

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION
May 24, 2016**

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 was taken, and a quorum of the Board was not present. A recess was taken in effort to contact absent Board members. At 3:24 p.m. roll call was taken again to establish a quorum was present.

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Planning Board Members present:

Nate Weisenburger, Chair
Peter Fontana
Anthony Houtz
Mark Striepe
Michael Wedekind

Planning Board Members absent:

Scot Davis, Vice Chair
Keith Nelson
Cheryl Patton
Sophia Sparklin

Planning Staff Members present:

Craig Raymond, Director P&CD
Tom Micuda, Deputy Directory P&CD
Galen Steffens, Planner II
Gregory Gordos, Planner I
Erin Borland, Planner I
Connie Rosas, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Other Staff present:

Sara Sexe, City Attorney
Joseph Cik, Assistant 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 Nate Weisenburger asked if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular meeting held on April 12, 2016. Seeing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

BOARD ACTIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

Smelter Avenue Apartments: Rezone and Annexation

Mr. Gordos entered the staff report into the record for the applicant, Farran Realty Partners. The subject property is currently zoned in Cascade County as County Mixed Use, and upon annexation, the proposed zoning would be R-6 Multi-family High Density for a 216 unit apartment complex. The site is flat and undeveloped, and the first request is for annexation of 9.209 acres, as it currently exists as an unincorporated enclave surrounded by incorporated properties. Upon annexation, the proposed zoning request is compatible with the existing adjacent uses and will provide a transition between the industrial uses to the east, existing R-6 Multi-family uses to the south, and single-family homes found to the north of the site.

The preliminary site plan shows nine 24-unit buildings at an undetermined height and three stories each. Four buildings surround the pool and clubhouse, with sixty-four carports shown, though the applicant may add more. Mr. Gordos reviewed the basis of decision for the Board's consideration as listed in the staff report.

The subject property is contiguous with City limits and the proposed annexation is a logical and efficient extension of City boundaries, while at the same time reducing the number of enclaves, which the Growth Policy strongly encourages. The proposed project is consistent with and supports the social, environmental, and physical portions of the City's Growth Policy. The subject property is also located in Neighborhood Council #3, and the Council voted all in favor to support the project. Mr. Gordos reviewed some of the multiple conditions of approval listed in the staff report, which include general code compliance, Public Works review, and an Improvement Agreement. He then offered to answer any questions.

Mr. Wedekind asked if the county needed to agree to the annexation, and Mr. Raymond said they do not.

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Mr. Weisenburger asked if a parcel adjacent to the subject property is part of the annexation, and Mr. Gordos said no, it is owned by MDT and currently not in City limits. Mr. Weisenburger asked if there was a way to encourage them to zone and annex that particular parcel into City limits as a way to eliminate these types of enclaves. Mr. Gordos said there have been extensive discussions with MDT about annexing that parcel into City limits, but due to issues with financing they did not do so.

Mr. Weisenburger also asked about the roundabout and whether or not the impact has been positive on the traffic studies done in that neighborhood. Jana Cooper, TDH Engineering, representing the applicant, said the traffic study done did show that this particular development would not increase traffic in the roundabout; however, the question on how the roundabout was functioning as a whole was not part of the study. Mr. Dobbs, City Engineer, said that intersection

was originally a four way stop, and with the roundabout it functions much better than it did before.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jana Cooper, TD&H Engineering, representing the owner, Farran Realty Partners, said Farran Realty Partners also developed the Talus Apartments, and they take pride in their developments and creating nice places for people to live. The development will be a garden style, with earth toned colors and a more modern feel than the Talus Apartments. The proposed project will offer another great housing option, and support the local building industry as they are looking at local contractors.

Kelley Aline, Great Falls Development Authority (GFDA), said on behalf of the GFDA, they fully support this type of housing development.

Brad Livingston, Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, said they also stand in support of this project. He said in speaking with the residents of Great Falls and the airmen at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Great Falls is in serious need of affordable housing. He commended the developer and said he hopes to see more projects to come.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

MOTION: That the Planning Advisory Board recommend the City Commission approve the annexation of the subject property located at Lot 4, Block 1, Division Addition, NE1/4 Section 2, Township 20 North, Range 3 East, P.M. MT Cascade County, MT.

Made by: Mr. Fontana
Second: Mr. Striepe

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

MOTION: That the Zoning Commission recommend the City Commission approve the establishment of zoning R-6 Multi-family high density for the subject property located at Lot 4, Block 1 Division Addition.

Made by: Mr. Striepe
Second: Mr. Houtz

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion passed.

After discussion, Ms. Sexe asked that the conditions of approval be included in the motions, and that the motions be amended to ensure the vote is the same.

MOTION: That the Zoning Commission recommend the City Commission approve the establishment of zoning R-6 Multi-family high density for the subject property located at Lot 4, Block 1, Division Addition, including the conditions of approval as listed in the staff report.

Made by: Mr. Striepe
Second: Mr. Houtz

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

MOTION: That the Planning Advisory Board recommend the City Commission approve the annexation of the subject property located at Lot 4, Block 1 Division Addition, NE1/4 Section 2, Township 20 North, Range 3 East, P.M. MT Cascade County, MT, including the conditions of approval as listed in the staff report.

Made by: Mr. Fontana
Second: Mr. Houtz

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

COMMUNICATIONS

Next Meeting Agenda – Tuesday, June 14, 2016

- None

Project Status:

- None

Petitions & Applications Received:

- Skyline Heights- minor subdivision

Financial Report

- Third Quarter Planning and Historic Preservation Division Financial Report 2015-16

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Nate Weisenburger adjourned the meeting at 3:54 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY