

GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
November 12, 2024, 5:30 PM
MINUTES

The meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Commissioner Teske.

Those present were Planning Commissioners; Ken Scissors, Sandra Weckerly, Kim Herek, Orin Zyvan, Ian Moore, and Robert Quintero.

Also present were Jamie Beard (City Attorney), Niki Galehouse (Planning Manager), Dave Thornton (Principal Planner), Tim Lehrbach (Senior Planner), Madeline Robinson (Planning Technician) and Jacob Kaplan (Planning Technician).

There were 4 members of the public in attendance, and 1 virtually.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) from October 22, 2024.

Commissioner Scissors moved to approve the consent agenda.

Commissioner Weckerly seconded; motion passed 7-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment – UDB & 201 Boundary Adjustments CPA-2024-644

Consider Amendments to Title 31 One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan) including Chapter 31.04 Comprehensive Plan and Establish a Land Use Designation of Residential Low for 2 Properties consisting of approximately 9.5 acres located on the east side of 30 Road just north of the Colorado River.

Staff Presentation

Dave Thornton, Principal Planner, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Questions for staff

Commissioner Zyvan asked who the property owner is for Area E. He asked why the land use of Residential Low was chosen for the properties in Area E. He asked if the State of Colorado would develop the property in the future. He asked if staff had evaluated the viability for these sites to be developed as public parks or open space.

Commissioner Weckerly asked if there were any negative impacts for the property owners who requested not to be included in the Urban Development Boundary (UDB).

Commissioner Quintero clarified that the intent of this request was just to align the UDB with the 201 Boundary.

Commissioner Moore asked what issues arise if the UDB and 201 Boundary are not aligned.

Public Hearing

The public comment period was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

There were no public comments.

The public comment period was closed at 5:56 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

There were no additional comments or questions from the Commission or staff.

The public hearing was closed at 5:57 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

Discussion

Commissioner Zyvan expressed concerns with the Residential Low land use designation for the properties in Area E. He proposed amending the motion to designate the future land use for the properties in Area E as Parks and Open Space to restrict how these parcels could be zoned.

Commissioner Scissors noted that the City did not own the property and that the State had indicated they wanted the flexibility to zone it to residential in the future.

Commissioner Quintero agreed with Commissioner Zyvan but that the current request only affected the boundaries and not the final zoning of the parcels.

Commissioner Herek echoed Commissioner Scissors' and Quintero's comments

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Scissors made the following motion "Mr. Chairman, on the request to amend Title 31 One Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan including Chapter 31.04, City file number CPA-2024-644, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to City Council with the findings of fact as listed in the staff report."

Commissioner Quintero seconded; motion passed 7-0.

2. Zoning & Development Code Amendments – Quarter 4 2024 ZCA-2024-660

Consider Amendments to Title 21 Zoning and Development Code to Modify and Clarify Various Provisions Relating to Application Outreach Meetings, Withdrawn Applications, Public Notice, Minor Plat Amendments, Simple Subdivisions, Administrative Changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Non-Administrative Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Conditional Use Permits, Permitted Encroachments, Mixed-Use Districts Regulations, Public, Civic, and Institutional Campus (P-2) Zone District Regulations, Principal Use Table, Use-Specific Standards for Industrial Uses,

Accessory Uses and Structures, Accessory Use-Specific Standards, Temporary Uses and Structures, Shared Driveway (Autocourt) Standards, Residential Compatibility Standards, Preservation of Significant Trees, Off-Street Parking and Loading, Measurements, and Definitions.

Staff Presentation

Niki Galehouse, Planning Manager, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Questions for staff

Commissioner Quintero clarified that the purpose of this request was to “clean up” the code and make interpretation easier moving forward.

Commissioner Herek asked if there were still noticing requirements for neighborhood meetings.

Commissioner Zyvan asked what the “physical” requirements are for noticing of neighborhood meetings. He asked how citizens who were not within the 500ft mailing distance would be notified of a neighborhood meeting.

Commissioner Weckerly asked why the number of houses on shared driveways was being amended. She clarified that the current language regarding the maximum number of units on shared driveways did not apply to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). She stated her appreciation for Staff’s considerations about significant trees. She asked for additional clarification on the proposed amendments to the alternative parking plans.

Jamie Beard indicated that Staff planned to remove the shared driveway amendments from the motion as there were conflicts with Fire Code that still needed to be addressed.

Commissioner Moore asked if there were any issues with amending the shared driveways language in the Zoning Code after the Fire Code had been updated.

Public Hearing

The public comment period was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

There were no public comments.

The public comment period was closed at 6:31 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

There were no additional comments or questions from the Commission or staff.

The public hearing was closed at 6:32 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

Discussion

Commissioner Scissors applauded the Staff’s continuous efforts to revise the code.

Commissioner Herek asked why Staff wanted to table the amendments for shared driveways.

Commissioner Weckerly noted that the Zoning Code mirrors the Fire Code and adopting the proposed amendments to the shared driveways would put these two codes out of sync.

Commissioner Quintero echoed Commissioner Weckerly's comment.

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Scissors made the following motion "Mr. Chairman, on the request to amend Title 21 Zoning and Development Code of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, City file number ZCA-2024-660, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to City Council with the provision that the section dealing with shared driveway density, Number 21.05.020, be removed and otherwise the findings of fact listed in the staff report."

Commissioner Zyvan seconded; motion passed 7-0.

3. Zoning & Development Code Amendments – Ped & Bike Connections ZCA-2024-656

Consider Amendments to Title 21 Zoning and Development Code, Chapter 21.05 Site And Structure Development Standards, Regarding Pedestrian And Bicycle Connections Within Development Sites.

Staff Presentation

Tim Lehrbach, Senior Planner, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Questions for staff

Commissioner Moore asked if staff knew how many properties that had developed since the new code was adopted in 2023 that were negatively impacted by the pedestrian access requirements. He asked if any alternative possibilities were explored regarding site layout in the same way as the drive-through facilities.

Commissioner Scissors asked how this issue was being approached in similar municipalities. He asked if there were any "Best Practices" for pedestrian access that had been developed in other jurisdictions.

Commissioner Zyvan asked if a cost-benefit analysis had been done for this proposal.

Niki Galehouse clarified that the municipalities that had similar pedestrian access language utilized form-based districts which implement the pedestrian access design standards based on the underlying zone.

Commissioner Quintero asked if the considerations for pedestrian safety still provided the greatest flexibility to owners looking to develop their property.

Public Hearing

The public comment period was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

Tom McCloskey expressed concerns that this proposal was a step backward from the mobility goals established in the TEDS Manual. He asked if the City had heard any feedback from the disabled community on how this amendment would impact their accessibility. He wanted to know how the Transportation Department felt this change would impact their long-term goals.

Andy Gingerich, representing GVT and the RTPPO, stated that the language concerning “adequate physical separation” led to more thoughtfulness in site design and that removal or modification of this language would lead to more auto-oriented design standards. He noted that the interaction between vehicles and pedestrians was particularly important in mixed-use zones.

Paula Anderson noted her appreciation for staff’s efforts. She commented that the shift toward multimodality has community support and is worth investing in.

Tim Lehrbach and Niki Galehouse addressed the public’s comments and questions.

The public comment period was closed at 7:26 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

Commissioner Quintero thanked the staff for their efforts.

Commissioner Zyvan asked for clarification on what specifically was being requested with this amendment.

The public hearing was closed at 7:29 p.m. on November 12, 2024.

Discussion

Discussion ensued regarding handicap accessibility, pedestrian safety, site design and zoning code requirements, and the various challenges presented by accommodating pedestrian access.

Commissioner Weckerly expressed concerns that requiring complete physical separation for pedestrian access restricted property owners’ ability to develop their lots as they choose. She stated that if the City wanted some control over the placement of structures during development, it should be called out separately in the Zoning and Development Code rather than relying on the subject code section.

Chairman Teske stated that the Zoning Code used the word “adequate” instead of “complete” intentionally and he argued that the proposed amendments were not in conflict with the City’s objectives for multimodal transportation. He echoed Commissioner Weckerly’s comments on having a separate code section for pedestrian access.

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Weckerly made the following motion “Mr. Chairman, on the request to amend Title 21 Zoning and Development Code of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, City file number ZCA-2024-656, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to City Council with the findings of fact listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Quintero seconded; motion passed 6-1.

Commissioner Zyvan clarified his reasoning for voting “nay” on the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

Niki Galehouse reminded the Commission that the November 24th Hearing was cancelled.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Scissors moved to adjourn the meeting.

The vote to adjourn was 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.