

**CITY OF MILL CREEK
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2016**

Approved January 19, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Eisner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Chair Stan Eisner

Vice Chair Matthew Nolan

Commissioner Randy Blair

Commissioner Ed McNichol (absent)

Commissioner Jared Mead (absent)

Commissioner Daniel Mills

Commissioner Dennis Teschlog

Staff:

Tom Rogers, Director of Community and Economic
Development

Sherrie Ringstad, Planning Specialist

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Commission Meeting of November 19, 2015

MOTION: Vice Chair Nolan moved, seconded by Commissioner Teschlog, to approve the November 19, 2015 minutes as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. WORK SESSION

Update on Economic Analysis for 132nd Street Corridor

Director of Community and Economic Development Tom Rogers noted that this presentation is based on a presentation given to the City Council in January. He explained that the presentation is a historical perspective of past economic development efforts, including the Town Center and the East Gateway Urban Village. Mr. Rogers briefly described the Town Center planning process, which started with a one sentence policy added to the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission in 1992. From that policy, many activities occurred, including a Town Center Advisory Committee, and an Economic Feasibility Study. Feedback from the development community indicated that the original master plan for the Town Center was too small, needed to have less of a residential focus within the Town Center itself but more residential density in close proximity. As a result, the City made changes to the zoning code to increase the size of the Town Center and changed the zoning surrounding the Town Center from Business Park to multifamily residential to create the opportunity for more residential density to support commercial uses. He stated that the City did make a 1.3 million capital investment by completing the Main Street extension.

Community and Economic Development Director Rogers reviewed the East Gateway Urban Village history, including the annexation of the property, the Walmart that was originally proposed, and the City's desire to create a master plan for this area similar to the Town Center. He described how the plan has evolved over time. In response to a concern that the area would contain too much residential, a Code Amendment was adopted requiring all residential uses west

of 44th Avenue Southeast to be above commercial development. Mr. Rogers displayed a property owner's map showing land that has already been developed or is in the planning stages, versus property that is still available for development. Because the Council was still not satisfied with the way the EGUV was developing, they instituted a moratorium on development in the EGUV while an economic analysis for the EGUV is being completed. He stated that the City entered into a contract with ECONorthwest to provide an economic analysis of the 132nd Street corridor.

The consultant will be making another presentation to the City Council on February 23rd and will be presenting three development alternatives to the City Council for consideration. The alternatives will compare the various uses and address the following: are the proposed uses viable, what kind of revenue would they generate, what zoning changes may be necessary and/or what investment might the City need to make to encourage development that fits their vision.

Vice Chair Nolan asked about the Gateway Shopping Center and the area west of Mill Creek Boulevard. Mr. Rogers indicated that these areas will be discussed by the City Council, who will provide direction to staff on where to focus their efforts. He noted that staff has had recent contact with the property owners of the Gateway Shopping Center site, who are interested in updating their site.

Chair Eisner mentioned the potential for the East Gateway Urban Village site competing with the Town Center. Community Development Director Rogers said that they are not in close proximity to each other and the East Gateway site would have a different focus, which helps. However the City may need to make an investment to remove some of the risk for developers. Mr. Rogers added that there has been a shift in the economy and products you can buy on the internet are having a hard time in brick and mortar stores. The more the City can focus on things that you can't find on the internet the better. Commissioner Mills said that he believes the City could use even more dining options, as well as entertainment options such as a movie theater.

Potential Department of Community and Economic Development 2016 Work Program

Director of Community and Economic Development Tom Rogers distributed a draft of the 2016 Work Program. He noted that the items shown in bold are the ones that the Planning Commission will be involved in. The Work Program will be finalized following the Council retreat and it will be based on direction received from the Council.

Community and Economic Development Director Rogers said that no developer or citizen generated proposals have been submitted for Comprehensive Plan amendments. However, the policy added by the Commission during the recent Comprehensive Plan update, regarding potential redevelopment of the City's Community Business and Business Park properties and suggesting that the City look at the feasibility and desirability of alternative land uses will likely generate some work for staff and the Commission.

Mr. Rogers stated that the Engineering staff, Community and Economic Development staff, and Parks, Facilities and Recreation staff are moving to the annex building this year. In addition, staff is in the process of a major records management system/process update, which will make responding to public records requests more efficient. Another item that staff will be working on is Land Development proposals, such as the Binding Site Plans for Vintage at Mill Creek and Mill Creek Sports Cards.

Chair Eisner referenced the Economic Development plan and noted that economic development and planning can frequently be in conflict. Community and Economic Development Director Rogers stated that it does require balance, but it has been the policy of the City to facilitate development that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Vice Chair Nolan stated that staff's working style and reputation within the development community is an advantage for the City because it is perceived that it is easier to develop here than other areas. Mr. Rogers stated that the City is running out of developable land and there are reasons why the land that is left hasn't developed yet. It will likely take even more flexibility for the remaining properties to develop.

Community and Economic Development Director Rogers advised the Commission that the City Council adopted the 2015 Comprehensive Plan in December. The City Council was appreciative and complimentary of the Commission's work on the Comprehensive Plan update. Mr. Rogers stated that depending on the Council direction, it is possible that the Planning Commission's agenda may not be that full this year. In an effort to better utilize staff time, as well as the Planning Commission's time, staff will not schedule a meeting for the Planning Commission if there isn't something substantive to put on the agenda.

IX. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Planning Specialist Sherrie Ringstad explained that an economic development initiative the City is working on is a partnership with Google to encourage local businesses to claim their business listing with Google. This is a completely free service provided by Google that allows businesses to control and enhance their listing. Staff is trying to educate the local businesses community about this powerful tool that is available to them at no cost. Community Development Director Rogers added that this initiative focuses on the retention of existing businesses.

Ms. Ringstad advised the Commission that three Commission terms expire this year on April 30th and staff will be starting the recruitment process soon. The positions that expire are Vice Chair Nolan, and Commissioners McNichol and Mead. Community Development Director Rogers encouraged the Commissioners whose terms are expiring to reapply by sending in a letter of interest.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Chair Eisner adjourned the meeting with the consensus of the Commission at 7:49 p.m.

Submitted by:



Sherrie Ringstad, Planning Specialist