



PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

July 7, 2022

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair ANTOL at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was held in person and virtually, using Zoom video-conferencing 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. Before calling the meeting to order, the Chair stated the rules and procedures necessitated by this virtual meeting format.

2. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Commission Members Present: Melissa Antol
 Kristine Disney
 Jerry DiTullio
 Will Kerns
 Daniel Larson
 Janet Leo
 Julianne Stern (via Zoom)

Commission Members Absent: Jonathan Schelke

Staff Members Present: Lauren Mikulak, Planning Manager
 Jeff Hirt, Senior Neighborhood Planner
 Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. APPROVE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 2, 2022

It was moved by Commissioner DITULLIO and seconded by Commissioner LARSON to approve the minutes of June 2, 2022, as written. Motion carried 5-0-2 with Commissioners KERNS and LARSON abstaining.

6. PUBLIC FORUM (This is the time for any person to speak on any subject not appearing on the agenda.)

**Vivian Vos, resident
6920 West 47th Place**

Ms. Vos gave a handout to the Commissioners regarding the upcoming Wheat Ridge Garden Tour which is a fundraiser for the Wheat Ridge Grange. She mentioned the event will take place on Saturday, July 23 and will cost \$18 which includes visiting 6 gardens and a lunch stop. Tickets can be purchased at Pietra's Pizzeria, All Seasons Holiday Market, www.wheatridgefoundation.org and the day of the event at The Grange.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Case No. ZOA-22-04: an ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning the implementation of a residential bulk plane.

Ms. Mikulak gave a short presentation regarding the bulk plane ordinance.

Commissioner DITULLIO agrees that bulk plane is a good tool between established neighborhoods and new development and thanks staff for bringing the ordinance forward.

Commissioner KERNS asked if bulk plane will reduce density.

Ms. Mikulak explained that bulk plane will not reduce the number of units in a development, it only impacts the design of a structure.

In response to a question from Commissioner KERNS, Ms. Mikulak confirmed that this ordinance will only apply to existing single-family homes if an addition is done to an existing home.

Commissioner LARSON asked for confirmation that bulk plane will apply in all residential zone districts.

Ms. Mikulak confirmed this and said it will only apply to single-family homes in all zone districts.

Commissioner LARSON asked why the Residential-Two (R-2) zone district was not included in the initial bulk plane ordinance.

Ms. Mikulak explained that in 2016 most properties that were redeveloping were in East Wheat Ridge where it is predominantly R-1C and R-3, so the bulk plane only applied to those two zone districts. She added that a number of people were neutral to the bulk plane idea during a 2016 survey and also possibly did not understand it at that time.

Commissioner ANTOL asked how this ordinance will apply to Planned Developments.

Ms. Mikulak mentioned that in Planned Developments the height and setbacks are all negotiated. Moving forward these developments will start with a baseline of the current zone district and incorporate the bulk plane because it will be a part of the baseline.

Commissioner KERNS asked if the bulk plane graphics will be in the ordinance.

Ms. Mikulak clarified that graphics already exist in the bulk plane section of the Code and added that handouts will also include graphics.

Commissioner STERN inquired if there has been any push back from applicants in the R-1C or R-3 zone districts with regards to the bulk plane.

Ms. Mikulak confirmed there has been no push back from architects or contractors in the last 5 years.

Commissioner DITULLIO feels that bulk plane will help with in-fill developments.

Public Forum

No one wished to speak.

It was moved by Commissioner DITULLIO and seconded by Commissioner LEO to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning the implementation of a residential bulk plane development standard.

Motion carries 7-0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Affordable Housing Strategy Update

Ms. Mikulak gave a brief presentation and introduction of Jeff Hirt with the City of Wheat Ridge and Eric Ameigh with CZB.

Eric Ameigh, CZB

Mr. Ameigh gave a brief presentation about the Affordable Housing Strategy. He mentioned that after a technical analysis is done the plan will assess the housing affordability challenges, identify potential tools and resources and also outline action steps.

In response to multiple questions about what the goal of the strategy is Ms. Mikulak and Mr. Ameigh explained that the “what” question has to be figured out before the “how” question. Once that is figured out, then the correct tools can be used; for example: will the focus be more on rentals or home ownership. Ms. Mikulak also said this could be a discussion topic as part of the future Comprehensive Plan update.

Commissioner STERN would like CZB to look at the entire housing market as a whole, including both rentals and ownership and added she would like there to be a comprehensive look at which members of the community are struggling the most.

Commissioner KERNS inquired about the City owning any land to help lower the price of development for affordable housing purposes.

Ms. Mikulak said the City does not currently and doesn't know what the future looks like to acquire land.

There was also discussion about subsidies for first time home buyers.

In response to a question from Commissioner STERN, Ms. Mikulak confirmed there is an affordable housing issue in the City of Wheat Ridge and Mr. Hirt added it is the top issue in most neighborhoods on the Let's Talk surveys.

Commissioner STERN would be curious to know what the income levels in Wheat Ridge look like.

Commissioner ANTOL inquired about maintaining affordability and what the City is willing to regulate. Also, should it be a priority as part of this strategy.

Mr. Ameigh said the regulatory approach to development could be to require affordable housing or require a fee in lieu. He added the tools are not new and there is no easy free way to get to affordable housing and maintain it overtime.

Commissioner ANTOL wanted confirmed that municipalities can't define rent control.

Ms. Mikulak confirmed that it is a state law, but municipalities can have deed restricted units. The City could manage the deed restrictions and it would run with the land.

Commissioner LARSON inquired about the timeline for this strategy.

Mr. Ameigh said there will be a discussion with City Council on August 15 then a draft strategy document will be written and then adopted as policy later in the year.

B. Amendment of Bylaws – Discussion to change meeting start time

Ms. Mikulak explained this topic was discussed by the Commission at the prior meeting. She gave a brief explanation about how to change the start time for the Planning Commission from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and mentioned the start times of other Boards and Commissions within the City.

Commissioner LARSON, STERN and ANTOL mentioned that it could be challenge for those that work to make a start time at City Hall by 6:30 p.m. but could work around the time.

Commissioner DI TULLIO, DISNEY, and LEO thought that 6:30 p.m. would be a good compromise time.

It was moved by Commissioner DI TULLIO and seconded by Commissioner DISNEY to amend Section 1 of the City of Wheat Ridge Planning Commission Bylaws such that regular meetings start at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m.

Motion approved 5-2 with Commissioners STERN and LARSON voting against.

C. Upcoming Dates

Ms. Mikulak mentioned there will be no meeting on July 21st, she also talked about the Parks & Rec Open Space Management Plan and said their survey will be running until mid-August.

D. Project and Development Updates

Ms. Mikulak updated the Commission on a few developments including Judy Townhomes Phase 2 being close to demolition and active work with permits; the southeast corner of 38th & Harlan has a new coffee shop in the works called Huckleberry Roaster; Ward Station (Toll Brothers) is wrapping up the 2nd phase of townhomes; Hance Ranch is also close to wrapping up.

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Commissioner LEO and seconded by Commissioner KERNS to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.



Melissa Antol, Chair



Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary