

December 1, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Planning Department

City Annex Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Natalie Black, Gene Hicks, George Morrison, Joanne Denney, Arnold Cantu, Margaret Wimborne, Lindsey Romankiw.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brent Dixon

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Director Brad Cramer; Assistant Planning Directors Kerry Beutler; Naysa Foster; and interested citizens.

CALL TO ORDER: Natalie Black called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: None.

MINUTES:

Morrison moved to approve the November 10, 2020 Minutes with the requested correction, Cantu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing(s):

1. RZON 20-019: REZONE. Rezone from R1 single Dwelling Residential with a PT, Planned Transition overlay to TN, Traditional neighborhood.

Black opened the public hearing.

Applicant: Blake Jolley, Connect Engineering 1150 Hollipark, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Jolley feels this is a straightforward request from R1 to TN. Jolley showed the property that has been vacant and would develop well with TN.

Foster presented the staff report, a part of the record.

No one appeared in support or opposition to this application.

Black closed the public hearing.

Wimborne is a fan of the TN Zone and feels this is a good area and a good fit for this historic area and will get a good mix of housing that the community needs.

Romankiw agrees with Wimborne and drives past this area every day and this area has not developed as R1, and it won't develop as R1 as it is not feasible. Romankiw feels it is perfect for TN.

Black agrees.

Wimborne moved to Recommend to the Mayor and City Council approval of the Rezone from R1 to TN, removing the PT overlay, for approximately 0.86 acres, lots 37-47 and 48, less 85.84 square feet, Block 11, Highland Park Addition, as presented, Denney seconded the motion. Black called for roll call vote: Wimborne, yes; Morrison, yes; Romankiw, yes; Denney, yes; Cantu, yes; Hicks, yes. The Motion passed unanimously.

2. RZON 20-021: REZONE. Rezone from PB, Professional Business to R2, Mixed Residential.

Black opened the public hearing.

Applicant: Blake Jolley, Connect Engineering, 1150 Hollipark, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Jolley indicated that this is a straight-forward request, and they want to make the entire parcel that has the same ownership the same zone so they can utilize the property the best. Jolley stated that PB tucked in behind everything else isn't working well and the applicant has found a way to make the whole parcel work with R2.

Foster presented the staff report, a part of the record.

Support/Opposition:

Dr. Paul Brook, 1405 # 4 Presto, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Brook hopes everyone in the Planning Commission have looked at the new construction on the Fremont/Presto corner that this Group (Fitzgerald) is constructing. Brook stated that they started off with high class townhouses, and have slowly gone to a much cheaper, less attractive project. Brook stated that they have been arguing over this ground for 30 years in hopes that they could get condominiums in the same construction type/square footage that are in the North Park Condos. Brook stated that he will become familiar with R2 and not let the same thing happen that is happening on Presto and Fremont.

D. Lewis, Science Center Drive, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Lewis asked whether they are building condos. Black clarified that they are only looking at zoning today. Lewis stated that her property was written 30 years ago to have condos on that property. Lewis stated that there was something written 30 years ago that when they were going to build on this lot that they would build the exact type of condos with same square footage, etc. Black asked if Lewis was talking about protective covenants. Lewis affirmed and stated that she thought it would all be the same.

Applicant: Blake Jolley, Connect Engineering 1150 Hollipark, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Jolley stated that some of the questions that have been asked by public are development type questions for construction, and the zoning code is about what you can and cannot do with the property. Jolley stated that they will look at what is allowed in that zone and that is why the applicant has requested the R2 Zone to be similar to what is already built. Jolley stated that the question about the CC&R Jolley is unaware.

Black closed the public hearing.

Black asked Foster about the CC&R. Foster indicated that if they are legitimate they would be recorded but it is not something that the City enforces and this is only a zone change and the zone that is proposed coincides with the existing zone and that is all the Commissioners should be considering.

Morrison thinks this is an improvement for the zone for the neighborhood and is in favor of the request.

Wimborne stated that it is challenging when there are parcels that have sat undeveloped for long periods of time and people have bought and established in the area and have a vision of how the area is going to grow, but sometimes it doesn't evolve that way. Wimborne stated that the R2 zone is how that area is zoned so it seems that it is a good fit for the area and the current zoning doesn't seem to work.

Black agreed with Wimborne and Morrison.

Morrison moved to recommend to the Mayor and City Council approval of the Rezone from PB to R2 for 0.56 Acres, Lots 18-24, Block 22 of Highland Park, as presented, Romankiw seconded the motion. Black called for roll call vote: Wimborne, yes; Morrison, (unavailable to vote due to technical difficulties); Romankiw, yes; Denney, yes; Cantu, yes; Hicks, yes; Black, yes. The Motion passed unanimously.

3. RZON 20-020: REZONE. Rezone from HC, Highway Commercial to CC, Central Commercial for approximately 3.3 acres.

Black opened the public hearing.

Applicant: Lorin Walker, 1070 Riverwalk Drive, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Walker is requesting that the HC be changed to CC for the area proposed. Walker stated that the southern border is already CC and they would like to have the same zone contiguous to it for purposes of expanding opportunities on the CC zone on that property. Walker has visited with the large landowners to the north, west and east and has received their support for this change as a compatible zone with their current zoning.

Beutler presented the staff report, a part of the record.

No one appeared in support or opposition to this application.

Black closed the public hearing.

Black stated that they want developers to look at infill and is in support of this application.

Wimborne agreed that it makes sense and is complimentary to the adjacent zoning. Wimborne stated that they have made a few adjustments with zoning that came about when the big rezone was done City wide, and this falls into this category. Wimborne indicated that the uses are similar and agrees that it fits and is a reasonable request.

Morrison stated that anything they can do to improve the street to keep up what is happening all around will be beneficial and it is close to the entrances to the City and there will be a lot of traffic due to Snake River Landing. Morrison is in favor of the CC.

Morrison moved to recommend to the Mayor and City Council approval of the rezone from HC to CC for 3.3 acres Se1/4 Section 24, T 2N, R 37 E, as presented, Hicks seconded the motion. Black called for roll call vote: Wimborne, yes; Morrison, yes; Romankiw, yes; Denney, yes; Cantu, yes; Hicks, yes. The Motion passed unanimously.

Business:

4. Comprehensive Plan Update: Cramer wanted to give an update from what they discussed last month. Cramer stated that they have received the 1st draft of the Community Health Assessment. Cramer is meeting with AgnewBeck later this week to finalize the Public Outreach Plan so that can be launched in January. Agnew Beck will be conducting interviews with community groups to find out about methods to reach certain groups. Cramer stated that Brian

Stephens will start taking the background studies (look at current utility system, roadway network, land use changes) that the staff has done over the last few months and putting them into a final document to be shared that will show what some of the trends are and things that the City will be facing. Cramer showed slides showing growth in the City and wanted to discuss what would happen if there was another boom decade between 2020 and 2030 what kind of things would the City need to think about. Cramer showed slides showing data points starting in 1907 and looked every 10 years up until 2020. The data points showed population, acres of land the City took up and they have broken that into an annual % increase or decrease and acres per capita. Cramer discussed the slides and then asked if the City was to double in population, where would they put another 16,000 acres, what kind of land would that take, how many roads, utility lines, etc., and where would 60,000 more people go? Cramer stated that they want to do a digital work session to discuss where the Commission feels people should be placed. Cramer stated that it is interesting data and shows the importance of decisions like ones made tonight to approve zones that have a greater density and allow things to be tighter and develop in-fill lots.

Wimborne complimented staff for looking into the data and the story it tells and feels that the growth that happened in the 50-60 with the INL is a potential in the future. Wimborne feels that looking at this data will help make the Comprehensive Plan a lot more relevant to the conversations.

Morrison feels that it is not beyond the realm of reason to have an expansion like that in the next 10 years and planning for it is a brilliant idea and they need to do it.

Black thinks looking at adjusting the Comprehensive Plan more often and be a little more adaptive to changes that are happening. Black sees license plates from all over the place and if they do get the modular reactor you could see an explosion and the City needs to be ready and do the planning for it.

5. Northgate/1st Street Area Wide Plan. Beutler indicated that last year they had consultants do some public outreach and steering committee meetings, interviews with property owners and business owners, and they were working with Stantec who is the consultant on the EPA Grant that paid to do the Northgate/1st Street Area wide Planning Study. Beutler was hoping by this time in the year to do additional public outreach, and additional meetings, but Covid has delayed that. Beutler wants to walk the Commission through the document and then spend some time in the document and give feedback and they will bring the document back in January and at that time ask for a recommendation from the Commission to take the document to City Council.

Beutler presented the document that focuses on the Northgate Corridor and the 1st Street Corridor. Beutler went through information from the Study. Beutler indicated that they held an open house meeting with public to listen to concerns. Beutler indicated that the vision that came back was the celebration of the area's history (used to be the Highway to Yellowstone); create a positive identity for the area; better the sense of place; branding and more uniform look and approach; enhance with infrastructure and amenities; start some traditions like festivals/parties and revisit the main street feel; provide new housing options; establish community priorities; traffic is a major issue; improve property appearances; create public amenities; promote beautification; walkability/public safety; parking. Beutler showed the 5 strategies that were within the Urban Design Plan including: Creating identity; circulation and access; catalyst projects to spur growth; steward ship/self-governance; policy and funding.

Black stated that by Planet Doom and the old Post Office she has heard they were going to do apartments; Black stated that area could be a catalyst project to build a large housing project with a courtyard. Black asked what the interest is in the area. Beutler stated that there is an interest in that property for apartments, and there is an approved site plan for apartments on that property. Beutler stated that the developer is now looking to sell the property instead of developing it. Beutler stated that there are out of state developers that want something built there. Beutler stated that most recently they were discussing townhomes. Beutler stated that they need higher density and height in this area to realize the vision. Beutler stated that they are working with the Redevelopment Agency and looking at parcels in the area to see about an opportunity to partner with the Redevelopment Agency.

Beutler stated that they looked at Activity Centers, including the Fred Meyer property with Fred Meyer as an anchor store but has a lot of underutilized pad sites, and there is potential for redevelopment; the stock yards has been identified as a potential site for a future Police Station and that will be a catalyst project and with that project there has been more people talking about other parcels developing due to the improvements that would come with the Police Station; 1st Street would become a main street with the area behind the Old Post Office identified as an Urban Village. Beutler stated that there is possibility of closing down portions of streets for events like a car show, etc.

Beutler stated that there has been discussion of vacating some streets to create more developable areas. There has also been discussion of changing traffic patterns to allow a left of Northgate Mile to access 1st Street. There has been discussion with Public Works about pedestrian connections. Beutler indicated that Public Works will be doing some work on water lines and they want to talk to Public Works about goals and priorities including improving the area where you turn from Lomax to 1st Street to allow better access and that will improve the overall look.

Beutler showed where they would want an Urban Village and how it could be closed off for events. Beutler indicated that the Urban Village would give the area an anchor.

Beutler showed some options of how they could change the traffic patterns with doing either a one-way couplet; two-way pairs; or realign the street on the west so there is a left turn off Northgate to access 1st Street. Black asked if they could do a connection to the Greenbelt as there is no great access. Beutler stated that has been a discussion and the underpass is an expensive barrier. Beutler stated that Holmes has been identified as a bike path, but now they are having conversations about bringing bikes off of Holmes and putting them elsewhere so Holmes can move cars.

Wimborne asked about the high number of Brownfields challenges/projects. Wimborne asked if there is a mechanism in place where the City might consider some sort of redevelopment district like they did along Lindsey. Beutler indicated that the EPA Grant that has paid for the funding the Redevelopment Agency is a coalition partners on the Grant, so they are working in tandem. Beutler stated that the EPA Grants has the ability to be a Phase I and Phase II environmental and the Grant will pay for those studies on the properties. Beutler stated that the Agency is having discussions of doing redevelopment districts on a smaller scale. Wimborne indicated that to bring this vision alive it will need to be a private/public partnership. Beutler indicated that when the Redevelopment Agency closed their last District they asked the City to have a portion of the funds being returned to have those funds designated back to the Agency so it had some seed money to look at property acquisition in this area, and the City was supportive of that request.

Black asked if the out of state developers are being directed to this area? Beutler stated that some of the out of state developers are interested in redevelopment and some want new.

Cramer stated that all of the contacts that they are getting they keep a running contact list of out of state and local developers so when they get the RFP put together to develop a section or create a district those developers will be mailed a direct packets.

Beutler indicated that the Plan will be on the website, then they will take comments and they want those comments back by the end of December, and then it will be back to the Planning Commission on the January Agenda and then go to City Council in a work session and formally to the Council after that. Beutler is having conversations with Public Works to make sure their projects are working and implementing the plan as well. Beutler has had conversations with the Redevelopment Agency. Beutler stated they are looking for the “Champions” of the neighborhood that can help the City adopt this and run with it.

Black adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Beckie Thompson, Recorder