

On Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., a regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order. Roll Call. Present: Chair Rene Morris, Doug Freed, Aurelio Gallardo and Skip McCloud. Absent: Dick Linville, Steve Munson and Jamie Schwingle.

Also present were: Planner Dustin Wolff and Brian Carranza of Mead and Hunt, Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt, Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward Alderman Retha Elston and Assistant City Clerk Monique Castillo.

Freed made a motion to approve the minutes of January 30, 2020 as presented. The motion was seconded by Gallardo. Voting – Ayes: Morris, Freed, Gallardo and McCloud. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Schmidt noted, at the Petitioners (Majeski) request, the Public Hearing to Rezone Lot #2 in the 400 block of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be tabled to the next regular scheduled meeting.

Chair Morris opened a Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m. to hear the recommendation to Annex Property contiguous to the City of Sterling, in the Steelton subdivision – Group 3, and Zone as SR-8.

Zollinger noted city is petitioner, all properties have sewer access and pre-annexation agreements, as did the prior groups of annexations. He also noted these properties became contiguous after the last annexation (Steelton - Group 2) and no objections were received.

Wolff reminded the commissioners the SR-8 zoning keeps these properties legal and conforming as they all have small/side setbacks. Noting with this zoning 4 foot setbacks are allowable.

Elston noticed one of the parcels is zoned B-2 and asked if zoning would change to SR-8. Schmidt noted yes, it will be rezoned as it is a single family residential structure.

Schmidt noted we want to get as many annexations completed by April 30, 2020.

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 and no written or verbal comments were made.

McCloud made a motion to approve the Annexation of the properties contiguous to the City, in the Steelton Subdivision – Group 3, and Zone as SR-8. The motion was seconded by Gallardo. Voting – Ayes: Freed, Gallardo, McCloud, and Morris. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 7:06 p.m.

Carranza recapped the last meeting focused on transportation and noted we will finish up with that section then go into Element 6; Utilities and Community Facilities.

Carranza stated a healthy transportation system will meet the needs of vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and public transportation, must be interconnected and multi-modal. He introduced the Complete Streets concept and noted they are specifically designed for safety and access to a range of transportation modes.

Carranza had detailed maps of what a complete street might look like and showed current pictures of local areas where a complete street may be beneficial. He pointed out, there is no specific design for complete streets, noting not all streets are created the same, therefore they are designed to reflect the area.

Carranza gave a brief history of complete streets, stating they date back to 2007 when the State of Illinois adopted a legislation to address the shift in transportation system priority. This legislation also created funding mechanisms at local levels for such projects.

Carranza noted, if we chose to utilize this concept, there would be a huge learning curve but would quickly become natural order. He also noted this new concept is highly popular with millennial groups.

Carranza introduced the road diet concept as another multi-modal transportation system. In accordance with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), he explained a road diet is the process of elimination or conversion of travel lanes in order to better utilize excess space.

McCloud inquired if this system could be utilized to de-couple the one-ways we have in town. Wolff and Carranza both noted it would be possible.

Carranza weighed the pros and cons of a road diet. Pros: crash reduction with the installation of road calming devices such as pedestrian islands, speed reduction differential, improved mobility and access, offers transportation choices and incorporates ADA design principle, integration of roadways in the community and improved quality of life. Cons: Reduced parking/parking issues.

Shumard noted the city has applied for a grant to introduce a road diet on East Second Street.

In addition to transportation systems, Carranza noted the importance of introducing a Community Gateway as a gateway presents a sense of arrival and gives an impression of what is within boundaries. He also noted visibility is key.

Carranza mentioned key corridors and explained how critical they are to the development and economic vitality of a community. He noted Sterling has 5 key corridors (Lincoln Highway - 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> St., State Route 2, West End; State Route 40; West Lynn Boulevard). He explained there

are several conflicts with pedestrian/bicycle mobility, parking efficiency and safety issues from increased vehicular speeds. Our goal should be to re-think the modal and make it a priority to balance pedestrian/bicycle crossings which could lead to potential improvements such as decoupling one-ways, incorporating traffic calming measures and enhanced crossings.

Carranza suggested implementing road diets in coordination with IDOT along these corridors and other areas in the community. He displayed a map highlighting the key corridors and illustrating the proposed improvements at major intersections and roadway extensions as well as illustrating community gateway locations.

Shumard mentioned the City intends to implement a road diet on W LeFevre for schools/parks with the use of FHWA funding.

There was a brief discussion about the importance of utilizing other mobility avenues that are more user friendly to bicyclists/pedestrians. Shumard inquired if this is how we want to spend money. Residents are asking us to spend money on roads but is this really what they would want? Do we really need to connect areas? Carranza reminded the group the information he presents is founded and highly popular with the all users not just a particular group. Wolff added the Council will decide how to spend money, the object of this group is to define what best suits the community. Feedback on everything that is presented is critical.

Morris and McCloud were both in agreement that these presentations make logical sense and the planners have done a remarkable job demonstrating ways to enhance our community.

Carranza gave a quick overview of the Utilities and Community facilities element. Stating this section will be used as a guide for future development of Community facilities such as parks, schools, libraries, police/fire/medical emergency services, etc. He briefly explained the community facilities we have and where they are located.

Carranza noted at the next regular scheduled meeting, we will take a closer look at schools/education, parks/recreation, key findings from public involvement and the 2040 utility & community facility visions.

The next Plan Commission meeting is March 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. We will have more public hearings; Steelton Group 4 and Majeski, then continue discussion with the Comprehensive Plan.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Monique Castillo  
Assistant City Clerk