

CITY OF ELKO
PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
6:00 P.M., P.S.T., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011
ELKO CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
1751 COLLEGE AVENUE, ELKO, NEVADA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Thompson.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jeff Thompson, Rich Perry, John Anderson,
Doug Owen, Alene Sutherland

Absent/Excused: Reece Keener, Brent Elmore

City Staff: Delmo Andreozzi, Assistant City Manager
Ed Wynes, City Planner
Scott Wilkinson, Development Manager
Mike Hecht, Deputy Fire Chief/Fire Marshal
Josh Carson, Deputy Fire Marshal
Ryan Limberg, Utilities Director
Eric Howes, Parks and Recreation Director

I. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

This agenda item is to provide time for the general public to address the Planning Commission regarding items of concern not specifically listed on the agenda. Action cannot be taken at this time, but a matter can be set on the agenda for a future meeting, as appropriate.

There were no public comments made at this time.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Review, consideration, and possible action to approve Resolution No. 01-11, a Resolution of the Elko City Planning Commission updating the Land Use, Streets and Highways, and Parks, Trails and Open Space components and maps of the current Elko City Master Plan along with adopting new components and maps for Arts and Culture, and Recreation, and matters related thereto. **ACTION ITEM**

Chairman Thompson noted since this was not posted in the newspaper there will no action taken on this item tonight.

Laura Hanson, CRSA, noted I put together a presentation that went through all the objectives including best practices, but it got to be too long. Instead, we are just going to answer all your questions, make sure the plan includes all of your ideas, etc. When we come back March 15 we can forward a recommendation to the City Council.

Mr. Hanson did a brief presentation of the Master Plan update and public comments received throughout the process. The current Elko City Master Plan includes a couple chapters that were not part of the update scope of work, so a template will be provided to format those chapters to look the same. Two areas were identified for neighborhood mixed-use, which is a place where you can have small scale commercial, townhomes, small apartment buildings, a convenience store, etc. all in one neighborhood. The Future Land Use Map is a guide of what you'd like to work towards in the future. It's not what will legally happen right now, that's the Zoning Code and Zoning Map. The Zoning Code needs to be updated in a few places. Creating the downtown mixed-use designation will not immediately correct the problem of non-conforming uses. There needs to be a trigger such as people requesting a zone change, conditional use permit, etc. Multi-family residential areas have been identified along arterial and collector roadways and also within the downtown area.

Mr. Wilkinson noted the new Land Use Map has a medium density designation, which allows for two more units per acre compared to the current low density. There were several sections of the city updated to the medium density designation. A more significant change was the mixed-use designation for the downtown area. We also added some mixed-use on 5th Street. We added some commercial and industrial uses on the far east end of the city where the current map had no uses. We also showed some industrial along the un-extended Ruby Vista Drive, and Statice Street. The rail property on the east end of the city used to be industrial, but we don't show any use for it and the rest is open space. Our new designation of highway commercial is big box, planned type commercial, and a lot of the development on the east end of the city is smaller scale than that, so we may want to just change that to general commercial. The future Jennings Way is a neighborhood center and the current Jennings Way is medium and high density because of the road classifications. I was wondering if we should show the two bigger parcels adjacent to Mountain City Highway that are currently in the county as commercial. We had a lot of high density in the drainage area near North 5th Street. Some of that was changed to open space.

Commissioner Perry noted there was previous discussion about having swaths of high density in between the commercial and low density along Mountain City Highway near Jennings Way, but it looks like that didn't happen and it's all just commercial.

Mr. Wilkinson noted it's zoned Planned Commercial. It may be our preferred use, but that would conflict with the zoning. There is some high density residential at the intersection of Ruby Vista and College. That is based on road classifications, but we do need to do some research to determine if the sale of the property prohibited that type of use. We classified the rail property that we're looking to purchase on the east end of downtown as industrial. The section of city to the right of that had some industrial, but we changed it to open space and medium density residential. The section below that was public, open space and high density residential, but we changed the high density to medium.

Mr. Andreozzi noted that is near the current landfill and we're trying to expand that. The area has a lot of steep topography, so we may want to take a second look and see if we even want medium density there.

Commissioner Perry asked why it wasn't just shown as public if it's for expansion.

Mr. Andreozzi noted we could only get the northwest quarter for expansion.

Mr. Wilkinson noted there is a little bit of high density along Powder House Road. I think we need to go in where we have the RMH along Pinion Road and show that as high density. We have it as medium right now. It would be nice to have some references to the Sections on the map. It's easier to locate ourselves.

Ms. Hanson asked if we had a GIS file that was Section-lined.

Mr. Wilkinson noted we should. The previous map had all the Sections on it. On South 5th we replaced commercial with mixed-use. We left the east end of Water Street industrial because there are several blocks which are currently industrial uses. The rail property we're looking to purchase on the west end of downtown we made general commercial. We replaced the high and low density near the airport property with medium. The general commercial near I-80 and Mountain City Highway was changed to highway commercial. There is another neighborhood center northwest of the end of the airport property along the future Cattle Drive. West of the airport property is industrial and highway commercial, but there may be some transitions as that develops. We need to show the W.R.F. parcel as either industrial or public. The future Errecart Boulevard is another neighborhood center. Right now the area around the hospital is all zoned Planned Commercial, but we show that as industrial and changed the low density residential to medium.

Ms. Hanson noted it's not heavy industrial. The idea was medical laboratories, etc.

Mr. Wilkinson noted the area to the east of the hospital is commercial, high and medium density residential rather than low density. Exit 298 we're still showing industrial. The west end of Bullion Road changed to medium density due to the county development.

Ms. Hanson noted the reason we went to medium density is due to research showing densities lower than about eight units per acre is really expensive for communities to maintain. The sweet spot is about 8 – 12 units per acre. That is a little too dense for Elko. Communities want to have more commercial property, but the more commercial space you have available it dilutes the property values and the demand. You don't get the strong clusters that do produce the economic strength. You have a lot of developable, but already zoned commercial acreage within the city as is.

Mr. Wilkinson noted the neighborhood commercial centers are consistent with the concept presented in the plan and seem logical based on the future proposed roads.

Mr. Wynes asked if the potential new Indian colony property was taken into account.

Ms. Hanson noted we discussed it and identified it as medium density residential. If there are specific plans then we need to make sure this reflects what they have planned.

Mr. Wynes noted there is a commercial node and a cemetery.

Ms. Hanson noted we should identify that. There is a small pink star that's a potential location for a future cemetery for the City of Elko. There is also a green star for a future ball field complex.

Commissioner Perry asked if there was any low density in the city limits now.

Ms. Hanson noted it was changed to the medium density.

A member of the audience asked if there were any on and off ramps planned for the future.

Ms. Hanson noted there were two planned and pointed them out. She explained the symbols on the Future Transportation System map.

A member of the audience asked which one would go in first.

Ms. Hanson noted she couldn't answer that.

Mr. Wilkinson noted they are very conceptual. The previous map showed four.

Ms. Hanson noted that would be a Federal process working with NDOT and the Federal Highways Administration. It's a big process.

Mr. Andreozzi noted the one on the west is for making the airport property more accessible. The one in the middle of the city is to relieve some of the mine traffic, etc. on Mountain City Highway. Interchanges cost about \$30 million to build. That could also provide some connectivity to the college as the college continues to be a civic center in our community.

Mr. Wilkinson noted we still need to work on the vacant property acreage a little bit because it changed significantly from our previous draft and we're not sure why that happened. We also have some comment from our Utility Department. We're going to be working on it through the next week.

Ms. Hanson noted there should be a new draft a week and a half or so before the March 15 meeting, so there is time to look at it before voting to adopt it.

Mr. Wilkinson asked if they could use track changes for the new draft.

Commissioner Perry noted a lot of my comments are little grammar, syntax and wording things, so I will just hand them to you. On page 38 of Land Use, the fourth paragraph mentions "monster homes". I've never seen this in Elko. Does that really need to be there?

Ms. Hanson noted it's happening in a lot of places, but maybe you don't need to worry about it.

Mr. Wilkinson noted we're merging lots to accommodate larger dwellings right now.

Commissioner Perry noted in the Tree Streets that was true because the lots were 25'x100', so most houses are built on two of them. Maybe the best thing to do is just leave it in there.

Ms. Hanson noted it doesn't even necessarily need to be a large house it's just the fact of how does it affect the neighbors if they buy in a certain zoning designation and they expect homes of a certain size or to be able to have a view, etc.

Commissioner Perry noted it affects the density.

Ms. Hanson noted it can also affect your property tax and what you're going to collect as a city.

Commissioner Perry noted page 47, second paragraph mentions "development rights". Are we anywhere close to wanting to have that?

Ms. Hanson noted we talked about that one as a group and decided it is a complicated process, but it can be a very good tool for you. It has to be set up very carefully. Elko's probably not ready for that yet, but we decided to leave it in here under a best practice as a tool that's available. Think of the best practices as your toolbox.

Commissioner Perry noted page 36, second paragraph mentions development within the County must adhere to the development standards in the Elko County Code. I think you meant to say city. If I understand that, near or adjacent to the city, is that what you're trying to say?

Ms. Hanson noted I think what I meant to say was it will follow the County standards which are usually less restrictive. I'll rework that paragraph. The idea is to direct the appropriate kind of development to the City and not have something happen just outside your borders, and then annex it at some point and have it not match up.

Mr. Wilkinson noted I looked at it as a cautionary statement that if our Code's too restrictive we will push development out.

Mr. Andreozzi noted the City does have some influence on development; anything that develops within a mile of our community. Generally you see those as a conditional use or zone change. We wouldn't see something like a single family dwelling that only requires a building permit.

Mr. Wilkinson noted there is parceling and subdivision going on out by the water reclamation facilities right now where the streets are not being developed to City standards.

Commissioner Perry noted page 48 shows the definitions of residential densities and the zoning districts that correspond to that. We plan on making a multi-family zoning district for high density. Should we add that in here?

Ms. Hanson noted you have an R3 now, but I don't know that it's identified on the map anywhere. What I would recommend is retiring the R zone in favor of more distinct zones. You would go in and change zoning with the uses that are occurring now, or you can do away with the zone and the uses would be legal non-conforming until they need a building permit,

conditional use permit, etc. You can go in and paint the R3 zone to specific areas where you would like to see it and then the rest of the city becomes a little more restrictive.

Mr. Wynes noted it would be impossible to get everybody to go out of the R zone, but we can do away with the zone except for property that's already zoned that way. They can do everything they want under the R zone, except going to multi-family.

Ms. Hanson asked if Mr. Wynes was suggesting updating the existing R zone to eliminate the problem of conditional use.

Mr. Wynes noted that's correct. The City Council would not be in favor of going out and mass zoning. I think it would be easier to clean up the R zone, but request the applicants specify R1, R2, or R3.

Commissioner Perry noted R3 requires a conditional use permit.

Ms. Hanson noted the R3 would need some updating too then.

Mr. Wilkinson noted the Master Plan's not force of law where it can correct that issue. The Code has to correct that.

Ms. Hanson noted you set your vision and then update the Zoning Code to implement it.

Mr. Andreozzi noted the bulk of our city is C (General Commercial) or R (Single Family and Multifamily Residential). That reflects back to a time when the other zones didn't exist; prior to about 2000.

Chairman Thompson asked if it should be in the Master Plan.

Ms. Hanson noted the R needs to be listed because of all the areas where it's challenging to get rid of. We could create another different kind of multiple family and add that in. Does R3 cover your needs or do you need another zone?

Mr. Andreozzi noted we identified a possible cemetery up off of North 5th Street. The Land Use section of our Master Plan talks about a possible cemetery in Section 18. The only problem with that is we lack infrastructure. The one off of North 5th Street would probably require less infrastructure.

Mr. Wilkinson noted there is a lot of Agriculture zoned property. As that property develops is where the new zones will come into play.

Mr. Limberg noted there is too much optimistic language on acquisition of additional water rights and conservation methods that are already in place. Ms. Hanson mentioned a density of eight units per acre that we're aiming for as an efficiency point, but the City only has water rights for roughly two units per acre. I have a question about the total acres available as compared to the developable amount because that ties into our developable rate per acre. You have a copy of the rest of my comments.

Chairman Thompson asked if that was all within the city boundaries.

Mr. Wilkinson noted that table shows within and property outside of the incorporated boundaries that might be annexed.

Chairman Thompson asked if annexations have to bring water rights in.

Mr. Wilkinson noted it is a policy, but it's not in Code. Our Utility Department requests that.

Mr. Limberg explained the policy for extending water to customers outside the city limits.

Mr. Wilkinson noted there is not an actual annexation policy. What's been done lately is they don't extend water unless the applicant annexes into the city and then usually request water rights.

Commissioner Perry noted that is another driver in the need to keep things higher density. The reality is 80% of municipal water usage occurs during the summer months for watering lawns. Bigger, drier cities are starting to require no lawns. The City of Elko owns most of the water rights in this basin, and this basin is fully appropriated. You can't take river water here and make it well water because this is an ephemeral river.

Mr. Wilkinson noted that's a consideration we have to deal with. In trying to extend Errecart Boulevard, which is important to controlling traffic within the city is going to require annexation of considerable acreage. Depending on what the City requires, if there aren't water rights to bring in then Errecart would never happen. There are some trade offs such as if someone will dedicate substantial right-of-way. Every annexation needs to be considered on its own merits. I don't think we should add no annexation without water rights to this document.

Commissioner Perry noted I agree, but this is a resource issue and it's a good thing to bring it in for people to think about.

Mr. Howes noted the only issue I have with the cemetery is that within 8 – 10 years we may need an alternative site ready. We need to pick a site that will realistically have utilities in that time. There is a table that shows our recreation budget at about \$2.5 million per year. That's not accurate by about \$2.5 million. That's the recreation fund, which is room tax and most of that goes to the Convention and Visitor's Authority. We get a small portion of that for projects like parking lots, etc. The majority of our funds are similar to the Golf Course fund. It's not an enterprise fund, but it's a special revenue fund and is self-supported. I'll get you accurate numbers.

Bailey Billington, Arts and Culture Advisory Board, noted we will go through the Arts and Culture component as thoroughly as we can at our March 2 meeting. We redid the mission statement in the beginning.

Ms. Hanson noted it would be helpful if you can summarize all the changes and comments.

Ms. Billington noted the new section will be forwarded to us, but there were some history omissions that needed to be included.

Ms. Hanson said pay special attention to the map in the back too.

Ms. Billington noted we plotted as many of the cultural and artistic things in the community as we could.

Mr. Wilkinson asked if there were any comments on the Transportation section. As Staff we're satisfied with that chapter. We're taking a different approach at how we're going to manage things. We have criteria for when traffic studies will be required, but that's not to say a special circumstance won't require one. We're shooting for a level of service D on all the roads, which is what we think the City of Elko can afford. We incorporated the Bicycle Plan into it.

Mr. Andreozzi noted the Transportation section is multimodal and we need to make sure we also have a walkability plan in there. I'm looking for a product that doesn't wear out so fast. We live in a harsh environment with many freeze-thaw cycles. The infrastructure requires a lot of ongoing maintenance.

Ms. Hanson noted the cross-reference table showing differences between the old and new plans is included on the CD. It also includes a summary of public comments. Those two pieces are not intended to be adopted within the plan.

Mr. Wilkinson noted we want to try to get all the comments except Arts and Culture in by next week.

Mr. Andreozzi noted we still want to have the adoption be at a separate meeting from your regular meeting.

Commissioner Perry noted we should discuss what we would like CRSA to present at that meeting. I think we will have some public here and we want to have some type of presentation that covers all of the chapters; bullet points.

Ms. Hanson noted we can do a PowerPoint presentation. When we were here in November we did that and I can just update that. It will take time, so how much time do you want to dedicate to public hearing and how much to presentation?

Mr. Wynes noted for presentation I would say no more than 45 minutes.

Ms. Hanson noted that seems long. What if I aim for 20 – 30 minutes? It would be a very cursory review. Do you want all the specific objectives under each goal?

Mr. Wilkinson noted I would do an overview. We need to do our last detailed review with tracked changes within the next week. If you don't keep tracked changes on then you don't know if your changes were made. If they weren't we can discuss why at the next meeting.

Mr. Andreozzi noted I concur. Every time we get a new iteration the whole document has to be read again.

Mr. Wilkinson noted if we have public comment the Commission can consider that so we can finalize that change then and there.

NOTE: The Chairman or Vice Chairman reserves the right to change the order of the agenda and if the agenda is not completed, to recess the meeting and continue on another specified date and time.

III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jeff Thompson, Chairperson

Reece Keener, Secretary