

# Highland City Planning Commission

## September 14, 2010

The regular meeting of the Highland City Planning Commission was called to order by Planning Commission Chair, Melissa Wright, at 7:01 p.m. on September 14, 2010. An invocation was offered by Kelly Sobotka and those assembled were led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Roger Dixon.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner: Melissa Wright, Chair  
Commissioner: Roger Dixon  
Commissioner: Tim Irwin  
Commissioner: Steve Rock  
Commissioner: Jay Roundy  
Commissioner: Kelly Sobotka  
Alternate Commissioner: Christopher Kemp

**EXCUSED:** Commissioner: Abe Day

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Administrator: John Park  
City Planner: Nathan Crane  
City Engineer: Matthew Shipp  
Secretary: Kiera Corbridge

**OTHERS:** Christie Dalley, Scott Smith

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

Melissa Wright invited comments from the public regarding items not on the agenda and no one chose to speak.

### **OTHER BUSINESS – GENERAL PLAN DISCUSSION ~ DISCUSSION (AGENDA ITEM D1)**

City Engineer Matthew Shipp presented his report on the Transportation Element of the Highland City General Plan. Several of the discussion points were as follows:

- Main function is to outline the transportation goals of the city as traffic circulation impacts all residents within Highland. This element defines the various roads within the city; arterials, collectors, residential collectors, and local collectors; as well as the appearance of the parkway detail, Highland City entrances, etc.
- Mr. Shipp noted that one of the issues in the Highland City General Plan is that a development over a certain number of homes requires a traffic study. Staff may

- suggest that in the future the city request the traffic study from a preselected engineering firm to avoid letting the developer sway the study in their favor.
- Tim Irwin shared that he had previously served on the Transportation Advisory Committee for the City Council and expressed his appreciation for Mr. Shipp's knowledge and assistance. Mr. Irwin questioned traffic studies in relation to the setting of speed limits. Matthew Shipp explained that speed limits are based on many more factors than are found in traffic studies. Residential roadways are twenty-five miles per hour unless otherwise posted; collector roadways are typically forty-five miles per hour, although curbs, driveways, and line-of-sight are factors that affect the posted speed limit. The posted speed is often less than the design speed – the speed that the road is designed to accommodate based on the clearances, vertical and horizontal curves of the roadway, etc. – so that a driver exceeding the speed limit is still driving within the road design parameters. Mr. Shipp also explained the eightieth percentile rule; often the speed that is posted is where eighty percent of drivers feel comfortable on a particular roadway. This can be controlled with traffic calming tactics. Narrowing street widths, speed bumps, adding turns, speed tables, etc. will decrease the level of comfort for a driver and decrease their driving speed as a result. Ultimately, however, the City Council determines what speeds will be posted.
  - Commissioners voiced concerns regarding street parking along business/church entrances. Staff noted that limiting parking for a particular business is not possible; a red curb limits everyone from parking along the roadway. Staff explained that if the parking issue is due to an existing business/church, the resolution is generally up to the developer/owner; however, city staff, Planning Commission, and City Council can take a more proactive and careful approach to parking concerns with new developments that are proposed.
  - A Commissioner inquired as to the process of determining road repair priorities. Matthew Shipp explained that roads are typically repaired according to main traveled routes; main collectors roads to connecting subdivision roads down to cul de sacs. He noted that there are many factors, such as the funds available in the budget, road inventory, age of the road, etc. Mr. Shipp mentioned that the roadways in the northern portion of Highland are in need of repair earlier than other roadways in Highland because they are constructed on a different road base due to the silt in the soil.
  - A Commissioner questioned how binding the transportation element is. Nathan Crane noted that a general plan is a general policy; a guide rather than a regulation. He stated that it's a "snapshot in time" based on the best information available at the time. A general plan is designed to be a living document that is changed as needed.
  - Matthew Shipp explained that sewer pipes and stormdrain pipes are non-flexible and require a manhole any time the pipe changes direction. Manholes are also located no more than four-hundred feet apart due to the length of the sewer cleaning hose. Mr. Shipp noted that Highland City has recently begun requiring a concrete "collar" around the manhole to mitigate the difference in grade due to resurfacing or wear on the roadway.
  - Commissioner inquired about the completion of Knight Avenue. Matthew Shipp stated that the original plan was for the road to connect through; however, a lawsuit arose from the neighboring residents resulting in a requirement for an environmental impact assessment on Highland Glenn Park.

- Matthew Shipp noted that the Murdock Connector project is being pushed to start construction by the summer of 2011; his understanding is that it should be built in conjunction with phase two of the 4800 West project.

Commissioner Tim Irwin presented his report on the Environmental and Natural Systems Element of the Highland City General Plan. Several of the main points were as follows:

- A portion of the Highland City vision statement says that “Highland City is also envisioned to be a community that is in harmony with its natural surroundings where opportunities for enjoying the outdoors are abundant, supported, and where participating in work and community activities can be experienced by all of its citizens.” Mr. Irwin suggested that the wildlife, open space, views, and recreation areas are reasons that residents move to Highland; therefore, preservation of these elements is essential.
- Natural concerns to Highland are flooding, earthquakes, soil related hazards – such as limestone deposits, and varying slopes, debris flow, rockfalls, landslides, urban water runoff area (creating a need for retention ponds), etc. Tim Irwin noted that due to areas of high flood risk, such as American Fork Canyon and the Dry Creek, Highland is in need of a Stormwater Master Plan. Matthew Shipp stated that the Stormwater Master Plan has been completed and implemented. He explained that Highland City is divided into two sections; Northwest Highland and the main body of Highland. The main section of Highland is connected to a sump system; water runs into a twelve-foot deep, eight-foot cylindrical hold and pumped into the ground for dispersal. The Northwest portion of Highland does not have absorptive soils, so the Stormwater Master Plan lays out various locations for piping and detention pond; as the property develops, the developer is required to install the master plan element.
- It was noted that other natural concerns include the microclimate issues, such as the high winds and harsh winter conditions.
- Highland City has federally designated wetlands. Federal guidelines indicated that there must be no net loss of wetlands so if a development is to be located within a wetland area, it must be replaced in other areas. A Commissioner noted that there are jurisdictional wetlands and common wetlands. When a development is going to impact a jurisdictional wetland, the Corp of Engineers will determine the offset; one acre of wetland developed could mean twenty acres of replacement wetlands elsewhere.
- Mr. Irwin noted that in planning, the need for clean, safe water must be recognized. Matthew Shipp mentioned that the Water Conservation Plan referred to in the Environmental and Natural Systems Element of the Highland City General Plan is submitted on an annual basis. A Commissioner stated that the Federal Government and the local water conservation districts spend large amounts of money to develop state-of-the-art conservation plans that are available online for businesses, residences, etc. to help people learn to conserve water.
- Tim Irwin summarized that the Highland City General Plan indicated that the city is approaching build-out and that many of the issues mentioned have been addressed; however, redevelopment activities should include site design, engineering controls for natural sites, constraints, or hazards, and specific cautions to ensure that no negative impact to water quality or the natural environment.

Commissioners discussed the vision statement. It was noted that it summarizes the history and future of Highland. John Park emphasized that the vision statement needs to be a document that means something to all residents and staff of Highland.

☞ **OTHER BUSINESS – WALL SIGN AMENDMENT ~ DISCUSSION AND REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM D2)**

Nathan Crane explained that staff would like clarification regarding the recent Planning Commission Recommendation for Amending the Sign Ordinance with regards to Wall and Window signs.

Commissioners indicated a preference of letting the business owners recommend what is appropriate signage for their particular business. Concerns were expressed that if a business is requesting to change/increase their sign, there is likely a need for additional advertising.

Staff suggested rewriting the sign ordinance with regards to wall and window signs. The new ordinance will be presented to the Planning Commission for review at a future meeting.

☞ **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 25, 2009 AND JULY 13, 2010 (AGENDA ITEM E)**

**MOTION: Tim Irwin moved to Approve the Meeting Minutes for July 13, 2010, as amended. Motion seconded by Jay Roundy. Those voting aye: Tim Irwin, Christopher Kemp, Steve Rock, Jay Roundy, Kelly Sobotka, Melissa Wright; Roger Dixon chose to abstain. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.**

**MOTION: Tim Irwin moved to Approve the Meeting Minutes for August 25, 2009, as amended. Motion seconded by Roger Dixon. Those voting aye: Roger Dixon, Tim Irwin, Christopher Kemp, Steve Rock, Jay Roundy, Kelly Sobotka, Melissa Wright. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.**

☞ **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA STAFF REPORTS AND PACKETS ~ DISCUSSION (AGENDA ITEM F)**

Nathan Crane gave a brief summary regarding his background. He shared his opinion that his primary job is not to make decisions for the city, but to provide the information for the Planning Commission and the City Council to make decisions.

Mr. Crane explained that the purposed of an agenda is to act as an outline for the meeting as well as to clarify for the public what will be occurring during the meeting. He noted that a particular goal of staff will be to differentiate between legislative actions and administrative actions. Legislative actions require public hearings and public clamor can be considered in the decisions.

Administrative actions are held in a public meeting where public clamor is not acceptable; comments must related to the facts of the case rather than opinion and decisions are based on whether or not the application complies with the ordinances. The Planning Commission reviewed a recent incident of public clamor and discussed various tactics that can be used to defuse the situation in future circumstances.

Nathan Crane presented visuals of the future format for Planning Commission Agendas and explained each section.

- Roll call at the beginning of the meeting will provide the opportunity for the Planning Commission to excuse absences of Commissioners.
- Withdrawals and Continuances publically announce items that have been delayed, notifying anyone in attendance that an item on the agenda will not be discussed.
- The purpose of staff reports is to give an overview of the application, background information, identify key issues, present staff recommendations, provide attachments, etc. Applications are reviewed by staff and revised prior to being presented to the Planning Commission, and it is staff's goal to ensure that the item is ready for Planning Commission consideration. A Commissioner requested that the staff report include the pros and cons of the item.
- The findings section of the staff report will include various information, such as the impact of a development on the Highland City water system or whether a proposal complies with the Highland City General Plan.

It was noted that one of the benefits Highland City can offer to an applicant is moving the item quickly through the review process; however, if the Planning Commission has questions or concerns regarding an item, they can continue the item or request additional time for review.

#### ☞ **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ~ DISCUSSION** (AGENDA ITEM G)

The Planning Commission has requested a list of possible upcoming Planning Commission Items. Items are typically placed on the Planning Commission Agenda as soon as the applications are submitted; the following items are exceptions:

#### **FUTURE ITEMS OF BUSINESS TO CONSIDER**

- **Amendments to Ordinances Regulating Fences**
- **Master Plan State Training School Property** – Located south of Lone Peak High School. Will be considered after the alignment of the East-West Corridor is determined.
- **Amendments to the Open Space Bonus Density Subdivision Ordinance** – Amending to create a more productive and user friendly ordinance.
- **Capital Facilities Project** – Planning of future roads, parks, and city development.
- **Highland Glen Park – Environmental Assessment**
- **Red Curbing the Entrances to Churches**

#### **CONTINUED/ONGOING ITEMS TO CONSIDER**

- **Commissioner Reports on the Highland City General Plan:**
  - October 12, 2010 - Economic Element – Christopher Kemp  
Parks, Recreation Facilities and Trails Element – Roger Dixon
  - October 26, 2010 - Senior Housing Element – Abe Day

The Planning Commission has also requested the opportunity to present ideas, concerns, and proposed Code Amendments/Additions over which they have authority. The following items were discussed:

**Discussion Updates** – Commissioners requested an update regarding previous items discussed during Planning Commission meetings. John Park summarized:

- The Conditional Use Application to provide UHAUL services at the Highland Hideaway Storage Facility has been put on hold by the applicant pending the resolution of the open storage concern. An ordinance may be presented to the Planning Commission in the future to differentiate open storage from storage of recreational vehicles. John Park noted that research indicated that other concerns voiced during the public hearing for the Conditional Use Permit, such as lighting and site plan, have been resolved. The code amendment associated with this application will move forward in conjunction with the Conditional Use Permit.
- The Wall and Window Sign Ordinance will be reworked and presented to the Planning Commission for review at a future meeting.
- The Town Center Overlay Zone was reviewed by the City Council and due to the time constraints of the moratorium, the City Council approved the Town Center Overlay Zone with the removal of a housing element. The City Council further reviewed the ordinance in subsequent meetings and requested that the ordinance be reformatted. The Town Center Overlay Zone was then approved with minor revisions beyond the Planning Commission Recommendations. Commissioners questioned whether the amended Town Center Overlay Zone had resulted in new applications for commercial developments. John Park stated that no new applications had been made and indicated that Highland City may have some impediments to retail development, such as Sunday closures.

**Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings** – Commissioners requested that the Planning Commission be notified of business grand openings and/or ribbon cuttings throughout the city.

**Subscriptions** – Commissioners discussed publications that are beneficial and suggested that unnecessary subscriptions be cancelled/not renewed.

 **ADJOURNMENT**

**Roger Dixon moved to adjourn. Seconded by Tim Irwin. Unanimous vote, meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.**