

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION
June 11, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Planning Board Members present:

Mr. Nate Weisenburger (Chair)
Mr. Marty Byrnes
Mr. Scot Davis
Dr. Heidi Pasek
Ms. Cheryl Patton
Ms. Sophia Sparklin
Mr. Mark Striepe
Mr. Wyman Taylor

Planning Board Members absent:

None

Planning Staff Members present:

Mr. Andrew Finch, Sr. Transportation Planner & Acting Secretary
Ms. Jana Cooper, Planner II
Ms. Galen Amy, Planner I
Ms. Ida Meehan, Comprehensive Planner
Ms. Phyllis Tryon, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Others present:

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

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

MINUTES

Chair Weisenburger asked if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the public hearing and regular meeting held on May 28, 2013. Seeing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Action Minutes of the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission. Please refer to the audio/video recording of this meeting for additional detail.

BOARD ACTIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

Growth Policy Update City of Great Falls

Ida Meehan, Comprehensive Planner, reviewed the staff report on the 2013 Growth Policy Update. Ms. Meehan entered the staff report into the record. Ms. Meehan presented an overview of the 2013 Growth Policy Update and the public process involved in preparing the update. She stated that the Growth Policy is a requirement of Montana State Law, is not regulatory in and of itself, offers tools to balance competing needs in the community, and identifies focus areas. She stated that any change in City Code would have to be adopted by separate ordinance and is not mandated by this update. Ms. Meehan reviewed the public outreach process of the Growth Policy Update, which included two community open houses, a survey posted on the City website, 40 public presentations which included presentations to Neighborhood Councils, City website updates, and four working groups, which met at various times from September – December 2012.

Ms. Meehan reviewed a breakdown of the working groups and the issues these groups discussed in relation to the Growth Policy Update. These groups were divided into Social, Physical, Environmental and Economic. She said there are 25 objectives in this document which were largely crafted out of the working group process. In addition, there are seven focus areas in the update as follows:

1. Encourage the development of underutilized or vacant lots and enclaves in the City. There are 34 enclaves totaling about 400 acres and about 50 brownfields.
2. Fulfill the Downtown vision.
3. Maintain a commitment to the Missouri River Urban Corridor Plan.
4. Continue to develop code changes and incentives to support urban development.
5. Pursue Demonstration Projects.
6. Evaluate Healthy by Design Principles.
7. Maintain a Business Friendly Attitude.

Ms. Meehan reviewed the benefits to the City of the Growth Policy Update, noting that it is a citizen-based document and has a 2025 Timeline. She said this document has not had a major revision since 1999, although there were minor updates in 2003 and 2005. She said this update provides an opportunity for more balanced growth of the City.

Ms. Meehan concluded her review of the staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board.

COMMENTS BY PROPONENTS

Alma Winberry, 423 15th Street South, said she participated in two of the Working Groups, and requested the Board consider Ms. Meehan's breadth and scope of work. She said that Ms. Meehan was very invitational to the public and responsive to the Working Group recommendations. She thinks this is a fair and balanced approach for the community. Ms.

Winberry said that in participating in a session with Vibrant Futures, there were items brought up but not completed. She is concerned that the City takes time to measure and review the goals of the Growth Policy Update.

Sheila Rice, NeighborWorks Great Falls, said they are excited about the emphasis on infill and downtown development that is included in this Growth Policy Update. She urged the Board to adopt the Update.

COMMENTS BY OPPONENTS

There were no opponents.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION

Chair Weisenburger asked for any discussion from the Board. Ms. Sparklin said she observed some of the public meetings and participated in some of the Working Group sessions, and she said the public participation was impressive. She commended Ms. Meehan on her work on this.

Ms. Patton gave her compliments to Ms. Meehan for the Growth Policy Update being well-written and logically presented. She said the Update gives lots of room for thought for City Commission and staff as we move into the future of the City. She was particularly interested in the results of the spending survey, and she was pleased to see that the public felt that our City parks were so important. She congratulated staff on this project being well done and to those who took the time to give their input, as it made a big difference over the process that was used before.

MOTION: The Planning Advisory Board recommends that the City Commission adopt the proposed revisions to the Growth Policy, referred to herein as the Growth Policy Update.

Made by: Ms. Sparklin

Second: Dr. Pasek

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

Ms. Meehan advised the Board on the next procedural steps. She said there will be two legal advertisements before the City Commission can act on this item. She said staff anticipates the earliest the City Commission can act on the Growth Policy Update would be July 17. She said she anticipates some minor editing and formatting that will continue to the City Commission phase.

BOARD ACTIONS NOT REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, Final Plat North of 38th Avenue NE, West of 2nd Street NE

Ms. Cooper reviewed the staff report for S&L Development for the final plat for a proposed subdivision called West Ridge Addition, Phase VI. Ms. Cooper entered the staff report into the record. Ms. Cooper said the proposed subdivision contains ± 7.99 acres and is located in a developing residential neighborhood, with existing residential units to the east and south, and vacant, undeveloped land to the north and west.

Ms. Cooper said that on January 8, 2008, the City Commission conditionally approved the preliminary plat of West Ridge Addition, Phases V and VI. The final plat of Phase V was approved by City Commission in 2008, but the developer did not proceed with Phase VI, and the preliminary plat approval expired in 2011. The preliminary plat has recently been reprocessed, and the developer is now requesting approval of the final plat of Phase VI. This Phase is similar to Phases I-V, and will consist of 24 single-family residential lots which will then be sold for development. Proposed zoning for West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, is R-3 Single-family high density residential. The lots are adjusted to accommodate a refinery pipeline easement that traverses the subject property.

Along with the final plat and establishment of City zoning, the developer is requesting annexation of ± 7.99 acres from Cascade County into the City of Great Falls. Access to the property will be provided by extensions of 2nd Street Northeast and 39th and 40th Avenues Northeast. Temporary cul-de-sacs will be installed at the west termini of 39th and 40th Avenues Northeast. Staff has requested the developer escrow funds to restore curb and gutter on the temporary cul-de-sacs once the property to the west is developed. City water and sewer mains are proposed in 39th and 40th Avenues Northeast, and they will be extended from the current manholes in 2nd Street Northeast. There are some questions about gravity sewer in the northern portion of the subdivision, and staff is waiting for preliminary engineering plans before the project moves forward to the City Commission.

Surface drainage on the subject property will generally flow from the southeast to the west. The developer has provided a 10-foot easement and will construct a temporary drainage ditch along the westerly edge of the subdivision, and a detention pond north of the property. The developer will fulfill the park land obligation for subdivision by paying a fee in lieu of park land. The project comes with some concerns about how infrastructure and street connectivity will function in the vicinity. Staff encourages property owners in the area to work together on these issues.

The applicant presented the project to Neighborhood Council 3 on March 7, 2013. The Council commented on the drainage and erosion related to the site, traffic concerns, the existing pipeline that traverses the site, and also suggested the park fees in lieu payment should go to Skyline Park. Staff cannot specifically direct those funds to a certain park, but did inform the Director of the Park and Recreation Department about the request.

Ms. Cooper concluded her review of the staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board. Mr. Striepe asked about a lift station for the subject property and whether that was for the current project or a future development. Ms. Cooper said the lift station was for future development, but for this project, there may need to be grinder pumps. Staff has asked the

developer to disclose any issues on the height of the sewer to prospective buyers. A future lift station would cover the property to the north if it develops, and would be a public facility, perhaps installed by developers.

Mr. Byrnes asked about soil issues. Ms. Cooper said there is a soils clause in the annexation agreement, and any building permit requires soil testing. Mr. Byrnes asked about curb and gutter with the flat grade. Mr. Dobbs said there will be a conventional 35-foot wide street with curb and gutter, and that the slope will be minimal. He said it will probably drain to the west, and there will be cul-de-sacs on the west ends of both avenues. Sanitation and emergency vehicles will be able to turn around in the cul-de-sacs. Mr. Byrnes asked about the asphalt for that section and said the asphalt in that area tends to break down due to the expansive soils. Mr. Dobbs said the soils on the subject property are not as bad as other areas and the streets do not show as much distress.

Ms. Sparklin asked Mr. Finch to address the current outlook on traffic in the area. Mr. Finch said the City is currently undergoing a transportation plan, and this is one of the areas being looked at for current level of service at some of the intersections, as well as modeling an extension of 36th Avenue Northeast all the way to 6th Street Northwest to see how it affects traffic patterns. He said two issues are growth and perception in this area. From a more objective standpoint, the plan should show if there is enough ability for the roadways to carry current and projected traffic. They will also be looking at how increased congestion will affect quality of life in the area, what is the perception of the neighborhood, what do the neighbors want for their area, and how we can make this a better neighborhood in relation to traffic issues. He said there is traffic, it doesn't go away, and there will be growth, so the goal is to look for long-term solutions.

Chair Weisenburger asked how the transportation plan fits into the purview of the Planning Advisory Board. Mr. Finch explained the relationship of this board with other bodies involved in transportation planning in the community. He said staff will also take the transportation plan to the County Commission, the County Planning Board and the City Commission.

Dr. Pasek asked about plans for any business or store development in this area. Ms. Cooper said the Planning and Community Development Department has not received any applications for commercial development in the area. Ms. Meehan spoke in terms of the Growth Policy and said the full complement of services lags in such areas. Dr. Pasek said this was something talked about during the Growth Policy Update, and we might want to give consideration to that as businesses come into the area.

Mr. Byrnes asked if the Board was being asked to approve the storm drainage as a Condition of Approval and if there is an agreement with an adjacent property owner. Ms. Cooper said there is no agreement needed with an adjacent property owner because the developer has addressed storm drainage on the final plat. She said the design will be reviewed by Public Works before moving forward to the City Commission and it is part of the Conditions of Approval before the Planning Advisory Board for this project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alma Winberry, 423 15th Street South, said this is a very narrow street and with the cul-de-sac coming around for emergency vehicles, people are concerned about it. A solution might be an exit point. She said if she had property in the area, she doesn't think people should have to

make agreements with neighbors for sewer and water, and that property owners should have independence from the facilities.

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION

MOTION: RECOMMENDATION I: The Planning Advisory Board recommends the City Commission approve the Final Plat of West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, legally described in the staff report, and the accompanying Findings of Fact, subject to the Zoning Commission adopting Recommendation III, and subject to the Conditions of Approval 1-3 listed in the staff report being fulfilled by the applicant.

Conditions of Approval:

1. The Final Plat of West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, shall incorporate correction of any errors or omissions noted by staff, including provision of a notification clause to purchasers regarding soil conditions.
2. The final engineering drawings, specifications and cost estimates for public improvements for West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, shall be submitted to the City Public Works Department for review and approval, including resolution of the items listed in the Inter-Office Memorandum attached to this report, prior to approval of the Final Plat.
3. An Annexation Agreement shall be prepared containing terms and conditions for annexation of the area within the Final Plat, including, but not limited to, agreement by applicant to:
 - a) install, within two years of the date of annexation, the public improvements referenced in Condition 2 above;
 - b) indemnify and hold the City harmless for any damages that may be sustained as a result of adverse soil and/or groundwater conditions;
 - c) adjust the finished grade of the lots, limit basement construction and/or install sewage grinder or injector type lift pumps in order to accommodate the sanitary sewer within the subdivision. The developer shall disclose this information to all prospective buyers of lots in the subdivision;
 - d) provide temporary cul-de-sacs per requirements of Public Works, escrow funds for the future installation of standard curb and gutter, and install a pavement patch when the temporary cul-de-sacs are removed, when future development occurs to the west;
 - e) provide an easement and construct a temporary drainage ditch along the westerly edge of the subdivision and a detention pond on the developer's property located north of subdivision;
 - f) pay all applicable fees owed as a condition of annexation, as determined in annexation agreement.

Made by: Mr. Davis
Second: Mr. Taylor

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

MOTION: RECOMMENDATION II: The Planning Advisory Board recommends the City Commission approve the Annexation of West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, legally described in the

staff report, subject to the Zoning Commission adopting Recommendation III, and subject to the Conditions of Approval 1-3 listed in the staff report being fulfilled by the applicant.

Made by: Dr. Pasek
Second: Mr. Striepe

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

ZONING COMMISSION ACTION

RECOMMENDATION III: The Zoning Commission recommends the City Commission approve rezoning property within West Ridge Addition, Phase VI, from the existing County Suburban Residential 1 to R-3 Single-family high density, upon annexation to the City, subject to the Planning Advisory Board adopting Recommendation I and II.

Made by: Ms. Patton
Second: Mr. Davis

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

Ms. Cooper advised the applicant of the next procedural steps.

Minor Subdivision – Sun River Park Addition Southwest Corner of Central Avenue West and 22nd Street Southwest

Ms. Amy reviewed the staff report for an application by property owner, Clint Buford, for a minor subdivision of the Sun River Park Addition located generally at the southwest corner of Central Avenue West and 22nd Street Southwest. Ms. Amy entered the staff report into the record. The subject property is ±1.798 acres and is zoned R-1 Single-family suburban district. The subject property is currently a vacant, undeveloped city lot, and the owner is seeking to subdivide the property into two lots in order to eventually construct a single-family residence on each lot.

To the north, east and west of the subject property is R-1 Single-family residential district, and south of the subject property is R-1 zoning as well as an R-10 mobile home park district to the southwest, where the Shade Tree mobile home park is located. Access for each new subdivided lot will be off 22nd Street Southwest. Per Public Works, the applicant may be required to provide a drainage easement and is working with Public Works on the details.

The subject property is located in Neighborhood Council 2, and information about this application was provided as a courtesy to the Council on May 29, 2013. Staff has not received any comments regarding the application. Ms. Amy reviewed the Conditions of Approval as contained in the staff report, and offered to answer any questions from the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD DISCUSSION & ACTION

MOTION: The Planning Advisory Board recommends the City Commission approve the Amended Plat of the property legally described in the staff report, subject to the following Conditions of Approval being fulfilled by the applicant:

Conditions of Approval

1. The Amended Plat of Lot 3A, Block 18, of the Amended Plat of Lot 3, Block 18, Sun River Park Addition, located in the NE ¼ Section 9, Township 20 North, Range 3 East, PMM, Cascade County, Montana shall incorporate corrections of any errors or omissions noted by Staff.
2. Any development in the subdivision is subject to review and approval by the City of Great Falls as necessary, and the applicant shall be required to submit any plans including engineering, architectural, and landscaping as required for review and approval by the City.
3. Applicant shall provide a site grading plan of the subject property for review and approval by the City Public Works Department.
4. Each property owner for lots in the subdivision shall be responsible for any current or future maintenance of their own property; the City shall not be responsible for any property maintenance in the subdivision.
5. Applicant shall work with the City's addressing department to establish a new address for the proposed residences and provide facilities for adequate mail delivery to both residences as required by the Post Office.

Made by: Mr. Striepe
Second: Mr. Taylor

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

Ms. Amy advised the applicant on the next procedural steps.

COMMUNICATIONS

Next Meeting Agenda – June 25, 2013

- None

Upcoming Planning Board Projects

- Farran Group Apartments
- Great Bear Addition No. 2 – Final Plat

Ms. Cooper said the Farran Group Apartment application should be coming in soon, and may be ready for the first Planning Advisory Board meeting in July.

Project Status:

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Finch invited the Board to attend the Transportation Plan public open house and presentation by the consultant on Wednesday, June 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the Missouri Room of the Civic Center.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Weisenburger adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY