

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION  
February 14, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairman Bill Roberts at 2:59 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of the Civic Center.

**ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE**

Planning Board Members present:

Mr. Bill Roberts  
Mr. Marty Byrnes  
Mr. Scot Davis  
Mr. John Harding  
Ms. Cheryl Patton  
Mr. Thor Swensson  
Mr. Wyman Taylor  
Mr. Nathan Weisenburger

Planning Board Members absent:

Dr. Heidi Pasek

Planning Staff Members present:

Mr. Mike Haynes, Planning & Community Development Director  
Mr. Andrew Finch, Senior Transportation Planner  
Ms. Phyllis Tryon, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Others present:

There was no other City staff present.

Mr. Haynes affirmed a quorum of the Board was present.

**MINUTES**

Chairman Roberts asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of the public hearing and regular meeting held on January 10, 2012. There were no changes and the minutes were received as submitted.

## **BOARD ACTIONS NOT REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Administrative Modification #1 – 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program**

Mr. Finch, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report on the proposed administrative modification to the 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Finch explained that the Planning Advisory Board is one of the advisory agencies of the TIP, along with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) is a decision-making body of the TIP. Both TAC and PCC have considered this modification.

This is a minor modification with no change to air quality or fiscal constraints and is an air quality improvement project, as it encourages those with mobility limitations to navigate sidewalks. The project includes ADA ramps at the corners on 9<sup>th</sup> Street North and improves alley crossing accessibility north of 3<sup>rd</sup> Alley North. The project cost is estimated at \$316,411.

Mr. Finch concluded his report and offered to answer any questions from the Board. Mr. Byrnes asked how this project was selected above other projects. Mr. Finch explained that different funds have different selection processes, and for smaller projects such as this, there are more funds available than are able to be used. This project was nominated by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), and the City and County were in agreement. Although approximately \$5 million is available, there is not a large amount of local matching funds required to move projects forward.

Mr. Weisenburger inquired about the required match percentage, and Mr. Finch noted it is 13.42 percent. The agencies responsible for the matches vary and include the MDT, City and County. Mr. Harding said it seems that a clean air violation, such as the City had with carbon monoxide about 20 years ago, never seems to go away. Mr. Finch explained that the City is moving through the compliance process, and that is a slow process. First is a 10-year requirement to show compliance, followed by a period of maintenance status. He also stated that we receive funds to help improve our air quality as a result. Eligible projects must reduce CO emissions, reduce traffic congestion, increase traffic flow, and encourage people to get out of their vehicles. The CO monitoring station is on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. In addition, particulate matter is monitored by the Health Department.

Chairman Roberts asked if weather related jumps in particulate matter are taken into consideration, and Mr. Finch stated they were, but could also indicate trends which can be addressed through farming practices and paving and controlling dust on roadways.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Roberts asked for any public comment, and there was none.



## BOARD DISCUSSION

**Chairman Roberts** called for any discussion from the Board. There was no further discussion.

**MOTION:** That the Planning Advisory Board approve Administrative Modification #1 to the 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program.

Made by: Mr. Harding  
Seconded: Mr. Taylor

**VOTE:** All in being in favor, the motion passed.

## INFORMATIONAL ITEMS NOT REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

### Planning Division 2011 Annual Report

Mr. Haynes, Director of the Planning and Community Development Department, presented the staff report on the Planning Division 2011 Annual Report. Some of the planning projects and initiatives staff worked on in the past year including the Downtown Master Plan, transportation planning initiatives, historic preservation projects, and others. A summary of projects is included in the appendices.

Current planning projects for 2012 include updating the Growth Policy. A review of the Building Safety Division has been added to the report this year. Mr. Haynes stated that he and the Building Official met with Building Officials across the state in January in an effort to gather ideas for increasing efficiency in the Building Division.

Mr. Haynes concluded his review and offered to answer any questions from the Board. Mr. Byrnes requested that he outline initiatives for the Safety Division. Mr. Haynes explained that staffing levels are compared with peer cities on page 21 of the report. Discussion with other cities reinforced the idea of utilizing "combination" inspectors instead of specialty inspectors to help provide flexibility and efficiency with inspections. One of the current inspectors may be retiring soon and the Department wants to replace him with a combination inspector, as well as encouraging existing inspectors to get additional certifications.

Another issue is that the Department currently has only one plan reviewer. Inspectors currently review plans in their areas of expertise but the Department will seek ways to provide additional plan review capacity.

Mr. Haynes said another area to address is to research using a civil procedure rather than criminal for code enforcement. Mr. Haynes said the goal of the Department is to continue to find efficiencies while providing the best service possible to the development community.

Mr. Byrnes inquired if a building fee schedule is available to the community. Mr. Haynes explained that the schedule is available both on the City website and in hardcopy in the Department. He said the City of Great Falls permit fees are comparable to Helena except the plan review component in Helena is higher, especially for residential. He said fees in Great Falls are a fraction higher now than fees in Billings, but Billings Building Fund reserve has dropped substantially and they will have to address that. When factoring in impact fees, fees for development in Great Falls are a fraction of those in Missoula and Bozeman. Mr. Haynes mentioned that not shown in fee comparison table are water and sewer impact fees in Bozeman that add up to more than \$7,000 per home, making fees for development in Bozeman multiple times more expensive than in Great Falls.

There being no further questions from the Board, the discussion concluded.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Upcoming Planning Board Projects

- Shumaker annexation

**Chairman Roberts** asked why there was a delay in the Shumaker annexation. Mr. Haynes explained that the applicant has not yet provided a submittal, but staff has been in contact with them.

### Project Status:

- Closure of 6<sup>th</sup> Street Northeast – City Commission Public Hearing March 6
- Stone Meadows, Phase 2 – being held by Developer

### Meeting/Obligation Calendar, February 10, 2012 – February 24, 2012

A copy of the calendar is attached and incorporated herein by reference, and was received without comment.

### Planning Advisory Board FY 2011-12 Budget

- Second Quarter Financial Report

### Petitions & Applications Received

- None

### Good & Welfare

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission is February 28, 2012. There are currently no items for this meeting. Chairman Roberts noted the Board has met twice in 2012, and asked if there is a required number of meetings each year. Mr. Haynes said there was a City Code adjustment to the number of required meetings, and that as applications increase, there will be more meetings.



### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **COMMENTS BY THE BOARD**

Chairman Roberts inquired about the decision of the City Commission regarding the Community Transportation Enhancement Program Update that was brought to the Board at the last meeting. Mr. Haynes said the Commission agreed to amend the CTEP process, and that staff would make recommendations directly to the City Commission, but that the Planning Advisory Board would be kept informed of projects.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

  
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CHAIRMAN  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY