order. This would be an effort to simplify and compile everything in one place which will make it easier, not only for City staff, but for developers and architects to follow building guidelines. City staff reviewed current parking percentages, storage, landscaping and permitted uses in the area and determined that other important considerations include understanding that most of the development is new and has to adapt to what is there, a practical and economical approach to encourage investment and to minimize nonconformance.

Mr. Spung then reviewed urban design principles and qualities that could be implemented into areas of the City. The main urban design qualities include image-ability, enclosure, human scale, transparency, complexity, coherence, legibility and linkage. Image-ability is the quality of a place that makes it distinct, it helps to create a lasting impression. Enclosure is the degree in which streets and other public spaces are visually defined by buildings, walls, trees and other elements. Human scale refers to a size, texture and articulation of physical elements that match the size and proportions of humans and correspond to the speed at which humans walk. Transparency refers to the degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or other public space. Complexity refers to the visual richness of a place. The complexity of a place depends on the variety of the physical environment specifically the number and kinds of buildings, architectural diversity, ornamentation and landscape elements, signage, etc. Coherence refers to a sense of visual order. The degree of coherence is influenced by the consistency and complimentary in the scale, character and arrangements of buildings and other elements. Legibility refers to the ease with which the spatial structure of a place can be understood and navigated. This is improved by a street or pedestrian network. Linkage refers to the physical and visual connections from building to street, space to space and tends to unify disparate elements.

Mr. Spung explained that the main focus in the Cutler area will be landscaping as this helps to improve the aesthetics of the area. A lot of the streets on Cutler have a landscaped buffer in place but could be improved. He said that better signage in terms of appearance and placement, a review of parking requirements, human scale lighting, bermed landscaping to hide parking, and awnings or other architectural features on the front of buildings would also help.

Mr. Spung asked if landscaping between buildings would be an accepted concept and also asked that the Planning Commission focus on the larger concepts and principles and provide City staff with feedback regarding the ideas he had presented tonight. He also said that it may be more effective to have a design standards guide as a supplement to the zoning ordinance in the industrial area.

Ken Leetham commented that this process started in the Cutler Drive area where there has continually been zoning restrictions that are detrimental to development there. The main objective is to allow economic prosperity and allow building owners to use the buildings for what they were built for with an emphasis on appearance and less on the use of the building.

Commissioner Oblad asked how other cities determine their parking requirements. Jim Spung responded that a lot of cities figure out a percentage based on square footage and that it was typically similar to how North Salt Lake determined theirs but that the ratios were different. He said that City staff had discussed allowing on-street parking to count toward parking requirements which would reduce the size of some parking lots.

Commissioner Baskin asked if high rise buildings fit within this calculation or if the height of the building could be restricted. Jim Spung responded that along Cutler or Redwood Drive it could be considered unless it was alongside residential areas. He said a height restriction and maximum lot coverage was already in place in the City Code.

Commissioner Knowlton commented that he supported the objective of focusing on design and economic development. He also said that lowering parking requirements match reasonable demand and considering water runoff would help in this area. Jim Spung responded that there would be a section for water detention and that sidewalks are currently not installed in this part of the C-G zone, which is another important aspect to have.

Commissioner Baskin said that trees and landscaping around buildings would be aesthetically pleasing but as Utah is a desert this should not be a significant feature of the C-G zoning. Jim Spung responded that the landscaping buffer may include plant life and decorative rock and rather than requiring an overall site landscaping percentage the City may explore another approach to assure consistency. He said he would like to see a focus on more xeriscaping and other landscaping options to reduce the use of water.

Ken Leetham commented that parts of the document will look like a zoning code but there will also be sections of the document that include policies and concepts. He said it will feel more like a guidebook than a zoning ordinance. The final product will be a mandatory document and will help property owners comply with these standards.

Ali Avery commented that a solution needed to be found on how this could be applied to already constructed spaces such as those sites with buildings, drainage and other structures already in place and how to make improvements to the site.

Commissioner Drinkall said that his frustration is when the City requires someone who is leasing the building to bring the site up to standards. Jim Spung replied that the property owner should ultimately be responsible for the site.

Ken Leetham said that the dilemma is how much retrofitting or correction of non-conformance needs to be required for a new application for business and that adopting standards in the industrial area could be part of the answer. He then said that City staff would continue to work on this project and that the Planning Commission would have the chance to review the progress made in 4 to 8 weeks.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission meeting minutes of August 26, 2014 were amended and approved.

Commissioner Oblad moved that the Planning Commission accept the minutes of the August 26, 2014 meeting as amended. Commissioner Baskin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Commissioners Baskin, Oblad, Drinkall, Knowlton and Council Member Mumford. Commissioners Jensen and Garn were excused.

4. ADJOURN

Chairman Oblad adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary