

**GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 25, 2007 MINUTES
7:00 p.m. to 8:35 p.m.**

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Roland Cole. The public hearing was held in the City Hall Auditorium.

In attendance, representing the City Planning Commission, were Roland Cole (Vice-Chairman), Lynn Pavelka-Zarkesh, Bill Pitts, Reggie Wall, William Putnam, Patrick Carlow (1st alternate) and Ken Sublett (2nd alternate). Commissioners Dr. Paul A. Dibble (Chairman) and Tom Lowrey were absent.

In attendance, representing the City's Public Works and Planning Department – Planning Division, were Greg Moberg (Planning Services Supervisor), Ken Kovalchik (Senior Planner), Ronnie Edwards (Associate Planner), and Scott Peterson (Senior Planner).

Also present was Jamie Beard (Assistant City Attorney).

Lynn Singer was present to record the minutes.

There were approximately 53 interested citizens present during the course of the hearing.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS AND/OR VISITORS

There were no announcements, presentations and/or visitors.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes available for consideration.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Available for consideration were items:

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| 1. PP-2006-102 | PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN – Kresin Subdivision |
| 2. VE-2007-233 | VACATION OF EASEMENT – Sundance Village
Easement Vacation |
| 3. PP-2006-214 | PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN – Mesa Ayr
Subdivision |
| 4. PFP-2007-044 | PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN – Dakota West
Subdivision Filing 3 |

- 5. CUP-2007-151 **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – Fordman Investments, LLC**
- 6. ANX-2007-220 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Ute Water Annexation**
- 7. GPA-2007-061 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Page Annexation**
- 8. ANX-2007-215 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Gentry Annexation**
- 9. ANX-2007-242 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Timberline Steel Annexation**
- 10. ANX-2007-234 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Crespin Annexation**
- 11. ANX-2007-232 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Bookcliff Land & Building Annexation**
- 12. ANX-2007-241 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Krabacher Annexation**
- 13. ANX-2007-251 **ZONE OF ANNEXATION – Rim View Estates Annexation**

Vice Chairman Cole briefly explained the Consent Agenda and invited the public, planning commissioners, and staff to speak if they wanted any of the items pulled for additional discussion. Vice Chairman Cole announced that due to the length of the agenda, items on the Consent Agenda would be heard at the end of the regular hearing items already on the agenda and could possibly be continued to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing. Ken Kovalchik, Public Works and Planning Department, stated that an adjustment to some of the lot lines along the cul-de-sac bulb regarding Item 4 had been made. No objections or revisions were received from the audience or planning commissioners on any of the remaining Consent Agenda items.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pitts) “Mr. Chairman, I move the Consent Agenda be approved, Items 1 through 13, as corrected.”

Commissioner Sublett seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

IV. FULL HEARING

- 14. SPP-2007-154 **SIGN PERMIT PACKAGE – Riverside Crossing Subdivision**
 Request approval for a Sign Package Permit for the Riverside Crossing Subdivision in a C-2 (General Commercial) zone district.
PETITIONER: James Walker – Gulf Coast Commercial
LOCATION: 2502 & 2504 Hwy 6 & 50
STAFF: Ronnie Edwards

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Ronnie Edwards of the Public Works and Planning Department addressed the Commission regarding the request for a sign package for the Riverside Crossing Subdivision. Ms. Edwards stated that the subdivision was approved in October 2006 and consists of two parcels totaling six acres. With the subdivision approval, Ms. Edwards stated that a new shared access between the lots was constructed to allow the two sites to develop and function as one, sharing parking and access. She further

explained that pylon signs are proposed along the two right-of-ways along 25 Road and adjacent to Highway 6 & 50. Each sign will be 248 square feet with a height of 30 feet. Ronnie Edwards confirmed that the maximum wall signage allowed for all of the lots together is 1,350 square feet; however, applicant's proposal would reduce the signage to 1,022 square feet and would be distributed along all three buildings. She concluded that after reviewing the criteria, she found that it met the Code and was consistent with the Growth Plan and, therefore, recommended approval of the sign package permit.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Sublett asked what the height of the building on the west elevation to the south is which is also the highest part of the building. Ronnie Edwards stated that she believed it to be 30 feet but without the site plan before her she could not confirm the exact height.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

James Walker, Gulf Coast Commercial, Houston, Texas, stated that they have worked with staff to develop this sign plan. He stated that they chose to build on Highway 6 & 50 because that lot was allowed that sign and was consistent with the Code. Mr. Walker also stated that the location of the 25 Road sign is about 8 feet below the street grade.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Sublett stated that he did not believe that a 30 foot sign would be compatible on 25 Road and added that he believed higher signs increase traffic friction.

James Walker stated that the applicant believed that the proposed sign area is needed to put as many tenants as possible on the sign. He further stated that they believed the height of the proposed sign to be proportional and important for the traffic coming southbound on 25 Road.

Commissioner Sublett asked if the sign on 25 Road would be a duplicate of the sign on Highway 6 & 50. James Walker stated that it would depend on the resulting tenant mix.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Pitts stated that the signs are virtually illegible while traveling at 35 miles per hour. He stated that he would not support the sign package.

Commissioner Carlow stated that he too has problems with signage but stated that he believes it is more a function of changing the Sign Code rather than dealing with it on an individual basis. He stated that until the Sign Code is changed, he has no reason to not support this project.

Commissioner Putnam agreed that these signs may not be any more effective than those on Patterson Road; however, they do conform to the Code.

Commissioner Wall agreed with Commissioner Putnam and added that he felt the biggest difference between the signs that were being built now are a better quality. He further stated that he appreciated that applicant using less footage than what is allowed.

Commissioner Cole stated that he agreed with Commissioner Putnam that this was well within the Code and, therefore, would support the request.

MOTION: (Commissioner Putnam) “Mr. Chairman, I move that the Planning Commission approve the Sign Package Permit, SPP-2007-154, for the Riverside Crossing Subdivision with the findings and conclusions listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Wall seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed by a vote of 6-1 with Commissioner Pitts opposed.

15. GPA-2006-241

GROWTH PLAN AMENDMENT – City Market Site

Request approval of a Growth Plan Amendment to change the Future Land Use Designation from Residential Medium (4-8 du/ac) to Commercial for 3.2 acres of an 8.6 acre site in anticipation of potential commercial development

PETITIONER: Phyllis Norris – Dillon Real Estate Company

LOCATION: 12th Street & Wellington Avenue

STAFF: Scott Peterson

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Scott Peterson, Senior Planner, Public Works and Planning Department, spoke on the request for a Growth Plan Amendment. Mr. Peterson stated that the subject property is located at the northeast corner of North 12th Street and Wellington Avenue. He stated that applicant has requested a Growth Plan Amendment in anticipation of future commercial development for the entire 8.6 acres. The surrounding zoning is presently a mix of commercial, medical offices, and single and multi-family uses. Mr. Peterson stated that the requested Growth Plan Amendment is acceptable because the proposed change from Residential Medium to Commercial will not adversely affect the residential land supply in the community and would be more in keeping with existing commercial development in the area. He further stated that anticipated development and higher traffic volumes could make new single-family residential development potentially questionable. Furthermore, he said that as there is a little less than three acres to work with and with the irregularly shaped lots, off street parking, open space, landscaping and buffering requirements could make development of multi-family dwelling units less feasible. Mr. Peterson pointed out that adjacent land use classifications are Commercial, Residential Medium and Residential Medium High. Mr. Peterson stated that current zoning for the area is R-8 and B-1. Existing and proposed infrastructure facilities are adequate to serve the commercial development. He also stated that additional upgrades to the intersection of 12th Street and Patterson Avenue would be required, likely including a requirement that the City acquire additional right-of-way at that intersection. Wellington Avenue would also be upgraded with half street improvements, including curb, gutter and sidewalk on the north side of Wellington

Avenue. Mr. Peterson further advised that increased traffic is a major concern. He stated that the proposed Growth Plan Amendment is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Growth Plan. Additionally, the applicable review criteria of the Zoning and Development Code have been met.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Wall asked if the entire 8 acre site were to be developed by one developer, would they have to stay within the boundary lines as marked. Mr. Peterson said that there are 21 parcels and the Commercial section would have to be developed commercially on the Commercial properties and any residential development would have to be developed on the Residential properties.

Commissioner Pitts asked if multi-family dwellings could be built on the subject property. Scott Peterson stated that there can be multi-family development in a Commercial designation.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Mark Goldberg, president of Goldberg Property Associates, retail developers, addressed the Commission in support of the requested Growth Plan Amendment. He stated that the difficulty in developing the property is that the Residential portion is odd shaped and does not allow for good residential development. He said that the Growth Plan places emphasis on infill development, which this development would be and is at the intersection of two of the City's major arterials. Therefore, he stated that he believed Commercial is a logical development scenario. Mr. Goldberg stated that it is the applicant's intent to develop a neighborhood shopping center that would have a grocery store. He said that the Growth Plan identified some key issues – to maintain compact development patterns focusing on unique needs of the community, neighborhoods and enhancing community aesthetics. He stated that the proposed project does work with those issues.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Carlow asked if the property was purchased as a contiguous 8 acres. Mr. Goldberg stated that he believed there was one parcel that was not included at the time of the original purchase.

PUBLIC COMMENT

For:

Dale Beede, 2059 Baseline Road, a commercial real estate broker, stated that he believed this would be the finest commercial corner in Grand Junction. He further said that he sits on the Hilltop Board of Directors and Hilltop is in favor of this development.

Sandy Randall, 1441 Patterson Road, president of Patterson Gardens Homeowners' Association, which is immediately east of the subject property, stated that the Homeowners' Association is in favor of the development.

Janet Terry (3120 Beechwood) stated that she supports a change in the Growth Plan to reflect Commercial on the 3 acres as requested by applicant.

Ana Elliott, 3082 D½ Road, said that she believes this seems to be the most natural place to begin infill development.

Against:

Bruce Verstraete (1321 Wellington Avenue) asked the Board for consistency – that this property remain Residential and not be allowed to be developed as proposed. He said that to change the area from Residential to Commercial would not be fair.

Pat Verstraete (1321 Wellington Avenue) stated that she represented the 366 neighbors that have signed a petition which had been provided to the Commission. Ms. Verstraete stated that according to the Zoning and Development Code, the Growth Plan can only be amended if the proposed change is consistent with the purpose and the intent of the Growth Plan and meets the applicable conditions. She further stated that the proposed zoning change is not compatible with the existing neighborhood. The proposed change would bring in 7,968 people a day with the businesses having up to 150 employees and would operate 24/7. A zoning change of this magnitude would significantly impact the existing neighborhoods and would be inconsistent with the purpose and the intent of the Growth Plan. Ms. Verstraete further pointed out that there is currently a great need for the type of development that this parcel of land is zoned for – medium to high density multi-family units. She further stated that the Housing Authority has a waiting list of almost two years and believes the City is experiencing a housing crisis.

Harriett Clothier, 1441 Patterson, #801, voiced her concern regarding the removal of any City residential areas as the City is in desperate need of obtainable housing. She also said that this is not an urban area. The area is a transitional area or a buffer zone between the urban and the suburban and commercial development would not be compatible being a transitional buffer zone. She went on to state that infill projects in the immediate area are not commercial but rather residential. She said that this will be a permanent drastic change.

PETITIONER'S REBUTTAL

Mark Goldberg stated that things can be done to mitigate the impact of the proposed development. He said that the proposed project by changing it to Commercial addresses some things positively.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Putnam said that he agrees with staff that the necessary criteria for a Growth Plan Amendment have been met and would be in favor of recommending it to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Sublett stated that he is very reluctant to change the Growth Plan; however, this particular request holds considerable merit. He further stated that with the

development issues facing the City, that it would be wise to approve this Growth Plan Amendment.

Commissioner Carlow stated that a contiguous one zone would be easier to deal with and would be in favor of approving the requested amendment.

Commissioner Pitts said that he too would be in favor of approving the amendment. He said that the Growth Plan Amendment could be an inducement or encouragement for a development that is aesthetically appropriate.

Commissioner Wall agreed that all criteria have been met to change the Growth Plan. He further said that it makes the most sense to have this changed to Commercial considering the growth of the community.

Commissioner Pavelka-Zarkesh said that she too would be in favor of the project based on the efficiency and existing infrastructure. She stated that the project could benefit the entire area and offer some benefit to the neighborhoods.

Commissioner Putnam stated that while several letters had been received stating their opposition to another grocery store in the area, the decision before the Board at this time is limited to the Growth Plan Amendment.

Commissioner Cole also spoke in favor of the amendment.

MOTION: (Commissioner Sublett) “Mr. Chairman, on item GPA-2006-241, City Market Growth Plan Amendment, I move that we forward a recommendation of approval of the requested amendment from Residential Medium (4 – 8 DU/Acre) to Commercial for properties located at 2510 N. 12th Street, 1212, 1228, 1238, 1308, 1310, 1314 and 1324 Wellington Avenue.”

Commissioner Pitts seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

With no objection and no further business, the public hearing was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.