

On Thursday, January 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., a regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order via Zoom. Roll Call. Present: Skip McCloud, Jamie Schwingle, Doug Freed, Aurelio Gallardo and Joe Strabala-Bright. Absent: Rene Morris and Steve Munson.

Also present were: City Planners Dustin Wolff, and Mark Sauer of Mead and Hunt, Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt, Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Alderman Retha Elston, Alderman Jim Wise and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

Joe Strabala-Bright made a motion to approve the minutes from December 20, 2020 as presented; seconded by Jamie Schwingle. Voting – Ayes: McCloud, Schwingle, Freed, Strabala-Bright and Gallardo. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Steve Munson entered the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Steve Munson made a motion to take from the table the request to rezone with a special use to allow for a cell tower at 2601 E. Lincolnway/Sterling Moose Family Center; seconded by Joe Strabala-Bright. Corie and Chad Smith were present via Zoom, the Smiths live at 2804 Woodlawn Road. They are concerned with the impact a 70 foot tower would have in a residential area. Corie Smith stated she is concerned about the visual impact as well as the sounds it may emit. Sherry Reitzel was present in the council chambers, Reitzel lives at 2802 Woodlawn Road Sterling. Reitzel stated that this tower would virtually be in her back yard. Reitzel is concerned that placing a tower in a residential neighborhood could impact property values. Reitzel said she spoke to several of the neighbors in the area and the majority of them were against it being placed there. Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt stated she has sent emails requesting additional information from US Cellular as well as providing them with other locations that might be more suitable for the tower. Schmidt has not received a response from the representative for US Cellular. Strabala-Bright made a motion to recommend to the City Council to deny the request to rezone with a special use to allow for a cell tower at 2601 E. Lincolnway/Sterling Moose Family Center; seconded by Doug Freed. Voting – Ayes: McCloud, Schwingle, Freed, Strabala-Bright, Munson and Gallardo. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Acting Chair McCloud opened a Public Hearing at 7:18 pm to hear the recommendation to Annex/Zone property contiguous to the city; Steelton Subdivision – Group 14. Attorney Zollinger stated this is a single parcel annexation due to the fact that this the edge of the subdivision, Group 15 will be a single parcel as well. Attorney Zollinger stated, as with the previous annexations/rezones, this property has sewer access and a pre-annexation agreement stating they would hook on when they became contiguous.

With no further business to discuss by staff, commissioners or guests, Acting Chair McCloud noted publications were made, fees and signage were not applicable, notification requirements were met, and there were no phone calls or written comments received.

The Public Hearing closed at 7:22 pm.

Steve Munson made a motion to recommend to the City Council approval of the Annexation and Zoning of the properties contiguous to the City, in Steelton Subdivision – Group 14. The motion was seconded by Joe Strabala-Bright. Voting – Ayes: Strabala-Bright, McCloud, Freed, Munson, Gallardo and Schwingle. Nays: None. Motion carried

Acting Chair McCloud opened a Public Hearing at 7:22 pm to hear the recommendation to vacate a portion of the former Harvey Drive exit adjacent to Lynn Boulevard. Attorney Zollinger stated the property at 2001 Chestnut Avenue has a driveway that is predominantly located in the existing public right-of-way. The property owner has expressed their expectation that the City provide maintenance services (snow plowing) for the private driveway as it is located in the ROW. The City does not maintain private drives, and as such, the City is requesting to vacate the 0.116 acre area of right-of-way adjacent to 2001 Chestnut Avenue. The vacated lands will be “attached” to the private property. Debbie Melendez was present via zoom. Melendez lives at 2003 Chestnut and her mother lives at 2001 Chestnut. Melendez had questions in regards to the taxes that will be assessed and who would be responsible for the survey. Attorney Zollinger explained that her mother would become the property owner and she would be assessed on that property. Zollinger stated that the assessment would not be payable until 2022, as property taxes are paid in arrears, and the taxes would be assessed on an unapproved vacant lot. Zollinger also advised Melendez that the survey had already been completed.

With no further business to discuss by staff, commissioners or guests, Acting Chair McCloud noted publications were made, fees and signage were not applicable, notification requirements were met, and there were no phone calls or written comments received.

The Public Hearing closed at 7:34 pm.

Steve Munson made a motion to approve the vacation of a portion of the former Harvey Drive exit adjacent to Lynn Boulevard; seconded by Aurelio Gallardo. Voting – Ayes: Strabala-Bright, McCloud, Freed, Munson, Gallardo and Schwingle. Nays: None. Motion carried

City Planner Dustin Wolff and Planner Mark Sauer presented a slide show on the Comprehensive plan that focused on the Northside Mixed use District and the possibilities for transformation. Sauer stated he would focus on four main issues with the Northside District; planning area, existing land use, growth and infill/redevelopment.

The Northside District has a total of 1,950 acres with 58% of it outside the City limits. This area is where "urban crawl" is occurring, when leapfrog development occurs businesses tend to follow. 61% of this land is agriculture and 13% single family residential.

The focus of this area needs to be about growth and balance. The City may need to consider acquiring the lands and incentivizing them. There is a need to be a good balance of light industrial and residential development. There needs to be a planned mixed use. Aureilo Gallardo stated he would like to see residential growth with green spaces preserved, City planner Dustin Wolff agreed there needs to be a clear plan to protect the areas that are to be used for residential as well as light industrial.

The area, specifically between Lynn Blvd and Science Ridge Road, can be controlled with prescriptive land use. The City can focus on what is not desired in this area by prescribing what can be developed. For example if the area is mapped out as Single family residential it will show that industrial is not desired for that area and vice versa.

Mark Sauer also indicated a need for a community separation zone, some existing farm land and open spaces will need to be preserved to provide a community separation.

Sauer also stated there is a need to improve aesthetics and safety on Locust Street. Underground utilities, sidewalks, signage regulations as well as connecting parallel streets to Locust Street.

The next Plan Commission meeting is February 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Teri Sathoff  
City Clerk