

**SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES  
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**

**January 23, 2012**

Mayor DiTullio called the Study Session to order at 8:10 p.m. Council Members present: Davis Reinhart, William "Bud" Starker, Joyce Jay, Kristi Davis, Mike Stites, George Pond, Tracy Langworthy, and Joseph DeMott.

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Bruce Roome, Deputy City Clerk; City Treasurer, Larry Schulz; City Manager, Patrick Goff; City Attorney, Gerald Dahl; Community Development Director, Kenneth Johnstone; Planner II, Sarah Showalter and Sr. Planner, Sally Payne; staff and interested citizens.

1. 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan Implementation

Mr. Johnstone introduced the topic to update Council on public meetings that have been held since the plan's adoption, to review the implementation items listed above, and to ask for Council's feedback on some key implementation steps.

Ms. Showalter gave a power point presentation on the history of 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue as the Main Street which included recommendations from the State based on traffic studies. The planning process included public meetings, and meetings with businesses. She explained implementation plans for 2012 which are based on traffic counts and levels of service. She highlighted economic benefits, safety components, efforts to encourage public support for slower traffic, on-street parking, bikes lanes, and street amenities.

**Meetings Held:**

December 7<sup>th</sup> Business Resource Open House

January 5<sup>th</sup> Roadway Design Open Houses

Restriping of the street will be 3 lanes from Upham to Depew with parallel parking on the south side between Upham and Depew. There seems to be more support from some businesses for back-in angle parking. There will be 3 amenity zones, multiple planters, enhanced pedestrian crossing signals, and potential for 3 access enhancements.

City staff hosted a small design charrette with designers in the Wheat Ridge community on January 13<sup>th</sup> to get input on all of the improvements – especially the amenity zones, planters, and public art – to ensure that they have a quality, unified look.

**Schedule**

Public Works anticipates placing the project out to bid in February or early March. Once a contract has been selected, it will come to City Council for final approval in April. The actual construction is anticipated to begin in May 2012 so that all improvements will be complete no later than the Carnation Festival.

Assessment will take place after 2 summers -- including feedback from businesses.

Wheat Ridge 2020 and Jerry Nealon, the owner of Cress Kitchen and Bath, have taken the lead on forming the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Leadership Committee. Anyone interested in the committee was invited to attend an initial meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m., following the roadway design open house. There were 25 attendees at the first meeting, including two City staff, one reporter, 13 business owners and five non-business owners/residents. A second meeting was scheduled for January 19<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. at Cebiche restaurant. Staff will be able to share more details about that meeting at a future Study Session.

Areas of interest for the Leadership Committee will focus on marketing and branding, events, and snow removal. They will work with Wheat Ridge 2020.

Britta Fisher presented a proposal for services from Wheat Ridge 2020 to help with immediate marketing and branding for the project -- to create the buzz and tell the story. The Leadership committee is not a formal entity so WR2020 can take the fiduciary role in that. Consultants will be hired immediately to provide marketing tools, tag line, brochures, website, banners, signage, and streetscape design. In answer to inquiry from Council she stated that if the consultant's fee results in monies less than budgeted, the balance of that appropriation would not be returned to the City, but would be used for other related expenses for the project.

Ms Showalter continued with charter changes that will be necessary to facilitate mixed-use zoning, including height and density increases, and the need for city initiated rezoning's. Staff would also like to have approval to hire services to do a space needs study, financial analysis, and appraisals for the development of a Civic Center (including cost estimates for relocating City Hall).

Question: Should staff pursue getting road diet bids? Consensus reached by Council to move forward with the bid process.

Question: Should the City award \$92,800 of unbudgeted money in phased increments to WR2020 for facilitation of branding and marketing, including about half of which will be spent to hire a consultant? Several councilmembers expressed a desire to have staff participate in some of the work in order to keep costs down. Staff assured the Council that staff would be involved in the marketing. Ms. Fisher emphasized the need to publicize the story and the vision when changes start happening on 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The Mayor asked for consensus to take the \$92,800 out of the Capital Improvement budget which had been designated for a sign that was to be built just south of City Hall, and have economic development staff participate in the process. Agreed.

Mr. Reinhart asked for consensus to shelve the Civic Center component at this time and focus on the road and the sidewalks. Agreed.

Question? Should the City move forward with city-initiated rezoning's and talking to business and property owners? Majority agreed.

Question: Should staff pursue charter changes for height and density? There was consensus to discuss this at a later time.

## 2. Comprehensive Plan Implementation

In anticipation of a lengthy discussion for Study Session agenda item #1 Mr. Johnstone updated Council during the pre-meeting on the implementation status of the comprehensive Plan – including background; goals and actions accomplished to date; and projects currently underway or to be initiated soon.

## 3. Northwest Sub-Area Plan Implementation

This agenda item was postponed to a later date.

## 4. Update to Architectural and Site Design Manual

Also in anticipation of a lengthy discussion for Study Session agenda item #1 Mr. Johnstone updated Council during the pre-meeting on this item.

In 2007, the City adopted the Architectural and Site Design Manual (ASDM). The manual provides design standards and guidelines to ensure quality development in Wheat Ridge. It applies to all commercial, industrial, multi-family, and mixed-use development in the City. It has been almost five years since the manual was created and staff is proposing a series of revisions that will address the following issues:

- Update architectural standards based on lessons learned from actual projects and to more closely align with the mixed-use zoning requirements
- Create separate design standards for heavy commercial/light industrial buildings
- Update the formatting and organization of the manual to make it more user-friendly
- Clearly establish the manual's applicability to include façade replacements
- Update the architectural overlay map

The ASDM is administered by staff and Section 26-224 of the zoning code gives the Community Development director the authority to amend the manual at any time. Staff plans to include both Planning Commission and City Council in the process of the revisions. Planning Commission had a study session in December regarding the changes and will have another study session this spring to review a draft of the revised manual. A general anticipated timeline follows:

- Draft manual to Planning Commission/second study session – March or April 2012
- Second study session with City Council – late spring 2012
- Adoption of revised manual – late spring or early summer 2012

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

*Janelle Shaver*

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Janelle Shaver, City Clerk