

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION  
July 28, 2015**

**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  
Peter Fontana  
Anthony Houtz  
Sophia Sparklin  
Mark Striepe

Planning Board Members absent:

Heidi Pasek  
Cheryl Patton

Planning Staff Members present:

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

Other Staff present:

Sara Sexe, City Attorney

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 July 14, 2015. Seeing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

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

### **West Ridge Addition – Phase VII Final Plat, Annexation & Zoning**

Ms. Galen Steffens presented the staff report for the application by S & L Development for West Ridge Addition, Phase VII, final plat, annexation and zoning. The subject property is ±58.749 acres of vacant, undeveloped cropland with a proposed zoning of R-3 Single-family high density. The area of the final plat of Phase VII is ±12.46 acres.

Ms. Steffens reviewed details of the staff report and provided background on this application. At the conclusion of a public hearing on June 9, 2015, the Planning Advisory Board recommended the City Commission approve the Preliminary Plat of West Ridge Phases VII – XI, and recommended approval of annexation of the subject property, and the Zoning Commission also approved assigning a zoning classification of R-3 Single-family high density district upon annexation to the City. During a meeting held July 7, 2015, the City Commission conditionally approved the Preliminary Plat of West Ridge Addition subdivision and set a public hearing for August 18, 2015.

Ms. Steffens said that the Draft Final Plat of the subject property consists of 38 lots and the dedication of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue Northeast. Expansion of the City limits come with concerns about how the surrounding area will be developed in the future and what necessary infrastructure and street connectivity will be. As a result, the property owner takes on the responsibility of addressing numerous infrastructure and service concerns incrementally as the phases are final platted over a number of years. The owner is participating in area wide traffic and storm water studies and is required to take a cooperative approach and work with the owner of the Thaniel Addition to the west on the recommendations from these studies.

Ms. Steffens reviewed information on roadways in the project area including the traffic study, utility information, storm water management options, and park land obligation information. The subject property is located in Neighborhood Council 3; the owner presented information to the Council on October 2, 2014 and the Council voted in favor of the project. The Council was provided an update of the project via email on June 8, 2015, and again on July 23, 2015. To date, staff has received numerous comments and questions from the public regarding Thaniel Addition, West Ridge Addition Phase VII-XI, and development in this area in general. Concerns expressed include, but are not limited to, traffic impact, property and home values, storm drainage, park improvements and maintenance, zoning standards and the timing of the project planning process.

The Conditions of Approval are listed in the staff report and include general code compliance, Public Works Department review, and the Improvement Agreement. Ms. Steffens corrected the Recommendation provided in the staff report in that this is a request for the Final Plat of West Ridge Addition – Phase VII, not Phase VI as written.

Ms. Steffens concluded her review of the staff report and offered to answer any questions from the Board. Chair Weisenburger asked which street was on the north end of the subject property. Ms. Steffens said it is 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Northeast. Chair Weisenburger asked about timing on development of collector roadways in the area and coordination with developers. Ms. Steffens said the traffic study will be assessing these issues. She said 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast is designed

to handle more traffic capacity than it currently sees. Once additional information is received, the timing of buildout will become more clear but it will be down the road.

### **PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION**

Leanne Bailey of S & L Development said she lives in the subject area and does not find traffic to be a problem. She said it's a great neighborhood and this development needs to happen.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeremiah Johnson, 1900 Whispering Ridge Drive, said he represented the Great Falls Development Authority and that GFDA is in favor of this project.

### **PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

**MOTION:** The Planning Advisory Board recommends the City Commission approve the Final Plat of West Ridge Addition – Phase VII, legally described in the staff report, and the accompanying Findings of Fact, subject to the Conditions of Approval being fulfilled by the applicant.

#### Conditions of Approval:

1. The Final Plat of the West Ridge Addition phases shall incorporate correction of any errors or omissions noted by staff.
2. The final engineering drawings, specifications and cost estimates for public improvements for the West Ridge Addition phases shall be submitted to the City Public Works Department for review and approval, prior to consideration of the Final Plat of any West Ridge Addition phase.
3. An Improvement Agreement shall be executed and filed containing terms and conditions for annexation Final Plat phases, including, but not limited to, agreement by Owner to:
  - a) install, within three 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) Provide temporary storm water management facilities until such time as the final detention area that will serve the subject property is secured and construct all of the storm water conveyance improvement to drain the site to the future onsite detention pond, whether they be surface conveyance and/or inlets and pipe;
  - d) reimburse the City its proportionate share of the cost of installing a new lift station and force mains to serve the property;
  - e) pay its proportionate share of the cost of an area storm water master plan;
  - f) pay its proportionate share of a North Great Falls transportation study;
  - g) pay all applicable fees owed as a condition of annexation, as determined in Improvement Agreement.

Made by: Mr. Striepe  
Second: Mr. Davis

Ms. Sparklin said that Great Falls needs residential lots to move forward to serve housing needs and urged the Planning Advisory Board to approve this project.

Mr. Striepe said he spent time driving the area due to local traffic concerns, and he did not think it was nearly as bad as some public comment on the Thaniel Addition would lead one to believe.

Chair Weisenburger said our traffic congestion is relative as compared to larger metro areas, and that rush hour probably has more problems than other times. However, hearing that there are additional traffic studies to be done, he said we are headed in the right direction to address these issues.

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

Ms. Steffens advised the applicant on the next procedural steps for this project.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### Next Meeting Agenda – Tuesday, August 11, 2015

- None

### Project Status:

- Thaniel Addition – Final Plat of Phase 1, Annexation and Zoning approved by City Commission on July 21, 2015
- Amended Plat of Replat of Lincoln Heights approved by City Commission on July 21, 2015

Mr. Raymond provided an update of projects moving forward in the City. On July 21, the City Commission rescinded their previous decision on Thaniel Addition, reopened the item for discussion and then voted to approve the project. At the same meeting, City Commission approved the amended plat of the Replat of Lincoln Heights.

### Petitions & Applications Received:

- Faith Lutheran Church – Annexation, Zoning, CUP

Mr. Raymond invited interested members of the Board to volunteer to participate in the interview process for a new Deputy Director of Planning & Community Development.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chair Weisenburger adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

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SECRETARY