



**MINUTES OF THE SPRINGDALE PLANNING COMMISSION WORK MEETING
ON TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2019 AT 5:00PM
AT CANYON COMMUNITY CENTER, 126 LION BOULEVARD, SPRINGDALE, UTAH.**

Meeting convened at 5:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Mike Marriott, Suzanne Elger, Allan Staker, Joe Pitti, Jack Burns, Barbara Bruno, and J. Treacy Stone Representing Zion National Park.

ABSENT: Tyler Young

ALSO PRESENT: Director of Community Development Tom Dansie, Associate Planner Sophie Frankenburg, and Town Clerk Katy Brown Recording. Please see attached list for attendees signed in.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion made by Joe Pitti to approve the agenda; seconded by Suzanne Elger.

Staker: Aye

Elger: Aye

Marriott: Aye

Pitti: Aye

Burns: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

A. Information/Discussion/Non-Action Items

1. Introduction and discussion of the upcoming build-out analysis: Mr. Dansie offered some background information on the Commission's process during the last buildout analysis in 2007.

- Mr. Pitti was on the Commission during the last build-out analysis and emphasized that the core element defined during the process was the importance of maintaining and preserving the village atmosphere in Springdale.

Among other analyses performed at the time on infrastructure, transportation, and the local economy, the Town chose to draw heavily from the Land analysis to help define what Springdale would be then and in the future. After consulting with various specialists, the biggest consideration become defining Community Character. The Land analysis directed future build-out discussions in a big way.

Staff worked with a professor at SUU on GIS-based modeling and generated different scenarios for potential future development. They determined that if every property in town were developed to its maximum potential, it would result in a total of 4,100 housing units. With an average household size of 2.7, that would equate to total population of almost 10,000 people. This figure represented an absolute upper limit but was by no means realistic. The modeling was then further refined using different scenarios to produce a more accurate build-out projection. They arrived at a projection of 900-1700 potential lodging units. Residential units were projected to be between 700-1,000 units for a population of 1,600-2,200 people. Mr. Dansie presented graphs showing these scenarios and projection figures.

To begin the process of updating the future build-out for Springdale, staff would update the existing conditions baseline and employ the same modeling from 2007. They would use mapping software to review properties and assign attributes to generate different scenarios for the Commission to analyze. This process would take into account both, vacant properties, and properties that had the potential to be redeveloped. The Commission would use the updated modeling and other data provided by staff to determine goals, discuss likely trends, and crystalize what they envisioned for Springdale now and in the future in regard to build-out potential.

The main questions that the last build-out analysis focused on were how many lodging and housing units could be developed on the available land Springdale had at the time, and the probability of the mix of

those two would be moving forward. The Commission could direct staff to provide modeling based on those same questions, or they could present new considerations to focus the modeling on.

Mr. Burns asked how adequate infrastructure to support the findings of the analysis could be brought into the process.

- The Town had been working with their engineer team on capital facilities planning based on the last build-out analysis and would continue to loop them in during the update process.
- Ms. Elger asked if an upgraded wastewater treatment system was part of the current capital facilities plan.
- The last update was almost eight years ago. With population growth would have to come upgrades to the infrastructure.

Mr. Pitti asked if the upcoming analysis would take into account any underdeveloped properties. He also asked if an outside firm would be hired to conduct the initial analysis.

- Underdeveloped properties would be one of the many factors considered in crafting hypothetical scenarios to base the modeling off of. The Community Development department would be in charge of gathering the preliminary data and provide mapping and modeling for the project. They would not need to hire an outside consultant.

2. Introduction and discussion of upcoming General Plan update: The current General Plan was adopted in July 2016 but the beginning of the process started in October 2014. In order to maintain the five-year update schedule suggested by the General Plan, planning would need to start soon. Utah State law required every General Plan to include Land Use and Transportation elements. Input from the public was also required.

The purpose of the General Plan was to define what Springdale currently was, and what it would be in the future. Law required each political subdivision to have a General Plan, but the General Plan was an advisory guide only and was not binding. Ideally, the visions captured in the General Plan would be reflected in the local ordinances.

Significant themes that manifested during the last General Plan update were the importance of maintaining village atmosphere/scale, and protection of natural resources. Based on the public input, the feedback was distilled into guiding principles. Using the guiding principles, objectives would be established and strategies set.

In summary, the General Plan aimed at capturing the community's vision for Springdale and was advisory in nature. The Commission's job was to receive public input and translate it into the General Plan.

Ms. Bruno asked if there had ever been a time when suggestions in the General Plan led to a change in ordinance.

- There were several examples: Staff was working with consultants to draft ordinances based on the Virgin River Management Plan, which was adopted based on the guidance from the General Plan. Other recent ordinances relating to General Plan guidance were the Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance, the Cottage Housing Overlay zone ordinance, and the most recent lighting ordinance.

Mr. Burns expressed a level of frustration with the process of crafting an ordinance. It was easy to mirror suggestions from the General Plan when they discussed ordinances conceptually, but he felt that ordinances seemed to deviate from the General Plan when it came time to sort out the details. He suggested creating a checklist that would help the Commission determine if the final draft of the ordinance supported the General Plan.

Mr. Stone referenced a recent zone change application which was not recommended forward due to its conflicts with guiding principles in the General Plan. It was a good example of the General Plan informing the Commission's decisions.

Mr. Pitti felt a main focus in the next update should be to resolve existing inconsistencies in the General Plan. He also suggested making the criteria for zone changes more strident and removing ambiguity. Perhaps even a point system would help guide the Commission.

The last few updates saw revisions to the existing General Plan template by way of additions/subtractions. The result overtime was a lengthy document that contained some inconsistencies and contradictions. Staff suggested that the Commission consider an entirely new format altogether. Staff would send the Commission links to other General Plan templates that served as good examples of crafting a community vision while being succinct but thorough.

Mr. Burns expressed a desire to implement a standard that would not allow a zone change unless the General Plan was amended.

- Mr. Dansie said it was not uncommon among other communities to allow zone changes only after a General Plan amendment. State Law required a public hearing to amend a General Plan.

Staff indicated that the General Plan update process would start after results from the buildout analysis were availed to review.

3. Discussion of upcoming Commission work meeting agenda items: Staff wanted to hear from the Commission what their preferences were on priorities as suggested by the General Plan.

The Commission expressed a desire to work on improving Pedestrian-Oriented Streetscape found in the General Plan, Chapter 14.

Ms. Bruno had observed that there were three main stakeholder groups in Springdale: residents, business owners, and visitors. She felt it would be important to include visitors when soliciting feedback about ease of navigation in Town.

Mr. Staker expressed a desire for a central plaza in Town. He also felt the Commission should look at infrastructure as a starting point to see if the town could support future development.

Mr. Pitti liked the idea of making the community feel friendlier. He questioned the best way to reach out to property owners who had no visible plans for their vacant buildings or empty lots in the Central Commercial zone.

The Commission also expressed a desire to revisit building and design standards in future work meetings.

4. Planning Commission Training: Planning Commissioners represented the community which included residents, non-resident property owners, business owners, employees of businesses, visitors, natural surroundings, and wildlife habitat. The Commission was tasked with representing all of those interests to determine what was best for the community. At times it would require them to separate from any biases in furtherance of the community. Staff presented key reminders:

Community-minded decision-making: When deliberating on policies, present ideas in terms of the community rather than personal statements (“This proposal enriches/degrades our community by.....” versus “I do/do not like....”).

Legislative actions vs. Administrative actions. Legislative actions were recommendations to the Town Council (legislative body) for new ordinances and afforded wide discretion as long as the decision was not arbitrary, capricious, or illegal. Examples were ordinance changes, General Plan updates and zone changes. Administrative actions were reviewing a proposal to determine if application met the standards outlined in the ordinance. Administrative actions carried an obligation to approve if the proposal met the standards. Examples included Design Development Reviews, Subdivision Plats, Conditional Use Permits, Open Air Display permits, Special Event permits, etc.

- Mr. Burns asked why the commission would have to review an application at all if it met all the standards.

- Some applications were more complex and staff had the discretion to forward to the Commissions for a review.

Ms. Elger asked if the Commission could still request further details, analysis, or proposal changes.

- The Planning Commission was more than welcome to ask for further details or analysis from the applicant, however they could only deny a proposal if there were specific findings which supported that the proposal did not meet the standards.

How to make a motion: Motions must include findings. For legislative actions, findings should be more complex. The Council would want to know why the Commission made a particular decision, and a solid motion would also demonstrate that the decision was not arbitrary, capricious or illegal. Being prepared with a motion including specific findings was a good exercise, but it could be perceived as being biased. There was a fine balance between being prepared with potential findings, yet being flexible enough to make a motion consistent with the presentation, discussion, and public feedback.

Recommending Body: The Council valued the Commission’s input but was not bound in following Commission recommendations.

Commissioner/Citizen roles: As both a Commissioner and a public citizen, it was best practice to avoid providing feedback to the Council from a citizen’s perspective in a public hearing that would directly contradict a Commission recommendation.

Legal Considerations: Avoid making comments that could be easily misinterpreted or misconstrued by the public or that offer an open to challenge. Always be cognizant of whether or not a comment or action was legally defensible. If questions arose that a Commissioner deemed problematic, they were encouraged to approach staff outside of a public setting.

Meeting decorum: Being on the dais, the Commission sat elevated on a platform. Any verbal and non-verbal cues from the Commission had the potential to be magnified by their physical station on the dais and their appointed positions. It was important to maintain impartiality in both words and actions and be aware of how their comments might be interpreted at all times. If disagreements arose, remember to be open minded, value other’s perspectives and feelings, and discuss issues as objectively as possible.

Mr. Pitti noted that only having one speaking podium shared by an applicant and a member of the public during a public hearing had the potential to look combative. He felt the Commission conducted themselves in a professional manner during the most recent Planning Commission meeting and he was proud that they had come prepared and found unity through the discussion He hoped that the Commission would be recognized for their accomplishments.

Mr. Marriott appreciated Mr. Pitti’s comments and shared his admiration for his fellow Commissioners and their hard work.

Motion to adjourn at pm made by Allan Staker; seconded by Suzanne Elger.

Staker: Aye

Elger: Aye

Marriott: Aye

Pitti: Aye

Burns: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

Katy Brown, Deputy Clerk

APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

A recording of the public meeting is available by contacting the Town Clerk’s Office. Please call 435-772-3434 or via email at springdale@infowest.com for more information.