

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue

October 24, 2016

Mayor Joyce Jay called the Study Session to order at 7:55 p.m.

Council members present: Janeece Hoppe, Monica Duran, Tim Fitzgerald, George Pond, Zachary Urban, Genevieve Wooden, and Larry Mathews

Absent: Kristi Davis

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; City Manager, Patrick Goff; Community Development Director, Ken Johnstone; Public Works Director, Scott Brink; guests and interested citizens.

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS (see City Council Meeting 10-24-2016)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Wheat Ridge Ward Station Planning Update ~ Patrick Goff, Ken Johnstone

Mr. Goff noted that consultants WSP/Parsons Brinkerhoff were present. They've worked on the Wadsworth project and Clear Creek Crossing, so they know our city well. He brought the Council up to speed with some history of the Ward Station site.

- 2006: NW Subarea Plan adopted; proposes a mixed use, pedestrian-friendly area
- 2009: Area becomes Urban Renewal; voters remove height and density limits
- 2010: Jolly Rancher site rezoned to MU-TOD (Mixed Use-Transit Oriented District); City entered into a contract with RTD to build a commuter rail station.
- 2012: "Jolly Rancher" created a metropolitan district to get funding for infrastructure.
- 2014: DRCOG grant for multi-modal improvements on Ridge Rd between Miller and Ward; another grant received for Tabor Street improvements.
- 2015: City partnered with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to do a TAP (Technical Advisory Panel) report.
- 2016: Hance property rezoned to commercial and residential (MUC-TOD and MUN)
- The proposed ballot issue 2E earmarks \$12M for public infrastructure at the site.

Ken Johnstone described the process of the TAP report which outlines the real estate challenges. The take-aways were:

1. Embrace the industrial character; focus on jobs and quasi-industrial uses.
2. Don't expect high density. Rethink the density to townhome level.
3. Make sure you get the urban design right.

Where we are now? Take the TAP recommendation and add more detail and guidance for the development community; communicate what is desired and sell them the vision.

Will Wagenlander of WSP/Parsons Brinkerhoff presented.

Their scope of work is to develop an overarching market based vision.

Their goals are to identify implementable solutions and develop a focused TOD vision.

- They've researched the best TOD practices in the metro area. Not each of the 74 stations will have 6-story, mixed use on opening day; have to work towards that.
- Development community feedback indicates previous plans were inconsistent with market conditions and site challenges; vision should match the market now, but not compromise long term vision; six stories can come later.
- Outside the box. Flexible. Something unique to WR. Employment. Outdoor recreation.
- From two visioning sessions with staff: "Premier location in the metro area for outdoor recreation focused co-working spaces"

4 major components

- 1) Innovative, co-working space; incubator for existing and future outdoor recreation companies; access to downtown, airport and the mountains
- 2) Linear greenspace with recreational amenities
- 3) Pop-up events after the station opens
- 4) Recreation: Take advantage of the ponds and topography as a regional park with unique recreational uses to augment outdoor vision and multi-modal connectivity

The next steps:

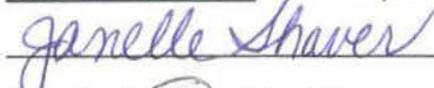
- The Marketplace Forum: Present the vision to the development community. They will have virtual reality goggles and a digital model showing evolution of the site.
- Will prepare a technical memo of actionable strategies for the City and a digital brochure staff can use when they go talk to potential developers.

Council questions

- **Councilmember Mathews** noted the Parks Dept rejected buying the ponds. Mr. Goff said development could be public or private. The area has infrastructure and grade challenges. Possibly a public-private partnership.
- **Councilmember Urban** suggested the area is a base camp.
- **Councilmember Wooden** expressed that we should keep going, be innovative, don't stay in a rut, and bring Wheat Ridge into the 21st century.
- **Councilmember Pond** believes this is innovative and we shouldn't be afraid to take a risk. He applauded the staff and everyone for staying on this.

The Marketplace Forum on Nov 9-10 at the Hyatt Regency is a multidisciplinary event for the private development community.

ADJOURNMENT The Special Study Session adjourned at 8:34p.m.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON November 14, 2016



George Pond, Mayor pro tem