

**Minutes Neighborhood Council
District 3 (NC3)
Thursday, March 7, 2013
Multi-Purpose Room
7:00 p.m.**

Call to Order: John Sturgeon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Johnathan Kenneway was absent. A quorum of Council members was present.

Attendees: Council members: John Sturgeon, Lori Fay, Kathleen Gessaman, and Ron Gessaman. City officials: Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood and Youth Council Coordinator, Jim Reardon, Public Works Director. Damon Carroll (Water Tower Park Apartments), Gary Williamson (Great Bear Phase II), and Gary Knudson (West Ridge Phase VI), were presenters on the agenda. Over eighteen members of the public were also present.

Minutes: John S. asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting. **Lori F. moved to approve the Thursday, February 7, 2013 minutes; Ron G. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Unfinished Business:

• **NC3 Bylaws:** Patty C. said the interim City Attorney approved the proposed NC3 Bylaw changes. **Ron G. moved to approve the NC3 Bylaw changes as proposed in the handout approved by the interim City Attorney; Lori F. seconded.** John S. asked if there was any discussion. Kathy G. said she thought the changes clarified when officers would be elected and made it easier for the Secretary to provide official notification of new officers to the City's Neighborhood Liaison. **The motion passed 4-0.**

Proposed changes to NC3 Bylaws (**the sections in bold are the changes proposed**):

Section 6 - Nomination, Election and Term of Officers

- A. Officers will be elected **annually at the January meeting** by the Council members; by a majority vote if there are two (2) or fewer candidates; or a plurality vote if there are three (3) or more candidates.
- B. Voting will be by ballot if there is more than one (1) candidate for office.
- C. The terms shall be for one year **beginning immediately following the election.**
- D. **The minutes of the January meeting will provide official notification to** ~~The secretary will notify the City's Neighborhood Liaison/Coordinator in writing of the names of the newly elected officers along with the date they were to take office.~~ **In addition, the Secretary may chose to email the names of the newly elected officers to the Neighborhood Liaison/Coordinator.**

• **Water Tower Park Apartment annexation and rezoning:** Damon Carroll, the developer, said he was very disappointed that the Planning and Zoning Board turned down his proposal to build two three-story 18-unit apartment buildings on his property (2 lots) along the south side of 36th Ave NE just west of the Bootlegger water tower. Damon said he is resubmitting plans for the site. He passed out a plan for a two and an half story (first floor - half in the ground) 24-unit apartment building and he is asking for R-5 zoning instead of R-6 zoning. Damon said he would have two and an half parking spaces per apartment unit. Damon asked for input from the neighbors on how he can adjust his building to fit in with the neighborhood on the lot next to the water tower.

Kathy G. said the new plans could still have up to 48 new people driving down 14th St NE or 9th St NE and the neighbors at the Planning and Zoning meeting were very upset by the possibility of a large increase of traffic and more vehicles parked in the side streets. Spencer Adams, 3501 11th St NE, asked if 36th Ave NE is widened wouldn't that decrease the amount of space for parking and Damon said it might. Jim Reardon (speaking as Public Works Director) said the final design (elevation and width) for 36th Ave NE has not been completed for the section of road from the end of the developed area to the Bootlegger Trail; the connections of 11th St NE, 12th St NE, and 14th St NE to 36th Ave NE will have to wait until the design is finalized. Jim said there might be a trail or a separate bike trail along 36th Ave NE in the design too. Jim Reardon (speaking as a citizen), 1104 35th Ave NE, said he was concerned about development to the west; if the lot next to the water tower is rezoned R-5 with an apartment on it – would the other lots be developed some time in the future as apartment buildings as well? Damon couldn't guarantee that his ex-partner would not build more apartment buildings on his lot (the two own about 3.8 acres along 36th Ave NE). Damon didn't know if he could put some covenant or restriction to prohibit building apartments on the other lots. Greg Pinski, 3405 11th St NE, had several comments: he trusts Damon's family to do what they say; the neighborhood is mostly single family homes and people have invested a lot of money in them; R-6 would be spot zoning in this area since all the other residential housing units are single family dwellings; Jim Workman has built single family housing units in his planned development northwest of this proposed project; the nearest multifamily units are some duplexes north of 36th Ave NE on 9th St NE; Damon's apartment building is built on one third of the area he owns what will stop future apartment complex development on the other two thirds; there is R-5 zoning for a building west of Sacajawea School and that was done many years ago; R-5 zoning limits the buildings to two stories; if the remaining 2-3 acres were rezoned R-2 or R-3 and some guarantee given that no apartment buildings would be built on these lots then it might be acceptable; traffic is another problem, a newer traffic study should be done; and the neighbors needs more information to make a good decision on this project.

Damon said the height of his building would be at 35 ft if he builds in the ground and would meet the R-5 conditions; the building would sit 5 ft from the property line. Spencer asked if there weren't other lots north of 36th Ave NE and Kathy asked if the land next to the Meadow Lark Apartments across from Riverview School was available; Damon said he's been looking but hasn't found any acceptable lots. Ron asked if Damon thought of putting in duplexes like Workman has and Damon said no. The group talked about covenants or deed restrictions on the other undeveloped lots as a compromise for allowing the apartment on the lot next to the water tower. Spencer suggested parceling (selling) off the other lots among the owners of the adjacent six or seven houses; another suggestion was to make a common area of the extra lots purchased by the neighbors. Damon said he would have to negotiate with his ex-partner but would consider this suggestion and he appreciated the neighbor's willingness to work with him.

Damon said he thought his project was going before the Planning and Zoning Board on March 26th but he would try to move the hearing to April. Ron thanked Damon for presenting his project to NC3 and for attending the Feb. 12th Planning and Zoning Board meeting since many developers do not.

• **Westgate Rezoning:** Ron G. said a PUD overlay of the I-2 rezoning of the Westgate Mall area would be discussed at the March 12th Planning and Zoning Board. The PUD overlay would allow negotiated conditions to be set on top of the I-2 zoning. Ron said the conditions haven't been put on the Planning and Zoning agenda. Jim R. said there is a draft of the restrictions for the PUD – relating to what can and cannot take place on the property, height of storage facilities, height of venting tied to what the DEQ requires, etc. Ron suggested people check the Planning and Zoning Board agenda on the City website.

Check the city website at: <http://www.greatfallsmt.net/calendar> under Boards and Commissions to find when the Planning Advisory Board and Zoning Commission is scheduled to meet and click on their name on the City Calendar to see if an agenda has been published.

Committee Reports: John S. said Johnathan K. would give a report on City meetings at a later date; minutes of City meetings can be found at <http://www.greatfallsmt.net/meetings>.

New Business:

• **Great Bear, Phase II – Preliminary Plat:** Gary Williamson, P. O. Box 2800, was not sure why the Great Bear was back on the agenda for review. Patty C. said his project was scheduled for a March 26, 2013 hearing. Gary said the City has been reviewing the project for nine months. Jim R. said there were questions about drainage. Ron G. asked about the railroad spur and the access issue and asked if there had been any progress. Gary said BNSF was trying to get the spur from the Malt plant and has a design to build another spur if they can't. Damon asked if Montana Specialty Mills was moving to Great Bear. When no one volunteered any information, Ron said the County had extended Montana Specialty Mills' lease and there was some talk of the Mills moving to the Agri-Tech Park but rumor was Montana Specialty Mills preferred to move to Great Bear. Gary said the hold up was access to the rail spur to the Malt plant.

• **West Ridge, Phase VI – Annexation and Zoning:** Gary Knudson, 220 30th Ave NE, said he was presenting the annexation plan for West Ridge Phase VI on behalf of his daughters, Shauna and Leann, who were partners in the project. The project lies on the extreme northwest corner of the City of Great Falls on the west side of 2nd St NE and will take in 39th and 40th Ave NE and there will be a total of 24 single family lots it's a continuation of West Ridge. The project might continue north since they were able to acquire about 56 more acres. Kathy G. asked about drainage in that area. Gary said presently there is some pipe and drainage to Watson coulee. Ron G. asked if there is any erosion on the undeveloped land and Gary said no. Ron asked about the major traffic patterns and Gary said traffic would go down 36th Ave NE to travel to the east and down 2nd St NE. Kathy asked if there any plans to put a four way stop at the intersection of 2nd St NE and 36th Ave NE to deal with additional traffic, Lori suggested a round-about; Gary didn't know if there were any plans to put in a four way stop at that intersection. Kathy asked if there was any parkland associated with the project and Gary said there was dedicated cash. Kathy asked if the cash could be designated for Skyline Park. Patty C. said that park money in lieu of parkland goes into the City's Park Trust Fund; the Trust Fund currently does not provide for earmarking funds for a particular park but we could recommend this cash go toward Skyline. Ron asked about the refinery pipeline right-of-way through the property. Gary said the lots are large (90 ft wide by about 128 ft deep) and they are adjusted so the houses can be set on the lots away from the pipeline (pipeline has a 30 ft easement) like what he and Workman have done in their developments.

Kathy G moved that NC3 recommend the Planning Board approve the annexation and rezoning of the West Ridge Phase VI and if possible allocate the park money in lieu of parkland to the Skyline Park development fund; Ron G. seconded the motion. John asked if there was any more discussion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Other Business: Ron G. passed out information from Marty Basta, Director of Parks and Recreation, which had been requested by City Manager Greg Doyon pertaining to the potential sale of underutilized or undeveloped City parkland. Patty C. said the list of 15 parks was developed at the request of the City Commissioners because it costs money to maintain parks. Patty said she talked to Marty before the meeting and only two parks are being considered for sale at this time. Ron said he favored keeping all City parkland because once it is sold it is impossible to obtain the land again and open green space is an important part of the City's growth plan. Ron noted if the Great Falls Public School District wanted to

purchase adjacent parkland that might be acceptable. Spencer A. asked if the City parks are eliminated would kids use the school playgrounds instead and would there be a liability issue for the school district. Lori F. said she wouldn't mind selling Skyline Addition Park and use the money to fund a new \$100,000 water irrigation system for Skyline Park so the rest of the redevelopment project could go forward. Ron thought the School District might need the land if Skyline School reopens. Jim R. said the property south of Skyline School is partly owned by the School District and partly owned by the City. Patty C. said Marty B. has asked the School District if they wanted to buy Skyline Addition Park and they weren't interested. Ron said he is opposed to the sale of any parkland especially parks like the ones on the list; Kathy agreed.

Ron moved that Neighborhood Council 3 recommend to the Park and Recreation Department and the City Commission that none of the parkland listed on the January 18, 2013 Underutilized Park Land memo from Marty Basta to Greg Doyon (in the 1-18-13 City Weekly Review) be sold. Kathy G. seconded. John asked if there was any more discussion. **The motion carried; 3 for and 1 against.**

Petitions and Communications: John S. asked if there were any public concerns. No one answered.

Patty C asked the Council if they would make a recommendation on the Water Tower Apartment project but council members said not at this meeting because Damon's plans weren't clarified and many of the ideas weren't formalized or written down. Greg suggested Damon meet with nearby neighbors. Kathy said she didn't remember to call the neighbors who had signed in at the last meeting and suggested that Greg and Spencer invite their neighbors to the next meeting or to the Planning and Zoning meeting scheduled for March 26th or in April (?). Damon said he would try to meet with the nearby neighbors to hopefully reach some agreement.

Lori F. moved to adjourn, Kathy G. seconded; the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next NC3 meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2013 at 7 p.m. at Riverview School.

Respectfully submitted, Kathleen Gessaman, NC3 Secretary. Please note these minutes are not an exact record of what was said.

The NC3 Board would like to thank Riverview School for providing a meeting spot for NC3 at the school.