



PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

May 19, 2022

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair DITULLIO at 7:02 p.m. This meeting was held in person and virtually, using Zoom video-teleconferencing technology. As duly announced and publicly noticed, the City previously approved this meeting format in order to continue with normal business amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the related public emergency orders promulgated by the State of Colorado and the Wheat Ridge City Council. The Chair stated the rules and procedures necessitated by this virtual meeting format.

2. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Commission Members Present: Kristine Disney
Jerry DiTullio
Will Kerns
Daniel Larson
Janet Leo
Jonathan Schelke
Julianne Stern

Commission Members Absent: Melissa Antol

Staff Members Present: Lauren Mikulak, Planning Manager
Stephanie Stevens, Senior Planner
Rocky Macsalka, Civil Engineer II
Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. APPROVE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner DISNEY and seconded by Commissioner LEO to approve the order of the agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 21, 2022

It was moved by Commissioner LARSON and seconded by Commissioner SCHELKE to approve the minutes of April 21, 2022, as written. Motion carried 7-0.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Vice Chair DITULLIO invited anyone to speak either on a subject not appearing on the agenda or on the 44th Avenue Subarea Plan update. No one wished to speak at this time.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Case No. WZ-20-01:** an application filed by Brandt Hospitality Group, Inc. for approval of a Specific Development Plan (SDP) for a Hampton Inn hotel on a property zoned Planned Mixed-Use Development (PMUD) and located at 4025 Clear Creek Drive (Planning Area 7 of Clear Creek Crossing).

Ms. Stevens gave a short presentation regarding the Specific Development Plan and the application. She entered into the record the contents of the case file, packet materials, the zoning ordinance, and the contents of the digital presentation. She stated the public notice and posting requirements have been met, therefore the Planning Commission has jurisdiction to hear this case.

**John Heiberger, Applicant
720 Vista Verde, Monument**

Mr. Heiberger gave a brief presentation regarding the history of Brandt Hospitality in Colorado and nationwide and about the proposed Hampton Inn & Suites building and amenities.

Commissioner KERNS inquired about the internal circulation and possible connection on the south side of the property.

Mr. Heiberger confirmed the intent is to have cross vehicular connectivity with adjacent developments and it will be the same on the northwestern side of the property as well.

Commissioner STERN asked for an explanation on the development vision with regards to the resident's comment on Wheat Ridge Speaks.

**Christine McRight, Evergreen Devco
1873 S Belaire, Denver**

Ms. McRight explained Evergreen's intention and vision for the Clear Creek Crossing development. She continued by saying the challenge has been the economy associated with COVID, but Evergreen has not shifted direction in regard to the envisioned tenant lineup although the order of development has been

reshuffled. She added the pedestrian connectivity is very important and the hopes are for a strong 2022 leading into 2023.

Commissioner STERN also inquired about the grade differences between the parking lot, trail, and the natural environment beyond for this development.

Ms. McRight confirmed there is a tapered grade difference to the north and mentioned a tiered walling system will be created and landscaped. She added there will be pedestrian connectivity to the Prospect Trail and the Clear Creek Trail.

Commissioner LARSON asked if the market will be saturated with 7 Hampton Inns in the Denver area.

**John DuBois, Brandt Hospitality
2864 Rivers Bend Dr., West Fargo, ND**

Mr. DuBois mentioned a lot of research goes into the location of a property and expressed his confident in this location.

In response to grading and lighting questions from Commissioner LARSON, Mr. Heiberger confirmed the finished level of the hotel's ground floor will be a little above the street for drainage purposes. He added the biggest challenge was the grade on the west side between the trail and the site. Mr. Heiberger added the site was designed with enough lighting to provide a safe environment for the patrons and mentioned the trail will also have lighting without light spillage across the property line.

Commissioner SCHELKE asked how close the Clear Creek Trail is to this development.

Ms. Stevens said there is a connection to Clear Creek Trail from Clear Creek Drive and from the SCL site. She clarified the trail being referred to for this development is the Prospect Trail which runs along the west side of the property and runs south to the residential neighborhood and golf course and will also connect to Clear Creek Trail to the north. Ms. Stevens added the Prospect Trail will be a 10-foot multi-use path.

Public Comment

No one wished to speak at this time

Commissioner LARSON asked what the next steps are for this development; he also noted this will be a suitable anchor for Clear Creek Crossing.

Ms. Stevens confirmed that Brandt Hospitality is working through the review process for civil construction plans, then approval of the plat and building permit and finally construction.

Commissioner DITULLIO thanked Community Development and applicant teams for succinct presentations and believes the hotel will be an asset to the community.

Commissioner KERNS thinks there is good opportunity to have some way-finding signage throughout the development directing users to the Clear Creek Trail and he is looking forward to having the hotel in the community as well.

Commissioner DISNEY believes this will be a lovely addition to Clear Creek Crossing. She also wanted to encourage people to take a walk around the entire development and believes the intent of the developer is shining through now that trails and sidewalks have opened for public use.

It was moved by Commissioner DISNEY and seconded by Commissioner LEO to APPROVE Case No. WZ-20-01, a request for approval of a Specific Development Plan for a Hampton Inn hotel on property located within Planning Area 7 of the Clear Creek Crossing Planned Mixed Use Development at approximately 4025 Clear Creek Drive, for the following reasons:

- 1. The specific development plan is consistent with the purpose of a planned development, as stated in Section 26-301 of the Code of Laws**
- 2. The specific development plan is consistent with the intent and purpose of the outline development plan.**
- 3. The proposed uses are consistent with those approved by the outline development plan.**
- 4. All responding agencies have indicated they can serve the property with improvements installed at the developer's expense.**
- 5. The specific development plan is in substantial compliance with the applicable standards set forth in the outline development plan and with the City's adopted design manuals.**

With the following condition:

- 1. The developer shall enter into a development agreement with the City to be recorded with the County Clerk & Recorder, and associated financial guarantee shall be provided, prior to issuance of building permits.**

Motion approved 7-0.

8. OLD BUSINESS

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. 44th Avenue Subarea Plan Update

Ms. Stevens gave a brief introduction to the 44th Avenue Subarea Plan, also introducing the MIG consultants Jay Renkins and Mark De La Torre.

Jay Renkins, MIG
518 17th St., Denver

Mark De La Torre, MIG
4345 Brentwood St., Wheat Ridge

Mr. Renkins gave a brief presentation regarding the scope and schedule, next steps, and the engagement timeline; Mr. De La Torre gave a brief presentation about the existing conditions around 44th Avenue and he summarized the engagement process and public feedback received to date.

Commissioner LARSON asked when the next public meeting will be held and wondered if enough people are being asked their opinions about 44th Avenue.

Mr. De La Torre confirmed the next public meeting will be held on July 6 at the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center. He also mentioned that businesses and residents have been engaged through focus groups, Let's Talk, cold calling to businesses and to larger apartment complexes, as well as taking part in a business walk with Steve Art on June 14. Ms. Mikulak noted that the 44th project is seeing a similar pattern as Let's Talk with slightly lower engagement in the project area compared to other parts of the City, but the engagement effort is using a variety of tools and outreach methods. Staff has budgeted for direct mailing to all addresses within the project boundary to capture as many voices as possible.

Commissioner KERNS inquired about the outreach to the non-English speaking part of the community.

Mr. De La Torre confirmed there were no request for translation. Ms. Mikulak added the postcards mailed at the start of the project included a contact option for Spanish speakers and she mentioned the City subscribes to an on-demand translation service accessible through tablets brought to public meetings which can help with translation as well.

In response to a question from Commissioner KERNS about pedestrian safety along 44th Avenue, Mr. De La Torre mentioned it is a bit too early to elaborate on safety, but it has been raised as a concern and will be looked at.

Commissioner KERNS observed the notable lack of tree canopy along the corridor.

Commissioner STERN appreciates the use of nodes and gateways and encouraged the team to be bold about what can be done in this part of the city. She observed how uncomfortable it can be to walk along segments of 44th particularly when accessing Anderson Park from the east, and she emphasized the need for connectivity be an important part of the 44th Avenue subarea plan.

Commissioner LARSON asked what happens if not everyone supports the plan.

Mr. De La Torre said there will always be compromises and trade-offs through the process. Mr. Renkins added there will be a little bit of something in the plan for everyone.

Commissioner SCHELKE inquired about the truck stop which is a defining feature on 44th Avenue.

Ms. Mikulak said the truck stop is a long-standing business, and we are transitioning to the more technical analysis phase that will inform the plan. There are no plans to relocate existing businesses, but staff will study the land use and the impact of the truck traffic. Ms. Stevens added that the community input so far is generally not opposed to the truck stop as a use but wants to address safety concerns.

Commissioner DITULLIO reminded all that the 38th Avenue corridor plan was also a 50/50 split on opinions and wonders if property owners of multi-family properties have been contacted.

Ms. Mikulak confirmed that the City is trying to equally engage property owners, tenants and business owners; adding that lessons have been learned from 38th Avenue. She also mentioned that the west side of Wheat Ridge has not experienced as much rapid change like the east side; staff and MIG are trying to find the balance between people not wanting dramatic change, but still wanting some change and visual improvements.

Commissioner DISNEY asked about the geographic scope of the subarea plan and why it doesn't extend all the way to Sheridan.

Ms. Stevens clarified that this was the recommendation from the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS).

B. Upcoming Dates

Ms. Mikulak informed the Commission that there will be June 2nd meeting, but not a June 16th meeting.

C. Project and Development Updates

Ms. Mikulak mentioned that International Paper will be moving into the Axis 70 warehouse building at 4990 Parfet.

Commissioner LARSON said the International Paper building is an attractive addition to I-70 in that location and recommended people drive by there and the Ward Station area because the developments are looking good there as well.

Ms. Mikulak also announced that the Parks and Recreation Department is currently in the process of hiring summer staff and if weather permits there will be paint drop-off at Anderson Park on Saturday, May 21.

Commissioner DISNEY inquired who designed the westbound Ward Rd onramp onto I-70 because she does not agree with it.

Ms. Mikulak clarified it was a CDOT project.

Commissioner LEO added she is also not happy with the new on and off ramps at 32nd and Youngfield and Clear Creek Crossing because of u-turning movements that occur west of the interstate.

Ms. Mikulak said she will forward the comment to Public Works.

Commissioner DITULLIO asked about the timeline for the rezoning of the Lutheran Campus.

Ms. Mikulak said that Lutheran Campus is not listed for sale yet and it still could be a couple years.

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner KERNS and seconded by Commissioner LEO to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.



Melissa Antol, Chair



Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary