

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

April 2, 2012

Mayor DiTullio called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m. Council Members present: Davis Reinhart, William "Bud" Starker, Joyce Jay, Kristi Davis, Mike Stites, Joseph DeMott, and Tracy Langworthy.

Absent: George Pond

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Treasurer, Larry Schulz; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Economic Development Director, Ken Johnstone, Administrative Services Director, Heather Geyer; Management Analyst, Nathan Mosley; and Planner I, Lauren Mikulak. Also present were guests Jon Johnson and Chris Fabian from Center for Priority Based Budgeting.

1. Priority Based Budgeting

Guest presenters Jon Johnson and Chris Fabian from Center for Priority Based Budgeting have been working with the staff to develop a foundation for introducing a Priority Based Budgeting process for the City. Their company is local and relatively new, but they have expanded quickly. They have helped large and small cities nationwide, including the Colorado cities of Thornton, Boulder and Colorado Springs.

The goal of this process is to have your budget accurately reflect what is actually done by the city. It provides a transparency about the true cost of doing business. Cities may think they are in good financial shape because they have a big savings account, but that kind of thinking/analysis doesn't tell the complete story about what all the City programs will cost down the road.— how much revenue will be needed to sustain the current level of service.

Modeling will show what deficit we really have for the sustainable future and help to make decisions. Using a one-time source of revenue to fund operational costs plus special projects will only last so long. Eventually you run out of "one-time revenue sources" and it will be necessary to increase ongoing revenue streams.

Also to consider is "What if you have a special project?" or "What if you have an unplanned emergency expenditure?" Will there be enough revenue to cover things like this? Do you keep using stop gaps, or do you create a healthy stream of revenue? Across the board budget cuts might seem fair, but it's not realistic to cut everything by the same percentage because some programs are more crucial.

Priority based budgeting will:

1. Identify the results we want to provide for the City
2. Define results: We want a safe, attractive, well maintained city with economic viability, desirable neighborhoods, effective transportation and good governance
3. Inventory programs: Identify programs and services and their costs; scoring them 0-4 on their value
4. Value Programs Based on their influence on results and other criteria
5. Allocate Resources towards programs of highest relevance

Evaluating programs: Are we the best service provider? Could we charge for this? There are some programs that only the city can offer; others that citizens may be able to find elsewhere.

Scoring: Programs are grouped into quartiles. NOT RANKED ONE VERSUS THE OTHER. Every program ends up with a score. Programs in the first quartile are the most essential while quartile four programs have minimal or no impact on the goals of the City. The result is a better understanding of what we do, and what our priorities are.

Over 40 staff members have been involved in this process so far and will continue to be involved for program inventory, scoring and peer review.

Staff plans to bring the overall prioritization results to City Council at the annual strategic planning retreat in May.

Mr. Goff stated he would like consensus tonight that this is what the City Council wants the City to be achieving. This topic will be discussed more at the retreat in May and he anticipates bringing this to a June Study Session and they will continue to work through the budget process.

Council feedback was generally positive to this process and there was general agreement to continue with this this process

2. Ordinance amending Article III of Chapter 26 of the Code of Laws concerning Planned Development Zoning Districts

Ken Johnstone and Lauren Mikulak presented proposed changes to Chapter 26 that would streamline the process for private developers and create the possibility for more administrative approval. It would frontload the ODP step with more information for Council's approval when the rezoning is done and thereafter all plan and site design review would be done by the Planning Commission and/or staff.

The proposed changes in the review process would affect:

1. **Zoning standards:** Separate the zoning standards and site design (ODP) steps to have separate processes. (Currently these are both done in the same step where zoning includes the ODP).

The zoning element will be termed the "Outline Development Plan." The site design element will be called the "Specific Development Plan." (These are similar to the titles we currently use for PDs, but not exactly the same.)

2. **Site design:** Do the site design by resolution (rather than ordinance) so as to eliminate the possibility of legal protest by adjacent property owners.
3. **Final Development Plan (FDP).** The FDP is currently an administrative review. The proposed change would completely eliminate the FDP and replace it with the Site Plan Review process. This offers administrative review of the final site details, but at a lower cost to the developer and without a requirement to record the document. This step would become part of the Building Permit process.

This does not change what we see, but when we see it. Additionally, amendments to the plan would be more administrative.

Council discussed, but did not wish to pursue, the proposal to have an expiration date for planned developments:

Risks of approving these changes:

- 1) Losing the opportunity for citizens to protest. And how much public input should there be? In the proposed new process City Council and/or Planning Commission would approve the SDP by resolution; there can still be public input, and the specific SDP would still need to go to a public hearing, but citizens would lose the opportunity to submit a legal protest.

2) Delegating more to staff. How comfortable is Council giving up some control, because these changes do propose more administrative review?

3) Developers are at staff's mercy, i.e. no appeal process for the developer.

Council recommended the following revised approval process for a planned development application:

Review Process, Option 1:

Step 1: Outline Development Plan (ODP): Approval of zone change to planned development zone district done by ordinance – recommendation by Planning Commission and approved by City Council

Step 2: Specific Development Plan (SDP): Approval of site design for a planned development to be reviewed/approved by resolution by Planning Commission

Step 3: Building Permit Review: The final specific site design, final engineering and construction documents for a planned development (or portions of a PD) to be reviewed/approved by staff

Review Process, Option 2:

Step 1: Outline Development Plan (ODP) and Specific Development Plan (SDP) :: Concurrent review of zone change and site design, recommendation by Planning Commission and approved by City Council, ODP is approved by ordinance, SDP is approved by resolution.

Step 2: Building Permit Review :: Approval of specific site design, final engineering and construction documents for a planned development (or portions of a PD) to be reviewed/approved by staff

Both options are available to applicants--Option 1 allows for an applicant to submit the ODP and SDP sequentially. Option 2 allows an applicant to submit both elements concurrently, at their own risk.

3. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Councilmember Stites brought up the question: Do we want to let people talk at study sessions?

Consensus by Council to allow citizens to speak for 3 minutes at the beginning of the Study Session on agenda items only. Staff will prepare a change to the Council Rules.

Mayor DiTullio passed out some information about Colorado's taxes as compared to other states nationwide. It is often stated that Colorado is 49th in its funding for education, but that is only the amount that the state of Colorado designates for schools. In Colorado we also have funding from the various school districts which impose taxes. In the end, Colorado does have lower state funding for education, but the added taxes provided by the school districts make us ranked 27th nationwide.

Ms. Davis reported that she will be meeting with the WR Business District on Thursday to discuss with them expanding their scope. She would like to see them offer some form of grant monies available to small businesses to help them meet ADA requirements.

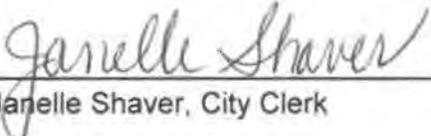
4. Staff Report(s)

Liquor Law Distance regulations to Schools

Staff has been informed of some businesses interested in locating on 38th Avenue near the Middle School. The businesses would like to have liquor licenses. Recalling that Council changed the distance limits for hotel/restaurant liquor licenses that are near schools, is Council interested in lowering the "distance from a school" limit so as to accommodate these businesses that are in the redevelopment area?

Consensus to have staff bring forward changes in the Liquor Code that would allow beer and wine licenses to be near schools.

The study session was adjourned at 8:46 PM.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk