

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION  
March 24, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Scot Davis at 3:04 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of the Civic Center.

**ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE**

Planning Board Members present:

Scot Davis, Vice Chair  
Dana Henkel  
Anthony Houtz  
Sophia Sparklin  
Mark Striepe

Planning Board Members absent:

Heidi Pasek  
Cheryl Patton  
Nate Weisenburger, Chair

Planning Staff Members present:

Lee Nellis, FAICP, Deputy Director P&CD  
Garrett Norman, Planner I  
Andrew Finch, Sr. Transportation Planner  
Phyllis Tryon, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Other Staff present:

Dave Dobbs, City Engineer

Mr. Nellis 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.\*\**

Vice Chair Davis asked if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 24, 2015. Seeing none, Mr. Striepe moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. Henkel. All being in favor, the minutes were approved.

## **BOARD ACTIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING**

### **Great Falls Rescue Mission Family Center – Conditional Use Permit 408 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South**

Garrett Norman, Planner I, reviewed the staff report for the application by the Great Falls Rescue Mission to construct an Emergency Shelter on a vacant lot located at 408 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South. Mr. Norman entered the staff report into the record.

The proposed project consists of three floors for a new Family Center with offices, medical exam rooms, a child care room, kitchen and dining rooms, as well as a total of 114 beds for homeless families. The proposed shelter would be located between the Baatz Building and the Bighorn Outdoor Specialists store.

The applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the construction and operation of an Emergency Shelter, pursuant to Chapter 20 of Title 17 of the Official Code of the City of Great Falls. An Emergency Shelter is defined in the code as a building that is used or is intended to provide temporary housing and ancillary services to primary indigent, needy, homeless or transient individuals.

Improvements to the subject property will include 6 street trees and a new 15-foot wide sidewalk that will run the length of the property. The subject property is located in Neighborhood Council 7. Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood Council Coordinator, itemized the project on the Council's March 9, 2015 agenda. The Council voted to support the project. To date, staff has not received any comment about the proposed project. The Design Review Board approved the design of the proposed project on March 9, 2015.

Mr. Norman briefly reviewed the Basis of the Findings of Fact as listed in the staff report, and said the Conditions of Approval, which are a cooperative result which satisfies various City Department requirements, are also in the staff report. Mr. Norman concluded his review of the staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board.

## **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Vice Chair Davis opened the floor for the public question and answer session. There were no questions from the public.

## **PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION**

Max Grebe, 1105 11<sup>th</sup> St NW, architect representing the Great Falls Rescue Mission, said they tried to be sensitive to the C-4 zoning district and the downtown district when designing this project. He said the project will be an asset to the downtown district and the community as a whole.

Jim Kiser, 764 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave NW, Director of the Great Falls Rescue Mission, thanked everyone for how this process has worked. He said this has been a 3-year journey in which about 26 families a month have been turned away from the Mission, and they have been working toward a solution. He said that the existing women and family shelter will become women only, and all families will be located in the new shelter.

## **PROPOSERS**

There were no proposers.

## **OPPOSERS**

There were no opposers.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **ZONING COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

Ms. Henkel said this fills a need in the community. Ms. Sparklin said she is looking forward to seeing the project succeed.

**MOTION:** The Zoning Commission recommends the City Commission approve the Emergency Shelter Conditional Use Permit for Lot 2A, Block 414, Great Falls Original Townsite, Section 12, Township 20 North, Range 3 East, P.M.M., City of Great Falls, Cascade County, Montana, the Findings of Fact and Conditions of Approval located in the staff report.

Made by: Ms. Sparklin  
Second: Ms. Henkel

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

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

### **Amendment #1 – Federal Fiscal Years 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Henkel said she must recuse herself from a vote on this agenda item. Due to a lack of a quorum for approval, the item was continued for the next Planning Advisory Board meeting.

### **PRESENTATION: A PLANNER'S TOUR OF GREAT FALLS – Round 2 Presenter: Lee Nellis, FAICP, Deputy Director of P&CD**

Mr. Nellis presented Round 2 of A Planner's Tour of Great Falls, focusing on development issues for the southeast portion of Great Falls. This and the surrounding area of Great Falls includes portions of Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB), the eastern commercial development around 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, and residential areas as well.

Mr. Nellis reviewed a number of current projects as well as potential projects for the southeast area, noting there is a lot of vacant commercial property that will probably become developed over the long term. He said constraints for development in this area include slopes, soils issues, storm water management, potential MAFB encroachment, and a general lack of connectivity with streets and sidewalks. Mr. Nellis said that on the plus side, storm water management can incorporate recreational areas and wildlife habitat. He touched on transportation concerns,

public service concerns, land use patterns, and the need for a city to have appropriate tools for successful planning.

Mr. Nellis concluded his presentation and offered to answer any questions from the Board. Ms. Sparklin said she has heard developers say it is complicated to work with the City, and she asked if currently there was more partnership between the City and the developers. Mr. Nellis said that a lot of contentions surrounding the Design Review Board have been resolved, and staff works hard to ensure a good process. As the need becomes evident, changes can also be made to the City Code.

Mr. Striepe asked Mr. Nellis to speak about soil issues. Mr. Nellis said soil tends to be an issue in the City due to glacial till and clay soils. Mr. Striepe asked how soil issues relates to commercial properties. Mr. Nellis said that the Building Code has certain standards and people have not been accustomed to building to the code, which causes friction. He said we cannot change our local soils, and sometimes it is expensive to build well and meet the code requirements. He expects this to be an ongoing concern.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### Planning Advisory Board Application

- Recommendation to City Commission

There were two applications to serve on the Planning Advisory Board to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mitch Stelling. Ms. Sparklin said that Josh Summer is a knowledgeable civil engineer, and she feels a civil engineer would serve this Board well. The Board voted by secret ballot and selected Josh Summer by a vote of 4 to 1 as their recommendation to City Commission to fill the current vacancy.

MOTION: That Josh Summer is recommended to City Commission to be appointed to the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission.

Made by: Ms. Sparklin  
Second: Mr. Houtz

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

### Next Meeting Agenda – Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Due to a lack of quorum to consider the TIP Amendment at this meeting, the TIP Amendment #1 will be the agenda for April 14.

### Project Status:

- None

### Petitions and Applications Received:

- CHS – Annexation and Zoning
- West Ridge Phase VII – Major Subdivision, Annexation & Zoning
- East Industrial Park TIF Industrial District (AgriTech) Application

- Central Montana Agricultural & Technology Park TIF Industrial District (Great Bear) Application

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

---

CHAIRMAN

---

SECRETARY