



Community Development

"Dedicated to Excellence in Public Service"

Adrian P. Freund, FAICP, Community Development Director
Nathan Edwards, Legal Counsel



Washoe County Planning Commission

Christy Magers, Chair
Dian A. VanderWell, Vice Chair
Neal Cobb

Roger M. Edwards
Roy H. Hibdon
Keith Lockard
William Weber

WASHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

December 2, 2008

The Washoe County Planning Commission met in a special session on Tuesday, December 2, 2008, in the Washoe County Commission Chambers, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chair Magers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following Commissioners and staff were present:

Commissioners present: Christy Magers, Chair
Dian A. VanderWell, Vice Chair
Neal Cobb
Roger M. Edwards
Roy Hibdon
Keith Lockard
William Weber

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Michael Harper, FAICP, Planning Manager, Community Development
Kimberly H. Robinson, Planning Manager, Community Development
Trevor Lloyd, Senior Planner, Community Development
Chad Giesinger, Senior Planner, Community Development
Lisa Brosnan, Planner, Community Development
Pablo Marin, Planning Intern, Community Development
Nathan Edwards, Deputy District Attorney
Cathi Moldenhauer, Recording Secretary, Community Development

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Edwards led the pledge to the flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Harper advised that Consent Agenda Item A was to be removed and would be rescheduled for the January 6, 2009 meeting. In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the agenda for the December 2, 2008 as amended. Commissioner Lockard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were available.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSENT ITEMS

AGENDA ITEM A

EXTENSION REQUEST FOR THE TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP CASE NO. TM03-012 FOR COTTONWOOD CREEK ESTATES - To extend for one year, until January 6, 2009, the approval of the remaining 37 lots of the original Tentative Subdivision Map for Cottonwood Creek Estates. The original request was to develop a 57-lot single-family, common open space, residential subdivision on five parcels totaling ±28.66 acres as authorized in Article 608 of the Washoe County Development Code. The project is located on the south side of State Route 341 approximately one mile east of the Toll Road intersection. The parcels are designated Medium Density Suburban (MDS) in the Southeast Truckee Meadows Area Plan, and are situated in a portion of Sections 27 and 34, T18N, R20E, MDM, Washoe County, Nevada. The property is located in the Galena-Steamboat Citizen Advisory Board boundary and Washoe County Commission District No. 2. (APNs 017-012-13 through 16 and 017-062-14)

[This item was rescheduled for the January 6, 2009 meeting.]

AGENDA ITEMS B, C, E AND F

- B. TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION INITIATING AN AMENDMENT TO THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ELIMINATE THE SOUTH VIRGINIA CORRIDOR SPECIFIC PLAN, THE STEAMBOAT SPECIFIC PLAN AND THE SOUTHEAST TRUCKEE MEADOWS SPECIFIC PLAN WHICH RESPOND TO STIPULATIONS APPROVED AS PART OF THE CONFORMANCE FINDING FOR THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION; AND OTHER MATTERS PROPERLY RELATING THERETO.
- C. TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION INITIATING AN AMENDMENT TO THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADOPT THE REGIONAL OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WHICH RESPONDS TO STIPULATIONS APPROVED AS PART OF THE CONFORMANCE FINDING FOR THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION; AND OTHER MATTERS PROPERLY RELATING THERETO.
- E. TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION INITIATING AN AMENDMENT TO THE WASHOE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO ARTICLE 302, ALLOWED USES; ARTICLE 304, USE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM; AND ARTICLE 326, WIND MACHINES, IN ORDER TO ADDRESS WIND ENERGY PRODUCTION AND USE.

- F. TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION INITIATING AN AMENDMENT TO THE WASHOE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO ARTICLE 420, STORM DRAINAGE STANDARDS, IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID) OPTIONS, AND REVISE THE STORM DRAINAGE PROVISIONS TO BE CONSISTENT WITH UPDATED STANDARDS MANUALS.

Commissioner Lockard moved to approve Consent Agenda Items B, C, E and F. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM D

TO CONSIDER AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION INITIATING AN AMENDMENT TO THE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT OF THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO ADDRESS MILITARY INSTALLATION NOTICING, DENSITY TRANSFERS FROM RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS, DENSITY LIMITATIONS ON SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND COOPERATIVE PLANNING THAT RESPOND TO STIPULATIONS APPROVED AS PART OF THE CONFORMANCE FINDING FOR THE WASHOE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, AND OTHER MATTERS PROPERLY RELATING THERETO.

Commissioner Edwards noted that the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan purportedly prohibited the increase of density in rural development areas (RDAs). Mr. Harper explained that the Regional Plan allowed transferring density within an RDA but prohibited the transfer of density from an RDA into the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA). This language would be added to the Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) when it comes before the Planning Commission in February 2009.

Commissioner Edwards also expressed concern that the TMSA states a goal density of four persons per acre while the LUTE would allow a maximum of five dwelling units per acre. Mr. Harper explained that the unincorporated County is limited to a maximum of five single-family detached dwelling units per acre, but there is no limitation on the amount of multiple-family densities within one structure. The limit of four persons per acre is the threshold for the ability to expand the Truckee Meadows Service Area, and it is an average of four persons per acre. Currently, Washoe County has approximately 2.5 persons per acre; therefore, a great deal of development in the unincorporated portion of the county would be necessary to justify expanding the TMSA. There is no goal of the County to reach a maximum of five dwelling units or an average of four persons per acre. These are only regional limits that cannot be exceeded.

Commissioner Lockard moved to approve Consent Agenda Item D. Commissioner VanderWell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

PLANNING ITEMS

AGENDA ITEM 1

- A. PUBLIC HEARING: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. CP08-006 (VILLAGE GREEN COMMERCE CENTER) -- To consider a request to amend the Spanish Springs Area Plan, being a part of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan. The amendment request would redesignate five properties totaling ±80.48 acres from the land use category of General Rural (GR) to Specific Plan (SP). Additionally, the

requested action would amend Policy SS.1.3 of the Spanish Springs Area Plan to allow for the Specific Plan land use designation and amend Policy SS.17.2.c to increase the allowable acreage of commercial and industrial from 7.25 percent to 8.0 percent of the Spanish Springs Suburban Character Management Area.

and

- B. PUBLIC HEARING: SPECIFIC PLAN CASE NO. SP08-001 (VILLAGE GREEN COMMERCE CENTER) – To consider a request to establish the Specific Plan regulations and guidelines for the Village Green Commerce Center. The Specific Plan will provide the regulatory tools, a table of uses and additional guidelines necessary to implement the development of the Village Green Commerce Center. The Specific Plan includes the table of allowed uses, policies for the implementation of the specific plan goals, development standards, architectural design, access and circulation, landscape, signage, lighting and fencing requirements, a project phasing plan, etc.

The subject properties are located along the south side of Calle De La Plata starting several hundred feet east of Pyramid Highway. The subject parcels are within the Suburban Character Management Area (SCMA) of the Spanish Springs Area Plan and within the Truckee Meadows Service Area (TMSA). Additionally, the properties are within the Area of Interest of the City of Sparks, as identified by the 2007 Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. The subject parcels are located within Section 30, T20N, R20E, MDM, Washoe County, Nevada. The property is within the Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board boundary and within Washoe County Commission District 4. To reflect changes requested within this application and to maintain currency of general area plan data, administrative changes to the area plan are proposed. These administrative changes include: a revised map series with updated parcel base and revised table of land uses. (APNs 534-561-06, 07, 08, 09 and 10)

Chair Magers opened the public hearing.

Trevor Lloyd reviewed the staff report dated November 19, 2008. Concerns that were raised at the Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board have been addressed by the applicant. Staff recommended the Planning Commission adopt a resolution to recommend approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Cobb suggested that the back side of the buildings comprising the project be articulated for aesthetic reasons. Mr. Lloyd noted that the western theme design of the project was proposed to be carried around the back, although he did not believe the level of articulation would be the same as in the front. He agreed that the requirement should be included in the Specific Plan.

Disclosures of meetings with the developer and applicant's representative were forthcoming from Commissioners Weber, Edwards, VanderWell, Lockard, Hibdon and Chair Magers.

Commissioner Lockard also disclosed that, while he was employed by Solaegui Engineers, he did not work on nor have any knowledge of this project. He was confident he could make an impartial decision on the matter before this body.

In response to Commissioner Lockard, Mr. Lloyd stated the applicant was in agreement with the changes to the Design Standards Handbook described in the staff report on pages 9

and 10. Commissioner Lockard asked for a definition of "electric hydronic heat." Mr. Lloyd deferred the question to the applicant. Commissioner Lockard inquired if the allowable land uses would include commercial as well as industrial land uses. Mr. Lloyd replied that there was no table of land uses included in the handbook. The list of uses in the appendix is consistent with the allowed uses in the Spanish Springs Area Plan.

Commissioner Edwards asked how the increase from 7.25 percent to 8 percent was arrived at. Mr. Lloyd explained that the purpose was to limit the number of acres of commercial and industrial uses within the suburban character management area. Commissioner Edwards was concerned that the percentage would be addressed again to accommodate future developments of commercial and/or industrial uses. He noted the trend toward mixed uses to reduce the need to travel to employment areas. Mr. Lloyd advised that very issue would be explored when the Spanish Springs Area Plan was updated.

Commissioner Weber was impressed with how "green" the project was. He was concerned, however, about the size of impervious surfaces. Mr. Lloyd stated there were mixed results from the use of some pervious surfaces. Commissioner Hibdon advised that those products might not work in this area because of the freeze/thaw cycles present each year.

Chair Magers questioned the feasibility report presented by the applicant that included a previous proposal that included a residential component. Mr. Lloyd replied that the study addressed the subject property as well as properties to the north. It did cover the issues necessary to develop this project, such as infrastructure and services. Chair Magers asked that convincing evidence of a need to increase the inventory of community-serving commercial land use opportunities be provided. Mr. Lloyd deferred to the applicant.

John Krmptotic, KLS Planning Group, representing the applicant, introduced Garrett Gordon, attorney, and Paul Solaegui, traffic engineer. He lauded the work done with staff to assure the project's environmental sustainability and compatibility with the community. In response to Commissioner Cobb's comment regarding the back of the buildings, Mr. Krmptotic displayed on the overhead a rendering of the architecture elements that could be extended around the buildings. He noted the buffer area around the project with landscaping and the equestrian easement. With regard to Commissioner Lockard's request for a definition of hydronic heat, Mr. Krmptotic stated he could only define it as heat electronically created by water. He also advised that, because of concerns expressed by the Spanish Springs CAB, no land use table was included in the Specific Plan, and the only land uses allowed were those contained in the Area Plan. He addressed Commissioner Edwards's concern about the increase in percentage of commercial or industrial acreage, stating that the projects should be judged on their merits. This project is different from the typical industrial park, particularly in its energy efficiency design standards. Commissioner Weber's comment regarding impervious surfaces was addressed. While the project may not be cutting edge, many low impact development standards have been applied at great expense. In response to Chair Magers, he noted that there was no commercial use proposed, only industrial to be used as an employment park.

Commissioner Edwards asked if runoff would be directed from the parking area into the sedimentation pond for recharge. Mr. Krmptotic replied that stormwater would be micromanaged on site.

Dan Herman, 11275 Campo Rico Lane, expressed consternation about the noticing policy used by the County. He noted there were three deaths at the intersection of Calle de la Plata and Pyramid Highway in the past two years. Although the applicant has agreed to contribute to a signal at that intersection, Mr. Herman would like a commitment that the signal be installed when the development commences. He was also not in favor of specific plans in the Spanish Springs area. If the developer plans to install windmills on the project, Mr. Herman recommended the project be brought back before the CAB prior to being presented to the Planning Commission.

James and Kim Lacy, 430 Tranquil Drive, Sparks, and Maria Voltl, 395 Calle Limpio Court, Sparks, spoke in opposition to the project. Concerns included loss of vistas through ongoing development, the fact the applicant offered twenty acres to the County for the sediment pond, creating the appearance of the County being obligated to the applicant, increase in traffic, and the possible devaluation of properties.

Chair Magers closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Cobb asked Paul Solaegui to comment on the danger of the intersection of Calle de la Plata and Pyramid Way. Mr. Solaegui stated a traffic study was done that indicated that existing volumes do not meet a traffic signal warrant. The completed project would generate enough additional traffic to warrant a traffic signal, however.

Commissioner Weber asked staff if notice of this hearing was posted on the property and if the staff report was posted on the County's website. Mr. Lloyd replied that the staff report was indeed on the website, but the County did not post signage notice of hearings on the property. Ms. Robinson noted that notice was mailed to property owners within 750 feet of the project, with a minimum of thirty property owners, as required by the Nevada Revised Statutes.

In response to Commissioner Edwards, Mr. Lloyd stated that the cost of a traffic signal was not included in the developer's application.

Commissioner Edwards asked Mr. Solaegui how the traffic study was performed. Mr. Solaegui stated that his staff physically sat at the intersections during morning and evening peak hours and counted the turning movements. National manuals were used to predict future volumes based on square footage of the proposed development, and Regional Transportation Commission data was used to predict the local generated traffic from future growth.

Commissioner Lockard asked Mr. Lloyd to present his perspective on the split vote of the CAB on the specific plan. Mr. Lloyd recollected that discussion between the vote on the comprehensive plan amendment and the specific plan regarding development that would be allowed by right upon approval of the specific plan produced some skepticism of one of the CAB members.

Commissioner Cobb asked Mr. Krmpotic to comment on providing a traffic signal. Mr. Krmpotic stated that when the first phase of the project was completed, if the required warrants were present, the applicant would be required to provide a traffic signal.

Mr. Harper emphasized the installation of a traffic signal was controlled by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and no light would be installed until warrants are met.

Commissioner Cobb and Chair Magers stressed that the information regarding the fatalities referred to by Mr. Herman be shared with NDOT.

Commissioner Lockard inquired as to the setbacks along the eastern and southern boundaries of the project and the distance from the buildings on the site and the homes in the area. Mr. Lloyd replied there was a setback of fifty feet from the property line, including the fifteen-foot equestrian easement; and, because of certain constraints, the setback would be even greater. The properties on the south also have an equestrian easement in addition to their setbacks.

Chair Magers asked to be shown the boundary of the Suburban Character Management Area on the overhead. Mr. Lloyd complied. Her purpose was to demonstrate to the community that the area was designated for more intensive development.

Commissioner Hibdon stated he was very much in favor of the specific plan process, as he felt it gave the community more opportunity to become involved in the process.

Chair Magers asked if, with the specific plan, the project would still come before the Planning Commission. Mr. Lloyd replied that the project would come before the Planning Commission if a special use permit was required or a subdivision was proposed. However, uses identified as uses allowed by right would only require a building permit and full compliance with the design standards handbook.

Commissioner Edwards requested that the perimeter landscaping on the east and south sides be installed at the commencement of the development rather than during the phasing of the project.

Upon advice of Deputy District Attorney Edwards regarding the wording of the motion, Commissioner Weber moved to adopt a resolution to approve Comprehensive Plan Amendment Case Number CP08-006, in accordance with the findings in Article 820 of the Development Code. A motion was seconded by Commissioner Cobb and passed unanimously.

The motion was based on the following findings:

1. The proposed amendments to the Spanish Springs Area Plan are in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposed amendments to the Spanish Springs Area Plan will provide for land uses compatible with existing and planned adjacent land uses and will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare.
3. The proposed amendments will further implement and preserve the Vision and Character Statement of the Spanish Springs Area Plan.
4. The proposed amendments to the Spanish Springs Area Plan will not adversely affect the implementation of the policies and action programs of the Conservation Element, the Population Element and/or the Housing Element of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.

5. The proposed amendments to the Spanish Springs Area Plan will promote the desired pattern for the physical growth of the County and guides development of the County based on the projected population growth with the least amount of natural resource impairment and the efficient expenditure of funds for public services.
6. The proposed amendment to the Spanish Springs Area Plan is the first amendment to the Spanish Springs Area Plan in 2008, and therefore does not exceed the three permitted amendments as specified in Section 110.820.05 of the Washoe County Development Code.
7. The Washoe County Planning Commission gave reasoned consideration to information contained within the staff report and information received during the public hearing.

Commissioner Weber moved to adopt a resolution to approve Specific Plan SP08-001, in accordance with the findings in Articles 816 and 820 of the Development Code. The motion was seconded by Commissioner VanderWell and passed unanimously.

The motion was based on the following findings:

1. The proposed Specific Plan is in substantial compliance with the policies and action programs of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposed Specific Plan will provide for land uses compatible with existing and planned adjacent land uses and will not adversely impact the public health, safety or welfare.
3. The proposed Specific Plan will not adversely affect the implementation of the policies and action programs of the Conservation Element, the Population Element and/or the Housing Element of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.
4. The proposed Specific Plan will promote the desired pattern for the physical growth of the County and guides development of the County based on the projected population growth with the least amount of natural resource impairment and the efficient expenditure of funds for public services.
5. The Washoe County Planning Commission gave reasoned consideration to information contained within the staff report and information received during the public hearing.

[Commissioners Weber and VanderWell left the dais and did not return.]

[A recess was called at 8:02 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:16 p.m.]

OTHER ITEMS

None

WORKSHOP ITEMS

VISUAL SIMULATIONS WORKSHOP: This is an informational workshop highlighting new technologies for planning presentations. No action will be taken on any matters during the workshop.

Lisa Brosnan, Pablo Marin and Chad Giesinger presented information on how visual simulations can enhance the provision of information and the types of simulations that can be offered and are provided by the department. Ms. Brosnan described the advantages of using visual simulations, from the neighborhood level through presentations to the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Marin explained how important visual representations are to the human brain for conveying accurate and consistent information. Computerized representations can also be misleading, resulting in decisions being made based on the visual images only.

Mr. Giesinger demonstrated some real-world applications that have been done in the Community Development Department. Google Earth technology consists of taking Geographic Information System (GIS) data and converting it into language recognized by Google Earth. He displayed a fly-through of a proposed wind turbine farm, both from overhead and road level. A fly-through showing the proposed results of a comprehensive plan amendment was also presented, illustrating the what-if scenario approach. Still images representing a proposed development are very effective in certain situations.

Mr. Giesinger noted application requirements for digital files of tentative subdivision maps. A possible future requirement would be for digital finish grading plans.

Another type of technology in use by Community Development is the ArcGIS suite, which is more sophisticated than the Google Earth technology.

Data accuracy is mandatory for computerized visualization to be effective. Base topography can be exaggerated, which could present very misleading data. Knowledge of who is creating the presentation is important.

Mr. Harper advised that consistency of information provided must be maintained. He asked the Commissioners to provide comments and identify the types of information they would like to have presented.

Commissioner Cobb noted that the value of photo simulations was in the hands of those who create them. Mr. Giesinger assured him that staff had access to the best available data, and staff would provide consistency in the quality of the presentation.

Chair Magers asked if staff would be viewing an applicant's presentation to assure that it conformed to acceptable standards. Mr. Giesinger suggested that applicants be advised that staff would review all incoming applications, including the photo simulations.

Commissioner Lockard suggested that technology be shared among the three jurisdictions as well as the Regional Planning Agency. This would assure a common set of technologies in use in the region. Mr. Giesinger stated that the County does provide a lot of information to the Regional Planning Agency.

Mr. Harper asked that the Planning Commissioners give staff a sense of what types of visual information they would like to have presented.

Commissioner Hibdon urged that staff not go overboard in doing the applicant's job. He was concerned about the expense of the software used as well as staff time.

Commissioner Edwards commented that the type of visuals shown this evening would have greatly assisted in making the decisions related to the South Valleys Area Plan.

Chair Magers stated that many community meetings were required to convey the idea behind projects using words, and the use of tools such as demonstrated at this meeting would save many hours of staff and Commissioner time. The initial cost could be substantial, but the long-term savings would be much greater.

Commissioner Hibdon was concerned that the technology would be helpful in project review but not in land use planning. Mr. Giesinger assured him that demonstrations could be made by overlaying land use on specific topography and show a model of the impact on the land.

Chair Magers complimented staff on the presentation.

CHAIR AND COMMISSION ITEMS

Commissioner Hibdon introduced his wife of one year, Carlene.

Commissioner Lockard advised that the Regional Transportation Commission adopted the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan at its November meeting. They also approved an alignment for the Southeast Connector from the Damonte Ranch/Double Diamond area north to the Sparks industrial area. Actual construction will not commence for many years due to the large costs and procedural necessities, such as environmental studies.

a. Report on Previous Planning Commission Items

None

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS

Mr. Harper announced that the February Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2009, in the District Health Department, Building B, 1001 East Ninth Street, due to the fact the Commission Chambers will be occupied by the Board of Equalization the entire month of February.

A workshop on the topic of Planning Commission Rules, Policies and Procedures will be scheduled for January 2009.

Mr. Harper advised that the County's Technology Services Department has expressed an interest in providing the Planning Commissioners with laptop computers upon which they can view their meeting packets in lieu of receiving the voluminous paper packets currently sent to them. Unfortunately, there are not computers available at this time, but it is expected that some will become available in the future. He did remind them that this information is available on our website.

ADJOURNMENT

Since there was no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathi Moldenhauer, Recording Secretary

Approved by Commission in session on January 6, 2009.

Adrian P. Freund, FAICP
Secretary to the Planning Commission