

**GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 14, 2012 MINUTES
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Wall. The public hearing was held in the City Hall Auditorium.

In attendance, representing the City Planning Commission, were Reginald Wall (Chairman), Lynn Pavelka (Vice-Chairman), Pat Carlow, Ebe Eslami, Lyn Benoit, Keith Leonard and Loren Couch (Alternate). Commissioner Greg Williams was absent.

In attendance, representing the City's Public Works and Planning Department – Planning Division, were Lisa Cox (Planning Manager), Greg Moberg (Planning Services Supervisor), Lori Bowers (Senior Planner), Brian Rusche (Senior Planner), Senta Costello (Senior Planner), Scott Peterson (Senior Planner) and Kristen Ashbeck (Senior Planner).

Also present was Jamie Beard (Assistant City Attorney).

Lynn Singer was present to record the minutes.

There were 20 interested citizens present during the course of the hearing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS AND/OR VISITORS

There were no announcements, presentations and/or visitors.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Approve the minutes of the January 10, 2012 Regular Meeting.

2. Brookwillow Village Planned Development – Request for Extension

Request a two year extension of the approved Preliminary Planned Development Plan to develop the final phase consisting of 5.116 acres in a Planned Development (PD) zone district.

FILE #: PP-2004-130
PETITIONER: Darin Carei
LOCATION: 650 24 1/2 Road
STAFF: Lori Bowers

3. Red Rocks Valley Planned Development – Request for Extension

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to amend the approved Phasing Schedule in the Planned Development Ordinance for Red Rocks Valley Planned Development (PD) zone district.

FILE #: PP-2006-217
PETITIONER: Kirk Rider – Rider & Quesenberry, LLP
LOCATION: South Camp Road & Monument Road
STAFF: Lori Bowers

4. Mobility Auto Center CUP – Conditional Use Permit

Request approval of a CUP to allow outdoor storage and display in the front half of the property on 0.314 acres in a C-1 (General Commercial) zone district.

FILE #: CUP-2011-1290
PETITIONER: Paul Harmon – Mobillity Auto Center LLC
LOCATION: 215 South 15th Street
STAFF: Senta Costello

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “I move we approve the Consent Agenda as read.”

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

Public Hearing Items

5. North Seventh Street Historic Residential District – Planned Development – Amendment; and Text Amendment to Section 21.07.040 – Zoning Code Amendment

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to 1) amend Ordinance No. 4403 to establish a new Plan for the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District Planned Development, including the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District Guidelines and Standards, to maintain and enhance the historic character of those properties and to apply those same Guidelines and Standards in an advisory manner to properties located at 327, 337 and 310 North 7th Street; and (2) amend the Zoning and Development Code to authorize the Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board to review and approve applications for construction/alteration to sites and/or structures within the entire District, located on North 7th Street between Hill Avenue and White Avenue.

FILE #: PLD-2012-80 and ZCA-2012-107
PETITIONER: Seventh Street Historic Residential District Neighborhood
LOCATION: North 7th Street between Hill Avenue and White Avenue
STAFF: Kristen Ashbeck

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Kristen Ashbeck, Senior Planner with the Neighborhood Services Division of the Public Works and Planning Department, addressed the Commission regarding the request from the North Seventh Street Historic Residential Neighborhood District. She advised that the subject area was located on North 7th Street and encompassed 35 properties

that fronted North Seventh Street from White Avenue on the south to Hill Avenue on the north.

Ms Ashbeck next referenced the split of the Comprehensive Plan as the properties south of Grand Avenue were part of the Downtown Mixed Use designation and the properties to the north were part of the Residential Medium land use designation with all of the existing uses within the District being consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. As there was a split land use designation, there was split zoning as well – the properties north of Grand Avenue were PD (Planned Development) properties and the properties south were B-2 (Downtown Business) with surrounding zoning being compatible and comparable to the uses that exist.

Ms. Ashbeck provided some background on the District as it was designated on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984 and she believed it was the only nationally registered district in the City of Grand Junction and perhaps the only designated district in Mesa County. She said the neighborhood would like to establish a process and standards to maintain and enhance the District as they were experiencing changes over time to the properties and would like to ensure the properties were maintained and continued in the current historic character as they now were.

The PD (Planned Development) zoning was re-established in February 2010 and at that time the PD zoning did not include any guidelines or standards for how decisions were to be made for changes in the District. She advised that the guidelines were recommended statements but standards were mandatory. In the creation of the guidelines and standards, an inventory of the homes and their current architectural characteristics was created which served as a guide for property owners and decision-makers as proposed alterations were evaluated. Ms Ashbeck said that the District had surveyed all of the property owners and 71% of the property owners preferred a mix of both guidelines and standards and determined that this document was tailored to the desires of the neighborhood.

Ms. Ashbeck next outlined the topics addressed by the guidelines and standards which were based on the evaluation of the properties in the survey. The neighborhood also did some choices exercises at their neighborhood meetings and discussed different elements such as window shapes, siding, and color palate. The most essential elements to be preserved and enhanced were determined. There were also some guidelines and standards which addressed overall characteristics of the District such as streetscape, setbacks, views along the street, street trees, and front yard landscaping. She said the guidelines and standards also distinguished between a contributing – those which retained the most historic character and integrity - and non-contributing structures – those which were already heavily altered or new structures.

Ms. Ashbeck concluded that the proposal was two-fold: To adopt a new PD zone district whereas the guidelines and standards would become the new plan for the properties in the PD zoning and for the properties south of Grand Avenue not in the PD zoning the document would be adopted as an advisory document only. For the PD zoning, the

underlying R-8 zoning would be retained. She noted that the new guidelines and standards would create separate bulk standards. There was also a review process established for how changes or alterations to structures and sites within the District. The second part of the proposal was a recommendation on a Zoning and Development Code revision that would provide new authority for the Historic Preservation Board to make final decisions. A Certificate of Appropriateness would be applied for and submitted to the Planning Division for staff review. It would then go to the Historic Preservation Board for a final decision. Any appeals to those decisions would go to City Council.

Ms. Ashbeck briefly outlined some of the guidelines and standards which addressed such things as new bulk requirements, landscaping, utility systems and the placement of the same, fencing, parking and lighting. Architectural guidelines went back to the essential elements the neighborhood felt were the most critical to try to retain whether for new construction, an addition or other alteration and determined there should be certain elements of the character of those homes that should be retained.

These included building proportions, exterior materials and promotion of trim and architectural details that looked similar to what was already there, porches, doors, spacing of windows, roof forms, additions and demolitions. Ms. Ashbeck concluded that the proposal was consistent with applicable sections of the Comprehensive Plan, sections of the Code, and the community would continue to derive benefits.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Eslami asked if the guidelines would become something similar to covenants. Ms. Ashbeck confirmed they would and the Historic Board could be compared to an architectural control committee but it would be zoning oriented as there was no homeowners association.

Commissioner Eslami asked if the Historic Preservation Board would become an agent to enforce the guidelines. Ms. Ashbeck said the Zoning Code itself would serve that way and could result in code enforcement actions.

Commissioner Eslami next asked if a building was destroyed in some manner, would they have to go through the Historic Preservation Board to approve a rebuilding. Ms. Ashbeck believed the owner would have to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Commissioner Benoit asked if the 71% were in favor of both standards and guidelines. Ms. Ashbeck confirmed they were.

Commissioner Benoit then asked if there was a percentage of those affected by the change in favor of the change. Ms. Ashbeck stated that it was basically the same percentage – 71%. She added that 5 out of 35 failed to respond; and 25 of the 30 who did respond were in favor of both a mix of the guidelines and standards. She believed there was only one response received that voted in favor of no change and opined that the majority of those who did respond did not necessarily agree with the current process

in that every alteration would have to go to City Council and, thus, saw the need to do something.

PETITIONER’S PRESENTATION

Kathy Jordan, 440 North 7th Street, said that she had worked with the rest of the neighborhood for approximately two years in the development of the guidelines and standards for the District. She confirmed that the City had helped with clarification and felt that she did not have much to add to Staff’s presentation except that she was impressed with the neighborhood participation. She explained that there were four meetings held; choices were presented to the neighborhood from which a survey was developed; and a decision was made after guidance from staff together with the survey results to meet the best interest of the neighborhood’s goals.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Robinson, 710 Hill Avenue, said that he had been involved with this process for two years and added that as a real estate broker for 25 years he came to appreciate the value of having a historic district tied in with the downtown renovation and development authority. He said the area had been described by many as a jewel of the community and it was their desire to preserve that for the benefit of the entire community. Mr. Robinson said that there were contributing and non-contributing structures in the District and there were guidelines, or suggestions, and standards, more rigid. He added that the standards only applied to the contributing structures. He thanked the Commission for its attention to this.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Eslami stated that he agreed with the comment that 7th Street was one of the most beautiful streets he had seen. He thought the District, as well as staff, had done a beautiful job. He would happily vote in favor of this project.

Commissioner Benoit said the Downtown Historic District was a jewel and deserved special attention. He said this particular change would create another level of City involvement and a process. In addition, the overwhelming support told him that it was the will of the people who lived in the neighborhood along with the absence of opposition and he too would be in favor of it.

Chairman Wall concurred that it was a nice example of how people work together to reach a common goal which was good for everyone who lived here.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on the PD Plan Amendment, PLD-2012-80, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval of the request to establish a new Plan for the Planned Development (PD) properties in the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District which Plan includes the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District Guidelines and Standards, which will apply to all properties within the North Seventh Street Historic Residential District with the findings of fact, conclusions, and conditions listed in the staff report.

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

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on the Code text amendment, ZCA-2012-107, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval of the amendment to the Zoning and Development Code (Section 21.07.040 – Historic Preservation) authorizing the Historic Preservation Board to review and decide certain applications for development within the District, with the findings of fact, conclusions and conditions listed in the staff report.”

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

Lisa Cox, Planning Manager, provided some background on the Public Hearing items involving either a rezone or a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. She explained that the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County adopted a Comprehensive Plan in February 2010. One of the key elements of the Plan was to encourage development in neighborhood centers and village centers. As part of the new Comprehensive Plan new land use designations were created to implement the new Plan. Ms. Cox said those new land use designations were applied in certain parts of the community. However, at the time of the adoption of the Plan, the City did not change the zoning of property to be consistent with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan and the new land use designation.

After working with the Plan for over a year, several observations were made. She pointed out that there were areas in the community where the zoning should be changed in order to support the new land use designation and the vision of the Plan. In other areas, the zoning currently in place should be maintained because it did support the vision of the Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Plan land use designation needed to be changed. Ms. Cox pointed out that the changes, if adopted, would not change taxes on property.

The Comprehensive Plan involved a process that took over 30 months with a significant amount of community participation, and more than 300 meetings. The City initiated rezone applications mirrored the process that an individual applicant would go through. That included notice to all of the impacted property owners so that each property owner was notified by individual letter of the City’s intent to either change the Comprehensive Plan to support the current zoning or to change the zoning of their property. The letter explained why the City was going through the process and outlined what the public hearing process would be so that citizens had an opportunity to attend an Open House and the Planning Commission public hearing. Notification to residents who lived within 500 feet of property to be rezoned were also sent. Ms. Cox added that the Open House was held to encourage participation of the neighborhood as well as the property owners. There was opportunity for submission of written comments and additional information could be obtained via the City’s website.

6. Future Land Use Map Amendments #2 – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to amend the Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map in various areas throughout the community to resolve conflicts between the current zoning of certain parcels and the Future Land Use designations. If adopted, the proposed amendments will be reflected as changes to the Comprehensive Plan Blended Residential Land Use Categories.

FILE #: CPA-2011-1324
PETITIONER: City of Grand Junction
LOCATION: Various areas throughout the City
STAFF: Greg Moberg

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Greg Moberg (Planning Services Supervisor) presented the second round of City-initiated Future Land Use Map Amendments. He added that many properties were looked at in terms of deciding how they should be rezoned. In this instance, five properties were looked at to change the Comprehensive Plan back to what it was previously. These areas had some use in the areas and it was decided that it would be a much better position for the City to allow these zonings to remain.

Mr. Moberg provided a brief description of the zoning, the land use, the existing Future Land Use designation and the City’s proposal. The first area was located around 24 Road and included some uses that were fairly well established within the area. The zoning on the property was currently C-1. He added that C-1 was to the west; I-1 to the south; PD, C-1 to the east and MU to the north. In terms of the Future Land Use designation, currently this area was designated as Village Center; however, Village Center did not allow C-2 as a zone under that designation. As a result the C-2 zoning was currently inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map. This proposal was to change the designation from Village Center to Commercial and that would bring the existing C-2 zoning into conformance with the designation.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Couch asked if the Village Center to be moved would go elsewhere. Mr. Moberg said that the Village Center would go east and cross over the Mesa Mall over to 25 Road.

Chairman Wall asked if everything there now was compatible with the Commercial. Mr. Moberg stated that almost all of the uses there currently were allowed by the C-2. He added that a couple of uses not allowed by the C-2 would remain non-conforming uses within the zone.

Chairman Wall asked if the non-conforming uses would only be affected if they were to update or remodel. Mr. Moberg said there were regulations under a non-conforming section within the Code that restricted it to some degree.

STAFF'S PRESENTATION

Mr. Moberg went on to discuss the second area which was located to the west of 25 Road and to the north of Highway 6 and 50. The property was currently zoned C-2 and this property was surrounded by a lot of C-2 to the north, east and south and C-1 zoning to the west. This area also was designated Village Center and the proposal was to change the Comprehensive Plan to Commercial which would bring the C-2 zoning into compliance with that designation.

Mr. Moberg identified Area 3 as the area mostly occupied by City-owned property with a current zoning of I-1. There were a mix of zones surrounding this property – C-1, C-2, R-8, CSR and R-8 to the south and a lot of County zoning to the west and to the north. He said the designation for this area was Business Park Mixed Use; however, under that designation, I-1 was not an allowed use so it would be necessary to downzone that property. The proposal was to amend that to Commercial Industrial which would allow the I-1 in that area and allow those uses to maintain and expand.

Mr. Moberg next discussed Area 4 as being primarily a residential area. Most of the uses within the area were single-family detached with a current zoning of R-8. Both R-16 and R-24 were to the west and to the south; R-5 and some R-8 to the north and to the east. The Comprehensive Plan designation for this area was Residential High Mixed Use and the R-8 zone was a zone that would not be allowed under that designation and so to keep the zoning in place, there was a recommendation that the Comprehensive Plan be amended to Residential Medium.

Mr. Moberg identified Area 20 as being located east of 25½ Road and south of the fire house and the zoning on that property was currently Community Services and Recreation (CSR) and also R-12. Under the existing Comprehensive Plan designation of Residential Medium High, at least in terms of the fields, the CSR was not a zone that was consistent with that Comprehensive Plan designation. However, R-12 to the east was and if approved, the proposal was to change the Comprehensive Plan designation to Park and move forward to rezone the property to the east to CSR.

Mr. Moberg concluded that after reviewing these proposals, he said that they met the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, the requested zones would become consistent with the Comprehensive Plan if the Plan was amended and the review criteria to amend the Plan had been met.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on File CPA-2011-1324, Grand Junction Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Amendments to Title 31 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code (GJMC), I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval of the proposed amendments with the facts and conclusions listed in the staff report.”

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

7. Blue Polygon – Area 16 Rezone – Rezone

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to rezone 4.952 acres from an R-E (Residential Estate) to an R-8 (Residential 8 du/ac) zone district.

FILE #: RZN-2011-1151
PETITIONER: City of Grand Junction
LOCATION: 3015 D Road
STAFF: Brian Rusche

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Brian Rusche, Senior Planner with the Public Works and Planning Department, addressed the Commission regarding the request for one property to be rezoned from R-E to R-8. The property, just under five acres, was annexed into the City in May 2004. At that time, the property was designated as Estate with an assigned zoning of Residential Estate. He said the property was currently vacant and was owned by a church.

In 2005 the Pear Park Neighborhood Plan was amended to designate the property as Residential Medium along with other properties on the south side of D Road. The Future Land Use Map maintained the Residential Medium designation and, as a result, the Residential Estate zoning was in conflict with the Future Land Use designation which required a minimum of four dwelling units per acre. The requested rezone would bring it into conformance with the Future Land Use designation.

There were no comments expressed on this property as a result of the open house. There were a few phone calls questioning the timing of annexation of some properties on the north side of D Road. The request would resolve the inconsistency and would be consistent with the character of the neighborhood. Mr. Rusche added that the Pear Park Plan anticipated some restrictions to access to D Road that would be mitigated by the development as well as a population build-out of about 22,000 and the rezoning would potentially accommodate some of that build-out.

He concluded that the R-8 zone district would provide the opportunity for additional development and/or density along an established corridor and was consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and he opined that the review criteria had been met.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on Rezone, RZN-2011-1151, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval for the Area 16 Rezone from R-E (Residential Estate) to an R-8 (Residential 8 dwelling units per acre) with the findings of fact and conclusions listed in the staff report.”

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

8. Blue Polygon – Area 11 Rezone – Rezone

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to rezone 201 parcels totaling 37.25 +/- acres from an R-8 (Residential 8 du/ac) to an R-12 (Residential 12 du/ac) zone district.

FILE #: RZN-2011-1212
PETITIONER: City of Grand Junction
LOCATION: 2520 Gunnison Avenue and 200 other parcels
STAFF: Scott Peterson

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Scott Peterson, Senior Planner with the Public Works and Planning Department, came before the Commission on the request to rezone 201 properties from an R-8 zone district to an R-12 zone district. Applicant, City of Grand Junction, identified the properties included within the requested rezone as within the City center area located east of North 22nd Street and west of 28 Road between Grand and Hill Avenues. The Site Location Map showed the properties in relation to the City. He said that the Comprehensive Plan and the corresponding Future Land Use Map designated the properties as Urban Residential Mixed Use at 24 plus dwelling units per acre. He added that the land use designation allowed a neighborhood of very high density of 24 or more dwelling units per acre along with limited retail and commercial businesses.

Mr. Peterson said that after working with the Comprehensive Plan, it was determined that this category and designation would allow too much density and non-residential development in the neighborhood. The City Council approved a Comprehensive Plan Amendment in 2011 to change or lower the Future Land Use designation to the Residential Medium High category which allowed a density of 8 to 16 dwelling units per acre. It would also allow a limited type office use such as an R-O.

He noted that increased density in this area was important due to its location within the City center and should be sought for this neighborhood. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan’s guiding principle of achieving a wider range of housing variety could be achieved through increased density. A density of R-16 was determined to be too much density for this existing neighborhood by the City Council at a workshop in 2011 and concluded that an R-12 zone would be more appropriate. The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map identified the property as Residential Medium High and stated the properties were presently zoned R-8 and staff had requested that the density for this area be increased to at least the middle of the Comprehensive Plan designation (8 to 16) for potential residential development at a higher density than what currently was allowed.

Mr. Peterson said the area was located within the City center and was in close proximity

to schools, hospitals, retail business, restaurants, transportation and employers. The proposed R-12 zoning met the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan to support the continued development of the City center area with a broader variety of mixed housing types to take advantage of existing infrastructure and a walkable area of the community. He added that the area was generally surrounded by higher residential and commercial zoning on three sides – R-16, R-24, C-1, C-2 and R-O. He pointed out that the west boundary was R-8 and CSR. The proposed zoning would provide for better transitioning of densities. The Blended Residential Map indicated an acceptable range of density for this area.

He next stated that the property owners were notified of the proposed rezone via mail and invited to an open house held in December. The general sentiment from both the neighborhood and adjacent property owners was to leave the existing zoning as it was presently since this area was fully developed with predominantly single-family detached residential housing. Mr. Peterson pointed out that the existing overall estimated residential density for the area was a little over 6 dwelling units per acre and a little over 4 if the right-of-way was included.

Mr. Peterson concluded that the requested rezone was consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the applicable review criteria had been met.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Couch raised a question regarding comments received by some residents who attended the open house who wanted to leave things as they were and asked if there was a benefit to changing all of this at once as opposed to individual property owners coming forward. Mr. Peterson said that the Comprehensive Plan was a guiding principle that looked forward and this proposal was merely setting the stage to initiate development now rather than later.

Commissioner Benoit asked what the zoning was for the undeveloped land to the east. Mr. Peterson said that was presently zoned C-1; however, that too would be coming for a rezone change and believed it would then be an R-24. Lisa Cox, Planning Manager, interjected that the request for a rezone for the area mainly to the east had not yet been scheduled. Additional time was necessary to enable staff an opportunity for further discussions with the property owners' representatives.

Chairman Wall asked if this was zoned to R-12, would the homes ultimately be non-conforming to the use and the zone. Mr. Peterson said that was correct; however, as long as the home stayed as single-family detached housing, it would fall back into the non-conforming section and so as long as the property stayed current and not vacant, single-family housing could be rebuilt under the non-conforming section. He added that under the R-12, single-family detached housing could not be built brand new on a vacant lot; however, if there was a house there presently and it had been vacant for less than one year there were provisions that it could still remain a single-family house.

Chairman Wall asked if he was correct that the future goal was to not have any single-

family detached homes in this area but rather for multi-family. Mr. Peterson said that was the vision for this area.

Commissioner Carlow asked what the effective density for the area was. Mr. Peterson said that right now there were 237 dwelling units in the area, or a little over 6 dwelling units to the acre which matched an R-8 type of zoning.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tim Cunningham said that he lived at the 500 block on 24 Street and added that all of those homes were currently in good shape with the only older homes being in the area of 22nd. The neighborhood, he believed, was over 80% owner occupied and he did not share in the vision. He added that he had received several letters from the City whereby different conclusions were noted. With regard to the proposed rezone, he did not want to feel like a conditional resident in his neighborhood and did not feel that there was any reason for the vision to be shared.

Tom Matthews, 2112 Chipeta, went to the open house to obtain answers to some of his questions such as the reason for the change in zoning and what the benefits to the current residents were. He was told that the change was because that was what the Comprehensive Plan indicated it to be and there were no benefits to the residents. He raised a question regarding the failure of coordination between the Mesa County Valley School District 51 and the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Matthews added that the plan failed to meet the needs and requirements of the Mesa County Valley School District. According to Mr. Matthews, adequate size properties available to accommodate new schools tended to be outside of the developed areas of the City. Future schools should be located within walking distance of as many homes as possible. He discussed additional transportation of students, busing of students because schools were full and added that Mesa County Valley School District was currently under a great financial shortfall and future funding did not look to improve either in the short or the long term. He did not find any benefit to property taxpayers of Mesa County by forcing the School District to incur additional expense to meet the requirement of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan criteria. He recommended that the request for the Area 11 rezone be denied for its failure to address the needs and requirements of the Mesa County Valley School District and the lack of any defined plan to resolve this issue. In response to a question posed by Chairman Wall, Mr. Matthews said that even without this change there were already too many students and did not think the downtown area would be able to provide any more space to build an elementary school so the only option available would be to bus kids.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Benoit asked if the School District was involved in the formulation and finalization of the Comprehensive Plan. Lisa Cox, Planning Manager, said that the School District was one of the partners in the planning process. There was a technical advisory committee and a representative of School District 51 was a part of that in addition to numerous meetings and open houses so their input was solicited and included within that process towards the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Benoit asked if the School District could essentially be considered a stakeholder in the evolution of the Plan. Ms. Cox said that was correct. She next addressed the issue and confusion raised by a member of the audience in connection with conflicting letters he had received. She said that in this particular planning area, she brought forward a number of Comprehensive Plan Amendments and this area was one of those. This area, as well as to the area to the west, were slated on the Comprehensive Plan for higher residential development and part of that reasoning was due to its proximity to Lincoln Park, the facilities at the corner of 12th and North Avenue, the VA Hospital, Teller Arms Shopping Center, among others, that were within walking distance. However, after looking at a couple of areas and discussions with City Council, neighborhood residents, and stakeholders, it was determined that these two areas really weren't appropriate for quite as much density as anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan. Both Amendments were meant to lower the land use designations for the two areas. In an effort to still support a variety of housing units but not as intense as the R-16, a map amendment was adopted last October.

Ms. Cox said that the letter she had sent out in December was meant to advise property owners that the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment process had been concluded and that the land use designation had been changed. In the 24 areas where Map Amendment changes were made, in all but two of those areas, there would be no change to the proposed zoning. However, this area was one where subsequent to the Map Amendment, Mr. Peterson advised that there was a proposed amendment to rezone the property. Ms. Cox said that her intent was to clarify that the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment would be coming but the zoning would not be changed. Mr. Peterson's letter later advised that the Map Amendment had been accomplished and the Planning Department wanted a slight increase to the zoning. She hoped that clarified any confusion and apologized for the confusion. She added that the Map Amendment for this area had been changed primarily because of wanting to have a higher density that would be able to take advantage of the walkability of the neighborhood and services. She also discussed the property to the east and stated that it was meant to cluster and increase the residential density so that not only walkability of the neighborhood could be taken advantage of but also potentially provide a school site. She assured that the impacts of the land use designations and proposed zoning changes were considered.

Chairman Wall asked if the area to be rezoned was considered one neighborhood. Mr. Peterson said that from a visual standpoint it was surrounded on three sides by higher zoning which could make it look like a separate neighborhood. He added that it did provide a transition and was basically one neighborhood with a mixture of single-family detached, some two family and also some apartments.

Commissioner Leonard asked if this rezone would potentially create non-conformities and asked if a home were destroyed would it be able to be rebuilt as it was. Mr. Peterson said that as long as it was within a year timeframe, it could so long as the land use was kept current.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tim Cunningham said that this was a single developed area except for a few homes on 22nd that were somewhat older. He pointed out that there was an undeveloped area on the east side marked R-8 which actually was a large drainage ditch maintained by the City. He added that he was totally opposed to the basic concept of the Comprehensive Plan that said that this should be a higher density area.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Carlow said that to date he had been in favor of these changes but he was real reluctant to vote for an area to change the zoning in an area that was fully built out.

Commissioner Eslami said that since this was already built, it should be left alone and right now he did not want the neighbors disrupted at this time. He was not in favor of this project.

Commissioner Leonard said that it also made him uncomfortable and was not in favor of this rezone.

Commissioner Pavelka concurred and said that although there were a lot of services and benefits with the park and walkability, it was a stable neighborhood. The opportunity to take advantage of higher densities across 28 Road to the east was available and it would be a good transition and would maintain the integrity of the neighborhood. With current conditions and the market, she thought she would have a hard time voting in favor of it.

Chairman Wall said that with this particular project he looked at the risk and reward and did not see much reward associated with this particular item. He looked at what could be put in with both the R-8 and R-12 and did not see the reward in changing it from an R-8 to an R-12 and would not be in favor of this zone change.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on Rezone, RZN-2011-1212, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval for the Area 11 Rezone from R-8 (Residential 8 dwelling units per acre) to R-12 (Residential 12 dwelling units per acre) with the findings of fact, conclusions and the conditions listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Eslami seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion failed by a vote of 7 - 0.

9. Blue Polygon – Area 2 Rezone – Rezone

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to rezone 14 parcels totaling 64.055 acres from an R-12 (Residential 12 du/ac) to an R-24 (Residential 24 du/ac) zone district.

FILE #: RZN-2011-1216

PETITIONER: City of Grand Junction
LOCATION: 2427 G Road and 13 other parcels
STAFF: Senta Costello

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Senta Costello, Senior Planner with the Public Works and Planning Department, addressed the Commission on the Area 2 Rezone. She identified the subject property as being located south and west of the intersection of G and 24½ Road. She pointed out that there were three properties under active agriculture use; two were vacant; and the balance was large acreage single-family with some agricultural uses. She added that the Comprehensive Plan designation was Urban Residential Mixed Use with a current zoning of R-12 and there were two intervening properties already zoned R-24. She discussed adjacent properties and their designations.

Ms. Costello pointed out that these particular properties were annexed in 1995 and zoned RSF-R at that time. With the adoption of the Growth Plan, these properties were designated for higher density and in 2000 when properties were looked at these were rezoned to the R-12 zone district. The Blended Map shows these properties designated as Residential High, 16 to 24 dwelling units per acre. She advised that she had received a few phone calls from neighboring properties and some were very supportive that it was a good location for additional residential development at higher densities. Ms. Costello added that she had received one phone call this morning that was in opposition because the increase in density would overload the street system with traffic.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DISCUSSION

Chairman Wall said that it seemed pretty straightforward and made sense.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on Rezone, RZN-2011-1216, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval for Area 2 Blue Rezone from R-12 (Residential 12 dwelling units per acre) to R-24 (Residential 24 dwelling units per acre) with the findings of fact, conclusions and conditions listed in the staff report.”

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

10. Blue Polygon – Area 4 Rezone – Rezone

Request a recommendation of approval to City Council to rezone 8 parcels from an R-2 (Residential 2 du/ac) to an R-4 (Residential 4 du/ac) zone district to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

FILE #: RZN-2011-1219
PETITIONER: City of Grand Junction
LOCATION: 2608 & 2612 G Road and 719, 720, 721, 725 & 726 26 Road

STAFF: and 1 other parcel
Lori Bowers

STAFF’S PRESENTATION

Lori Bowers, Senior Planner, Public Works and Planning Department, spoke to the Commission on the Blue Area 4 Rezone request from R-2 to R-4. She pointed out that I-70 was directly to the north. Totaling 41.27 acres, the parcels ranged in size from .84 acres to 24.43 acres; four of the parcels are located on the west side of 26 Road; all of which abut the Grand Valley Canal. Two parcels are located on the east side of 26 Road. The remaining two parcels abut G Road. Two of the eight parcels are vacant. After notification by mail to property owners, she had received one phone call in favor of the application. After preparation of the staff report, she had received two more phone calls voicing no concerns with the proposal.

Ms. Bowers said that this area was annexed in 2000 as part of the G Road North Annexation area. The Comprehensive Plan showed this area to redevelop at Residential Medium, 4 to 8 units per acre, and thus the R-4 request would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She concluded that the requested rezone from R-2 to R-4 was consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the pertinent review criteria of the Grand Junction Municipal Code had been met.

QUESTIONS

Chairman Wall asked if the property to the north was a Planned Development. Ms. Bowers said that it was an R-4 zoning with a cluster provision.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Pavelka said that it seemed pretty straightforward.

MOTION: (Commissioner Pavelka) “Mr. Chairman, on Rezone, RZN-2011-1219, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval for the Area 4 Rezone from R-2 to R-4 with the findings of fact and conclusions listed in the staff report.”

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

General Discussion/Other Business

None.

Nonscheduled Citizens and/or Visitors

None.

Adjournment

With no objection and no further business, the Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.