

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION
November 25, 2014**

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:

Nate Weisenburger, Chair
Scot Davis, Vice Chair
Dana Henkel
Heidi Pasek
Sophia Sparklin
Mark Striepe

Planning Board Members absent:

Anthony Houtz
Cheryl Patton
Wyman Taylor

Planning Staff Members present:

Craig Raymond, Director P&CD
Galen Amy, Planner II
Phyllis Tryon, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Other Staff present:

Dave Dobbs, City Engineer

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

MINUTES

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

Chair Weisenburger asked if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular meeting held on November 12, 2014. Seeing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

BOARD ACTIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

46th Street North & 3rd Avenue North Rezone

Galen Amy, Planner II, presented the staff report for the rezone request for 46th Street North and 3rd Avenue North for applicant/owner Casey Cummings. Ms. Amy entered the staff report into the record. The applicant is requesting rezoning from R-3 Single-family high density to R-5 Multi-family medium density in order to construct a 12-unit multi-family apartment building. The subject property consists of 3 lots and is ± 0.62 acres and the owner proposes to build a 12-unit apartment building with a garage facility.

Ms. Amy said the subject property was previously the location of a neighborhood church and parking lot, as well as a preschool/daycare. The church was razed in 2009 and the property has been vacant since that time. The proposed project is much more dense than the adjacent neighborhoods to the north and west, but the size of the property provides enough area for the development to meet R-5 district development standards for setbacks, height, lot coverage and landscaping. Similar housing configurations exist in the immediate vicinity.

Ms. Amy reviewed details of the staff report for the proposed project. The project will come to the Design Review Board for review. There are eight Conditions of Approval listed in the staff report which include alley and stormwater improvements. Ms. Amy concluded her review of the staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board.

Ms. Sparklin asked about sidewalks within the development. Ms. Amy said staff has noted that in comments to the developer, and that the Design Review Board will review the site plan details.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Tony Houtz, CTA Inc., 219 2nd Avenue South, said he was present on behalf of the owner and would answer any questions from the Board. Mr. Striepe asked if the project would look like the apartment building in the vicinity. Mr. Houtz said it will look similar.

PROPONENTS

John Chase, 4436 3rd Avenue North, said he would like to make some observations about the proposed project. He submitted written comments, photographs, and other information, which are incorporated into the minutes of this meeting.

He said he was not exactly pleased with the prospect of a three-story structure on the subject property, but he would not oppose it if the following issues are made part of any permits or considerations by the Design Review Board.

1. I do not want a three-story structure located on the lot immediately adjacent to my house. Keep that portion of the building as far to the east as possible.

Mr. Chase said it appears by the plot layout that the building is planned for the east side of the property, and that is acceptable to him.

2. Drainage: This has been a major issue on this site. Any concentrated runoff from roofs or concrete slabs MUST NOT be allowed to percolate into the ground in the area near my house! Water pouring off the roof of the former church in the area adjacent to my house is viewed as the principal reason why the west facing wings of the church essentially detached themselves from the church and were leaning toward toward my house and the east end of my house settled 7 inches. The area is a quagmire near the property line. As far as I know, the church was abandoned and torn down, in part because of structural damage that resulted from the failure to address necessary drainage from the site. It cost me \$11,000 to have my house (foundation, footings, the whole works) raised and supported on steel piers. I don't want a repetition of that costly process.
3. The silver poplar on the southwest corner of the property was cut down several years ago and the root system is still intact and sends up shoots all over the area. My yard has essentially been decimated by shoots popping up all over the place. Please have a qualified person chemically treat or do whatever is necessary to exterminate the blasted thing. Refer to the photographs for some kind of clue as to what kind of problem it has been for me.

Mr. Chase said the project would be acceptable to him with those considerations. He asked if he should come to the meeting of the Design Review Board (DRB) for this project, and Ms. Amy stated that he is welcome to attend the meeting of the DRB, and that the information he submitted would be provided to that Board.

Jolene Bach, Great Falls Development Authority, 300 Central Avenue, said they are excited about this project and see an opportunity to work with neighbors to address concerns. They wish Mr. Cummings great success. She said Mr. Cummings will have another project in the near future.

OPPONENTS

There were no opponents.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ZONING COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Ms. Sparklin said she reviewed the stormwater comments and asked Mr. Dobbs, City Engineer to comment. Mr. Dobbs said a storm drain plan is required and should be forthcoming. Mr. Davis asked if Mr. Chase's issues would be addressed, and Mr. Dobbs said a soils report as well as storm drain plan will have to be done.

MOTION: That the Zoning Commission, based on the Findings for the Basis of Decision, recommends the City Commission approve rezoning the subject property, legally described as Lots 11-13, Block 12, Morningside Addition, Section 9, Township 20 North, Range 4 East, P.M.M., Cascade County, Montana, from the existing R-3 Single-family high density to R-5 Multi-family medium density, subject to the Conditions of Approval being fulfilled by the applicant.

Conditions of Approval:

1. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this report, and all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
2. Provide an amended plat aggregating the lots of the subject property, which shall incorporate corrections of any errors or omissions noted by Staff.
3. The applicant shall pave the alley adjacent to the subject property, in accordance with the design approved by the City Public Works Department.
4. A concrete alley apron shall be installed at 46th Street North.
5. The project architect and engineer shall submit reports and site civil plans to the City Public Works Department for review and approval.
6. Dual handicap ramps shall be installed at the southwest corner of the 3rd Avenue North and 46th Street North intersection.
7. Outdoor lighting shall have cutoff fixtures and be situated to prevent off-site light pollution.
8. If after approval the owner proposes to expand or modify the use, buildings, and/or structures, the Director of the Planning Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the finding for one or more review criteria. If such proposed changes would alter a finding, the proposal shall be submitted for review as a new development application. If such proposed change would not alter a finding, the owner shall obtain all other permits as may be required.

Made by: Dr. Pasek
Second: Ms. Sparklin

Ms. Sparklin said she thought this is a great project for Great Falls. Mr. Striepe said he appreciated the comments by Mr. Chase, and that Great Falls has a need for this type of housing. He said this project is a nice transition from commercial to residential in the area.

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

Ms. Amy explained the next steps for the developer. The recommendation by the Zoning Commission will be presented to City Commission and if approved, the project will go to the DRB.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

COMMUNICATIONS

Next Meeting Agenda – Tuesday, December 9, 2014

- 2nd Avenue South – Block 414 – Rezone
- Heritage Tourism Planning update

Project Status:

- Northview Addition, Phase 9 – City Commission Public Hearing Dec. 16, 2014

- Mitchells' Crash Repair Rezone – City Commission Public Hearing Dec. 16, 2014

Petitions and Applications Received:

- West Ridge Phase VII – Major Subdivision, Annexation & Zoning
- East Great Falls Retail Center

Board Training

- Board/Commission Training – conducted by MSU Local Government Center – Wed., Dec. 10, 2014, 6-8:00 p.m., Civic Center

Board Invitation

- Historic Preservation Advisory Committee holiday party – Tuesday, Dec. 16, 5:30-8:00 p.m., Paris Gibson Square

Mr. Raymond presented information on building permit activity for this year. As a comparison, in 2013, the Building Permit division handled \$46,726,000 in building valuations through the end of October. This year through the end of October, we are at \$73,300,000 in building valuations, and he said the scale of the projects is fairly large and requires significant staff time. Applications are continuing to come in and he said this is an exciting and busy time.

Chair Weisenburger said someone recently noted to him how many building cranes can be seen in the community. Mr. Raymond said that although Calumet is spending millions on development, none of that comes through the Building Permit division of the City, so the building valuations for this year do not include anything from Calumet.

Upcoming Planning Advisory Board Opening

Mr. Raymond said the Board was welcome to encourage applicants to the Planning Advisory Board, as Mr. Taylor's term will be up at the end of December.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Weisenburger adjourned the meeting at 3:33 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY