

City of Green River

460 East Main Street, Green River, Utah

Planning Commission Minutes
Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 3, 2012

ATTENDING: Katherine Brown, Robert Smith, Ben Coomer, Amy Wilmarth and Jack Forinash; Council Member Kathy Ryan; Employees, Conae Black, from the Association of Governments Michael Bryant, Citizens, Cindy McFarlane, Chris McNamara

CONDUCTING: Chair, Robert Smith, the meeting began at 10:05 a.m.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

1. Discuss/approve/deny minutes for April 5, 2012 regular meeting. Jack Forinash asked to rephrase a sentence on wider streets. **MOTION:** Katherine Brown moved to approve the minutes for April 5, 2012 with the change that Jack Forinash mentioned. Amy Wilmarth seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Robert Smith, Ben Coomer, Jack Forinash, Katherine Brown and Amy Wilmarth voted aye. The motion carried.

2. Discuss/approve/deny recommendation to the City Council concerning the Book Cliff Elementary traffic/pedestrian concerns. Robert Smith said what he understands from the Planning Commission powers and duties he said the Planning Commission does not have much to say on traffic concerns on the streets. He said through the General Plan the Planning Commission can designate streets. Cindy McFarlane from the Book Cliff Elementary Community Council addressed the Planning Commission. She said there is an increased concern of safe passage for children to cross Solomon Street when parents drop off and pick up their children. This is partially due to no designated crossing spot for pedestrians to cross that street. The vehicles are parking on the street in the wrong direction and in the middle of the street to distribute the children. She has contacted the State Safe Routes to School organization and was told if there are more than ten students and more than fifty cars then by law something has to be done. The Community Council has been working on educating the children on a safe way to cross the street. They feel that the parents are the ones who need to be educated on safe crossing. Michael Bryant said it seems so simple. The School should open up the drop off area on the school property for a safer distribution of the children. Every other school does it why not this one. There was some discussion on who should be responsible the school or the city.

MOTION: Ben Coomer moved to recommend to the City Council that they work with the School District safety group and the Book Cliff Community Council to find a temporary solution by this fall and the long term solution be in place for the school year 2013/2014 school year. Jack Forinash seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Robert Smith, Ben Coomer, Jack Forinash, Katherine Brown and Amy Wilmarth voted aye. The motion carried.

3. Discuss Bible Church's new building and their Building Permit concerns. This is not under the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission but makes a good discussion and learning tool for them. Jack Forinash said the punch list that they received is not any different then what he received from the Sunrise Engineering Building Inspector. The problem is there is not available communication between builder and the inspector. Robert Smith said if the architect understands the building code then there wouldn't be this problem. The Bible Church has already been to the Planning Commission for all approvals and has zoning clearance from Bryan Meadows, Zoning Administrator. Ben Coomer said someone in the Bible Church had authority to purchase an agricultural steel building that was on sale and the Bible Church bought this for the addition to the church. The building code says you must have an engineered plan. This is an agricultural building that does not require a permit if you put it on agricultural land for agricultural use. The Bible Church needs to meet all building codes. Katherine Brown said this example can be used as what not to do for any future building applicants.

4. Discuss/approve/deny Revised Subdivision Ordinance. Katherine Brown said in her reading of the subdivision ordinance there was not any mention of street width. Ben Coomer and Kathy Ryan explained that the reason for that is because there is a transportation code that sets street standards. Michael Bryant said the ordinance mentions the street standard and leaves it up to the city to determine street widths. Katherine Brown felt Title and Purpose of the sample ordinance was well written. Michael Bryant instructs that it is difficult when you get into plat exemptions. It needs to be either simple and determine those that need a plat and those that do not. If a subdivision requires installing sewer, water, etc. then they should probably be required to have a plat. Katherine Brown said in the sample ordinance all subdivisions are sent to the City Council for approval. Ben Coomer said in his experience that the more you can qualify a subdivision the better it is even if it is a cumbersome process but in the long run for the owner and those property owners who will buy into the subdivision it is best. Michael Bryant said a subdivision used to be legislative but that has been changed to allowing a land use authority to make the decisions. Katherine Brown would like to change the ordinance to allow the land use authority to make decisions without it having to go to the city council especially the small subdivisions. Ben Coomer said most of the time there are individual members of the city council who do not have the knowledge of zoning laws that the planning commission has. Jack Forinash would like a discussion on how they would like to see in the subdivision ordinance. Ben Coomer said in past discussions they have talked about one type of subdivision as being expansive and sprawling and the other as being a condensed population area with an open space around it. Beyond that they would like to address the health, safety and welfare of the citizens. The things they don't want are multiple different traffic patterns going into and out of the subdivision because the city cannot maintain that many roads. They would like to see a really good centralized sewer and water plan. Jack Forinash thought it would be helpful to develop what we want the subdivision to look like with all of these extra rules like the placement of fire hydrants. Right now what we are depending on is a developer coming to the planning commission with a drawing and the planning commission has to make the changes on what should be put in the drawing. Michael Bryant said a lot of the requirements are code such as the distance between each fire hydrant. Jack Forinash said some things that have been discussed but no decision has been made are the type of subdivisions such as, do we want cul-de-sacs, do we want T streets or cross streets or what width do we want the streets to be. Ben Coomer said one of the reasons you let the developer design it and then come to the planning commission with their plan so that they can best use the land that they have. We want them to be able to develop their property to a beneficial use and we also want to be able to look at it and state the problems with the design. Michael Bryant said it is a give and take situation. Cities that are out of land mass have much more restrictive ordinances. Jack Forinash felt that if a developer came into city hall today and said he was interested in buying land and asked for suggestions they would not get any help with visuals or plans. Michael Bryant said that would be included into the General Plan. Jack Forinash asked where they were and stated that they know the special zone but no one wants to build there. Ben Coomer disagreed and said there will be building in the special zone if this plan goes in. Jack Forinash asked if the city could guide development. Michael Bryant said the city could give incentives to developers to infill in certain areas.

There was some discussion on following through on the development of subdivisions. Who is responsible for making sure the subdivision has met all standards. It was agreed that the land use authority should approve subdivisions and the building inspector should make sure the subdivision has met building standards. Michael Bryant said the majority of land use decisions should be made by the body that knows the most about it. The City Council is busy doing everything else the city needs done such as finances and other things and they do not know the land use laws. Amy Wilmarth asked how the planning commission can make that change to not involve the city council. Michael Bryant said look at the powers and duties of the planning commission and modify who does what and make the changes there.

Jack Forinash said he would still like to define what they are doing and asked Conae Black what she would like to see done. Conae Black said she would like to see the ordinance updated to meet State requirements, change the planning commission to be the land use authority and approve all subdivisions and go through the subdivision ordinance, make sure that it states what we want in our ordinance and have a check list for the developer, land use authority and staff. Robert Smith said a check list would be a good place to start. A sample checklist was available from Utah League of Cities and Towns. This can be used as a starting point with

modifications to improve on for Green River. Robert Smith brought up the current state of the water and sewer systems. If there are too many large subdivisions in place then they will need to be updated. Michael Bryant said that is what impact fees are for. Ben Coomer mentioned the problem with making building affordable so that the small developer can compete with the large developer. Jack Forinash said if there are 100 new houses at capacity and the city is collecting more property taxes to increase revenue then the plan should be to put money aside to improve on the water and sewer systems. Michael Bryant said that is also what the impact fee is for. Robert Smith said the nuclear plant way of helping the city out financially is the extra taxes that we will get and can bond against.

There was some discussion on the type of subdivisions. They can be spread out or densely populated. The denser development could help with some of the old motels that in the center of town.

Amy Wilmarth asked what they needed to do first. Conae Black suggested dividing up the current ordinance into sections and each member of the planning commission taking some of each to study and come back with revisions. She also said to read through the current ordinance and ready through the examples that they were given. Robert Smith thought it would be best for each member to take a section. Amy Wilmarth asked for work meetings at the next few meetings with nothing but the subdivision ordinance. There was some discussion on the role of the City Council and the role of the Land Use Authority for subdivisions. Michael Bryant said for a preliminary plat review where an engineer, fire chief, city council representative and others to discuss the plans with the developer and to help design the subdivision. This way the city council can be more involved and more aware of the subdivision. This way the subdivision is developed better. There was some discussion to encourage development with the lowest impact fees possible and help for the developer to design the best subdivision. The divisions and assignments were made by the planning commission members and the plan was to come back at the next meeting with suggested revisions. The assignments went as follows: Katherine Brown, chapters 1 & 2, Amy Wilmarth, chapters 3 & 4, Robert Smith, chapters 4 & 5, Jack Forinash chapter 6 and Ben Coomer, chapters 7, 8 & 9.

5. Discuss zone revisions e.g. Industrial Zones may be first on the list. There was not any discussion on this agenda item.

6. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Robert Smith, Chair

Conae Black, City Recorder

Approved: _____