

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
GREAT FALLS PLANNING BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION
April 26, 2011**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Planning Board/Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairman John Harding at 3:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of the Civic Center.

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Planning Board Members present:

Mr. Marty Byrnes
Mr. John Harding
Mr. Terry Hilgendorf
Mr. Ron Kinder
Mr. Bill Roberts
Mr. Wyman Taylor

Planning Board Members absent:

Mr. Michael Bates
Ms. Cheryl Patton

Planning Staff Members present:

Mr. Mike Haynes, Planning & Community Development Director
Ms. Phyllis Tryon, Administrative Assistant
Mr. Charlie Sheets, Design Review Coordinator
Ms. Jana Cooper, Planner II

Others present:

Ms. Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood Councils Coordinator
Mr. Dave Dobbs, City Engineer

Chairman Harding inquired of Mr. Haynes if a quorum was present, which Mr. Haynes affirmed.

MINUTES

Mr. Harding asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of the public hearing and regular meeting held on February 22, 2011. There were no changes and the minutes were received as submitted.

PUBLIC HEARING

Beehive Assisted Living (A Tract of Land in the NE ¼ of Section 18, Township 20 North, Range 4 East, M.P.M. Cascade County, MT)

PLANNING STAFF REPORT & RECOMMENDATION

Ms. Cooper presented details of the application, the proposed project, and the conditions of approval, and concluded by offering to answer any questions from the Board.

Mr. Byrnes inquired whether there was reimbursement for the City storm system. Ms. Cooper replied there was not, per the engineer.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Mr. Mike Kingsley, 124 Highwood Drive, Great Falls, explained this is a \$1.2 million project which will bring in revenue for the City. Traffic flow around the existing facilities is congested, and this project will help ease the congestion. He stated that currently people send their loved ones in need of extended care to Missoula. This project will allow people to keep their loved ones in Great Falls. One of the facilities will be for dementia care, and the other is yet to be decided. He noted the property currently looks rough, and will be beautified with the landscaping and buildings.

PROPOSERS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK

There were no proponents.

OPPOSERS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK

Ms. Lori Taylor, 2321 15th Avenue South, who lives across from the proposed Beehive facility site, stated she is neither an opponent nor proponent. She asked whether park area was required with the development. She thought the land area where low income housing now exists and the Beehive is coming in was not to supposed be developed due to storm drain retention area, and that where 15th Avenue South is not paved was wetland protected. She stated she apparently received that information in error. She stated that mature trees were going to be removed for the Beehive project, and she questioned whether this is a done deal, or if something more can be done before the development is built. Her understanding is that the development includes sidewalks, but where there are storage units, that would not be developed. Ms. Taylor wondered how much parking will be eliminated. She said parking and garbage is already a problem, and that it seemed to her when this planning is done that no one makes space for garbage and snow removal.

OTHER PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no other public comment.

PETITIONER'S OPPORTUNITY TO CLOSE

The petitioner, Mr. Kingsley, commented regarding Ms. Taylor's concerns. He stated that when 15th Avenue South is opened up and is no longer a dead-end street, there will be better snow removal. He stated garbage is enclosed and there are good receptacles that are well maintained. Some of the trees will be removed, but one will remain and be trimmed back. Landscaping and younger trees will replace current mature trees. He stated this is a good project, the area will look nice, and there will be more police driving by and better lighting, which will help make the area more secure. Mr. Kingsley thanked the Board and City staff for all their work on this project.

PLANNING BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION

Mr. Harding opened the Planning Board discussion and action, stating that action will first take place as the Planning Board and then as the Zoning Commission. Mr. Byrnes requested City staff to clarify City policy regarding open space and dumpster enclosure.

Mr. Haynes responded, noting that this is in the medical district, and the Master Plan does not call for a lot of open space. He stated the City has a lot of park space, but this area is expected to grow as a medical district and medical campus. There are several proposed new projects in the area, including the Grandview project in the Southeast corner of this district, Cascade Ridge senior housing project, and the Beehive Assisted Living project. He stated the Planning Department works hard with each applicant to improve the Medical Master Plan District. With the Grandview project, the applicant has agreed that 15th Avenue South will be constructed through to 32nd Street South. However, there is one portion of private property right-of-way that the City will need the owner to donate. If that occurs, it will help resolve traffic issues in the area. Parking is also an issue at times, and the City is working with Benefis on a long-range transportation Master Plan for their campus.

Ms. Cooper noted that the land area being developed is not part of Sand Hills Park, although it may have appeared to be because it was previously undeveloped. Access to the park is on the east side, and drainage will still be going to the retention area.

Mr. Harding asked for further discussion, and there being done, requested a Board recommendation.

**PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD AND
ZONING COMMISSION DISCUSSION & ACTION**

MOTION: That the Planning Advisory Board recommend the City Commission approve the annexation of the subject property of ±0.96 acres located at 15th Avenue South between 24th Street South and 25th Street South from Cascade County into the City of Great Falls.

Made by: Mr. Hilgendorf
Second: Mr. Byrnes

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: That the Zoning Commission recommend the City Commission approve the rezoning of the subject property from the existing County-Suburban Residential 1 to R-5 Multi-family Medium Density Residential.

Made by: Mr. Hilgendorf
Second: Mr. Roberts

Mr. Harding took a moment to explain to the public present that the City of Great Falls has had a policy for a long time to accept money in lieu of park land, as it does not make sense to develop 1-2 lot parks. That money is placed in a fund to maintain and expand existing parks. As to the other concerns raised regarding garbage, parking, and park access, Mr. Harding explained that the existing process of development is pretty good. He stated that this Board is an advisory board to the City Commission, and as such, the Board can raise questions to the City Commission. There is also a Design Review process to work with developers. Mr. Harding stated that although this board may not discuss issues in their entirety, discussion also takes place in other processes and overall, the process is a good one and this is nice progress for Great Falls. Mr. Harding stated he is in favor of this project.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Harding requested Ms. Cooper to explain the next procedural steps that will take place for this project. Ms. Cooper stated that the Planning Board recommendations will be taken to the City Commission, which will approve or deny the annexation and zoning. If approved, the applicant will submit any documents for review and then file the required documents with the Cascade County Clerk and Recorder's Office.

The public hearing portion of the meeting was concluded.

BOARD ACTIONS – NOT REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

There were no Board actions not requiring public hearing.

COMMUNICATIONS

Upcoming Planning Board Projects

No applications at this time.

Project Status:

Great Bear Innovation Park, Phase 1 – Awaiting Additional Documents
Eagle's Crossing, Phase IV – Awaiting Final Application
Redding Addition, Phase II – Awaiting Final Application
New Castle Addition – Awaiting Final Application
Valley View - Annexation

Meeting/Obligation Calendar, April 22, 2011 – May 6, 2011

A copy of the calendar is attached and incorporated herein by reference, and was received with no comment.

Petitions & Applications Received

There were no comments on petitions & applications received.

Good & Welfare

In response to Mr. Harding's request if there were any Board Members not able to attend the May 10, 2011 meeting, Mr. Wyman said he may not be able to attend. All others present are able to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Haynes noted that the next meeting will be streamed live on the City website and will be available for viewing following the live meeting. Mr. Haynes said live streaming is part of the City's effort toward more open government.

Mr. Harding commented on the packet for the board members regarding Robert's Rules of Order, openness of government, and conflicts of interest.

Mr. Haynes stated the City attorney will provide board training and is tentatively scheduled to give a presentation before the next board meeting on May 10. Depending on time frames, he may present a half hour before the regular meeting. Times will be noted on the next meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY