

On Thursday, October 15, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., a regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order in-person and via Zoom. Roll Call. Present: Chair Rene Morris (Zoom), Doug Freed, Aurelio Gallardo, Skip McCloud, Jamie Schwingle (Zoom) and Joe Strabala-Bright. Absent: Steve Munson.

Also present were: Planners Dustin Wolff, Brian Carranza and Mark Sauer of Mead and Hunt, Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt, Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Alderman John Stauter, Alderman Retha Elston, City Clerk Teri Sathoff, and Assistant City Clerk Monique Castillo.

Freed made a motion to approve the minutes from September 17, 2020 as presented. The motion was seconded by Schwingle. Voting – Ayes: Freed, Gallardo, McCloud, Schwingle, Strabala-Bright and Morris. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Schmidt noted Council approved the recommendation to annex the Steelton Subdivision – Group 10.

At 7:01 p.m., Chair Morris opened the continuation of the Public Hearing from September 17, 2020 regarding a request to rezone with a special use to allow for a cell tower at 2601 E. Lincolnway/Sterling Moose Family Center.

Zollinger noted the city is waiting on additional documentation from the petitioner and suggested we allow for public comment but leave item tabled for the next regular meeting.

Kenyon Thompson, Sterling Moose Administrator, introduced Dewey Beck, John Ordean (past Moose Administrators) and William Schuttler, Moose member. Thompson explained the works of the organization and how they generously contribute to the community.

Beck noted cell towers are the key to the future, without cell towers, electronic programs such as Zoom would not exist. Not only are these towers financially beneficial, they are essential to the world today.

Schuttler explained, as a Moose member, he is well aware of the financial contributions of the organization and a cell tower would be a great source of income.

Sherry Reitzel, 2802 Woodlawn Road, is not opposed to the concept of the tower, but is in opposition of a tower at this location. Reitzel noted, this particular tower would be right in her back yard and would decrease property values.

Katelyn Ekquist, 1608 E 1<sup>st</sup> Street, is in favor of the cell tower and the incentives it could bring to the area. She stated it could draw people to the community and with COVID19 restrictions, could be beneficial to all that are required to work remotely.

Steve Munson entered the meeting via Zoom at 7:10 p.m.

The continuation of the Public Hearing was closed at 7:11 p.m.

McCloud made a motion to table to the next regular meeting on November 19, 2020, the continuation of this Public Hearing, to hear the request from the petitioner to rezone with a special use to allow for a cell tower at 2601 E Lincolnway/Sterling Moose Family Center. The motion was seconded by Stabala-Bright. Voting – Ayes: Gallardo, McCloud, Munson, Schwingle, Strabala-Bright, Morris and Freed. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Chair Morris opened a Public Hearing at 7:12 p.m. to hear the recommendation to Annex/Zone property contiguous to the city; Steelton Subdivision – Group 11.

Zollinger noted this is the continuation through this subdivision. He stated the last group is Group 15 which will be a catch all, as several of the parcels cannot be annexed until wholly surrounded.

Zollinger reminded the commission we had to do these annexations in groups to make sure all properties were contiguous. He stated, as with the previous annexations/rezones, all properties in Group 11, have sewer access and pre-annexation agreements stating they would hook on when they became contiguous.

Wolff noted, one parcel currently has a split zoning, 503 Oak Avenue, rezoning to SR-8 with the rest of the parcels will keep all these properties legal and conforming, allowing for the smallest amount of setbacks.

James and Mary Lawrence, 503 Oak Avenue, inquired about residents with livestock and if this will continue to be allowed. Zollinger noted, there is a city ordinance that covers this matter and will be addressed accordingly once annexed.

With no further discussion by staff, commissioners or guests, Chair Morris noted publications were made, fees were not applicable, notification requirements were met, signage notifying the public of the hearing was not applicable. There were no phone calls. There were no written comments were received.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:19 p.m.

Munson made a motion to approve the Annexation and Rezoning of the properties contiguous to the City, in the Steelton Subdivision – Group 11. The motion was seconded by Gallardo. Voting – Ayes: McCloud, Munson, Schwingle, Strabala-Bright, Morris, Gallardo and Freed. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Munson inquired on the possibility to wrap up these annexations, by year end, with the technological capabilities we have. Zollinger noted while there is no incentive, it may be possible to expedite a few but noted we also rely on the City Council schedule. Schmidt noted with the schedule of City Council, it would be unlikely to expedite.

Wolff stated Carranza and Sauer will be reviewing the West End and North End gateways. There is really no context to review. He noted they are looking for feedback as to the types of land uses envisioned in both areas.

Carranza reviewed the existing land use of the West End gateway and noted there is approximately 101 acres (19%) of land available for redevelopment. He added 36% of land use is Industrial of which Halo expands over 27 acres.

Wolff noted at one end of the gateway we have Industrial sights that were architecturally designed, at the other end we have sights not as welcoming. We need to look at ways to re-locate the not so welcoming sights or offer ways to better screen the properties.

Wolff noted local employers have admitted to avoiding these not so welcoming areas when taking prospective employees on tours of the city.

Wolff wonders how we can be better neighbors and raise the bar. Help clean up these problem areas and help our local businesses thrive. He added the business community should spearhead these conversations, which may be difficult, as businesses have been operating this way for years.

Carranza stated 19% (100 acres) of the existing land use is shovel ready, owned by GSDC. He noted the importance to think long term as to what we want to attract to these areas. Wolff noted this is a very different time as we once were able to attract developers with 5-10 acres of land, now developers want nothing less than 20 acres.

Carranza explained industrial and residential conflicts, stating we need to determine what we want in specific areas, industrial or residential as we cannot have both.

Currently 11% of the land use is residential with no curb/gutter or sidewalks and developed under county subdivision standards. How do we connect these areas to the community and urbanize the roadways? 2% of the land use is commercial. This is a mix of community and neighborhood businesses. A majority of the businesses have property maintenance issues and require repairs as first impressions are critical.

Carranza noted key considerations here are to establish/preserve growth opportunities for industrial land use, develop connections and improve aesthetics.

There was a brief discussion regarding the residential/industrial conflicts and whether the group was in support of industrial conversions, leaving the area as is, adding industrial elsewhere or preserve and mitigate the current land use. As it appears, the group is in favor of preserving the residential areas and converting industrial elsewhere.

Carranza inquired about roadways and how the group felt about current conditions, adding green space or curb and gutters. Strabala-Bright wondered about current property values in these areas and if improvements would be worth the investment. Shumard

noted Dillon Avenue was improved with curb and gutters and it gave the area an entirely different look, definitely worth the investment.

Sauer shared his thoughts on the West End gateway before reviewing the North End gateway. He noted the West End gateway is the closest area to the interstate and it is important to have bigger parcels for industrial land while maintaining smaller parcels as they work hand in hand. It appears the residential parcels may have been there first so it is important to support existing land use while adding green infrastructure to provide better access to these areas. With reference to the park lands, Sauer noted we need consider how we will be able to gain access to the river from this area.

Sauer reviewed the North End gateway stating the existing land use is a good mix but there is no land use pattern which makes it appear disorganized. We need to define the land use and make neighborhoods unique.

Currently the largest land use in this area is agricultural at 40% (168 acres), followed by residential at 18%, 10% is Industrial and 14% is a regional/community commercial mix. Sauer noted it is important to understand the interactions of the community to determine the main focus. Is the land use in this area fully occupied? Is there room to alter current land use? Do we add more residential as 8% is institutional and people are drawn to moving close to schools?

Sauer noted key considerations here are to develop a land use plan and provide connections between developments. We also need to determine how vacant and agricultural lands will develop and focus on improving aesthetics of the gateway.

Wolff noted the intent is not to increase infrastructure but add when improvements are incorporated. He also noted annexing Wahl Clipper is vital to the cities growth.

Wolff asked the commission to think about how people perceive this area of the city. Strabala-Bright noted this is a business district that is not well defined. He added it makes sense, with the high traffic and roads, to focus on keeping this area commercial and add residential.

The next Plan Commission meeting is November 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. We will continue the Public Hearings for the Steelton Subdivision; Group 12 and continue discussion with the Comprehensive Plan. Hopefully we will all be able to meet in person.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Monique Castillo  
Assistant City Clerk