

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

City Council Chambers 7500 W. 29th Avenue

October 3, 2016

Mayor Joyce Jay called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

Council members present: Janeece Hoppe, Monica Duran, Tim Fitzgerald, George Pond, Zachary Urban, Genevieve Wooden, and Kristi Davis

Absent: Larry Mathews

Also present: Deputy City Clerk, Robin Eaton; City Manager Assistant Director Heather Geyer; Public Works Director, Scott Brink, Planning Director Ken Johnstone, Zack Wallace, Carly Lorentz, guests and interested citizens

CITIZEN COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor would like to include a Citizen Speaker for a 7-minute presentation and assessment for longer duration in speaking. It is special engineer Jesse Hill. Council agreed.

Michael Epson (WR) Having spoken multiple times at study sessions he would like to see a limit in size in the R-1C zone - to limit the size of Bulk Plane to 12.5 and a height limit of 25 feet. This is the only area that they are trying to limit at this time. Single story bungalows prevail in the City of Denver and across Wheat Ridge. Current zoning allows for "towers" to be built next to brick bungalow's; it does not fit the character of the neighborhoods; it interferes with privacy and also lessens home values when they are built. He submitted petitions of support garnered by going door to door and not by standing in front of a supermarket.

Deana Swetlik believes the 15 foot Bulk Plane Standards are a good thing 15 feet is the most restrictive to consider and questions how are they measured or considered for the finished floor.

- Disagrees with anything that is less than the 15 feet bulk plane
- Does not like expanding the Bulk Planes to all Residences and it is a big leap to make that change as R-1 and R-1C are the most restrictive
- Removing the current setbacks: Standard's for Multi is duplicative and conflicting. Current language for Setbacks doesn't work for good architectural design
- Support for allowable limited acceptable encroachment appurtenance types into the Bulk Plane

- Planning Commission discussion for more in depth analysis of the zoning code is warranted but architecture design codes and standards are typically done for Special Districts or Historical Districts and separate from the codes.

Al Lazalde – Watched last meeting on TV and was very disappointed as they acted like they had no guidance from City Council which he knows is not true. Agrees with Mike to keep the 12.5 Bulk Plane with 25 ft. height limits and restrict it to the R-1C zone in District 1. This has taken on a life of its own; it was never the intent to expand to the whole City of Wheat Ridge. He was disheartened by the planning commission meeting and could have been resolved in a simple manner.

Staff remarks

Heather Geyer talked about a presentation for a new software called Balancing Act to help the citizens be more interactive, to give feedback and input on balancing the City budget.

Carly Lorentz talked about launching the software on the proposed budget. The 2017 budget is in process. The software shows graphs and charts about revenue and talks about what citizens can do to have input and share their thoughts and comments. They have put in a "working budget" to help include the residents but not a proposed budget.

Mayor Joyce responded that this is terrific and really interesting.

Monica Duran asked who is responsible for answering the comments?

Ms. Lorentz replied that the citizen reports are put into one report to her, but each department will be aware of those comments and will be able to follow-up with answers separately.

Tim Fitzgerald asked if the link will be on the homepage.

It will be more on the Budget page.

Mayor Jay – Regarding the 3.19 deficit, was the number based on the budget requests that we have received?

Ms. Lorentz: Yes, it is where we are at in the process and reworking the EIP and also what we need to save for future projects.

1. Staff Report(s)

a) Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan Update

Scott Brink – Bike Master Plan work began last summer. They hired a consultant. There's been quite a bit of mapping and data/info; correct existing map; a good

deal of public outreach; a visions and goals outreach in August with various stakeholders; reaching out through social media, public events, Ridgefest and Carnation Festival. Accessibility to senior community, Town center, etc. Lastly, there will be an open house Wednesday at the Rec Center 5-7pm to talk on this and other subjects that include a new Wikimap. This is a click and share in the City to mark and show areas where something needs to be done - i.e. safety issues, people want bike lanes or sidewalks, etc. Staff will wait until input is in from citizens and comments for priority projects to move forward on critical needs to make a rough draft sometime maybe in early December.

Zachary Urban raised concerns on immediate needs, grants, goals and improvements and would like them to be more defined like back in 2010. There is no way to track goals. Will they be coming out at Rec Center open house?

Scott Brink: Those measurable goals will be reflected in the plan whether in division statement or long term capital plan, short term goals etc. to get the most bang for the buck. Reach out beyond the traditional bubble of input that we usually get. Trying to show how the projects will be paid for to meet the project goals. Consultant services to put together a plan and identify the funding sources for grants out there. We will try to push message out a little deeper to stakeholders like BikeJeffCo, Lakewood, Arvada etc., pushing them hard to get the word out, both inside and outside of the community.

Heather Geyer: Definitely will continue working with Scott and his staff to get it out via traditional and non-traditional manners and will be very transparent. October 15th at the Kipling Trail ribbon cutting ceremonies, Scott will have the consultants there to give information and take input from the people that attend.

Mayor Jay – Specifics to make sure they get public input and they understand that we are trying very hard to create these plans to be able to have a true community project.

b) ADA Transition Plan

Scott Brink– A similar timeline to the Bike Master Plan is being used; staff hopes to have a draft plan for Council in late November or early December. Will be at the same meeting on Wednesday at the Bike Ped open house, trying to get the data gathered, really urging public input - ultimately to meet the federal requirement, to review the City's programs, services and activities for Disabilities, and to address accessibility, public notification system and compliance concerns. The Plan will include formal grievance procedures and a multiyear program to correct deficiencies.

Zach Urban – As stated before, it's essential to make sure we have clear and measurable goals and have a dedicated funding source for this as well.

Tim Fitzgerald - Because of the expense, do we have a time line or some point on when we have to have this accomplished?

Mr. Brink answered that does depend on funding. We have checked with other cities. Some have barebones plans in place while others are more reactive with complaints, and some are very proactive, setting hundreds of thousands of dollars aside to correct deficiencies and make new plans.

Kristi Davis thinks we have to have a plan and funding -- to set that we are proactive to address, state that we are being proactive in some high risk areas but yet budget a couple of other little projects, to try and keep some aside for a complaint or special project that may arise.

Monica Duran: Mid-November it states in notes about a priority plan draft, estimation of cost to help prioritize, and help figure out all of the little pieces and how they will be addressed.

2. Residential Development Standards – Bulk Plane

Ken Johnstone started the presentation on Bulk Plane residential development standards -- an ongoing regulatory frame work, for the creation of Bulk Plane standards. Staff and council were receiving some concerns from the residents, particularly on the east side of the city and the scale of that development. Mark equal time from, particularly on the east side of town, not in scale to the existing neighborhood. Zach Wallace has done the bulk of the research to benchmark us against some of our adjacent communities in terms of three areas: Setbacks Building Heights and Bulk Plane. Typically, we run in line with Setbacks and Building Heights with the other jurisdictions, but maybe not Bulk Plane regulations. The Emergency Bulk Plane ordinance was adopted on August 2 and is only in effect for 90 days. We have a ticking clock to find a permanent solution.

Mr. Johnstone stated that as a community we have been trying to encourage development in the city with policies like the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy in our Comprehensive Plan that encourage reinvestment and diversity in our housing stock -- to help strike a balance between our commercial development and valuing the established neighborhoods as well.

Mr. Johnstone went over the core policy questions with a power point:

1. Is there support from Council for the 15-foot bulk plane?

The Bulk plane is a new concept to the City of Wheat Ridge whereas there are already minimum setbacks in place along with maximum height levels. Bulk

Plane is something that is measured to reduce the impact of the upper stories. As such, with a 5-foot minimum setback from the property line, the 10 ft bulk plane is about the most restrictive; and as such, is not recommended.

Moving up to the 12-foot Bulk Plane; the 12 ft. plane would not be good for two stories stacked on top of each other, unless you move back 10 feet from the property line.

The 17 ft. Bulk Plane is the most generous type, used in some adjacent jurisdictions, questioning if that makes sense for fairly tall structures on the 5ft setback line that is used predominantly for single family housing units.

Striking a balance: Staff recommends using a 15 ft. Bulk Plane which might require a reduction of the clear heights in the floors or shift back to a 7 ft. setback from the property line, and for 3rd stories to be set back 17 ft. from line.

2. What does Council think about apply the Bulk Plane to all Residential Districts.

Showing the map of the City of Wheat Ridge and to where the Bulk Plane could apply to or varying by R-1C mostly in the eastern part of the city; R-3 is imbedded in many areas to include the R-1C as well. Fairly similar setbacks and smaller lot sizes, by Wheat Ridge standards.

3. Is there support to remove zoning requirements for setbacks? It makes sense as they may be duplicative and somewhat confusing.

Setbacks are a cumbersome regulation for multifamily structures and duplexes you are required to setback the upper floors from the property line. From a design perspective they are cumbersome and the recommendation is to eliminate the residential setbacks.

4. What type of limited encroachments may be acceptable in the Bulk Plane?

Some exceptions are already in the building code (i.e. chimneys, etc.) and have necessary features that can be similar as to what would go into the Bulk Plane Code. These wouldn't have the same impact on neighboring lots and if allowed to, there will be a list of examples at a later date such as solar panels, roof eaves, etc.

5. Speak about what the Planning Commission was in reference to.

There was a healthy discussion a few weeks ago; members are not necessarily aligned or doing a Bulk Plane and their next meeting is October 20th. They did not think it was appropriate to apply a Bulk Plane universally or to just adopt the Emergency Bulk Plane as a permanent ordinance. More discussions are to

follow on the residential standards and to allow more time for public outreach, but to make sure to get it done by November 14.

The presentation of the power point was concluded with discussion by the Council to include slopes on properties that would have any impact on homes, pop tops on existing homes plus garages, and how the 15ft restrictions were arrived at.

Public Comment was given by Jesse Hill, who was allowed by Council to speak after the presentation. He noted R-1C as defined is a high quality, stable, safe, medium density as a key point. He would like to have more input from the Building Department as it's tough to actually follow code. He addressed slopes for drainage, grade level and grade beam for realistic building. He recommended finding out why a foot above the highest point on the property line is needed. He requested Council to please take the time to think it through, along with the Building Department and architects, on how this would really look out there and if it's the path that we want to go down.

Discussion followed including when it becomes economically unfeasible to pop tops or scrape a home; support for the 15 ft Bulk Plane with variance; to define what variances would be allowed; and how it affects the fabric of the neighborhoods

General Consensus:

To support the Bulk Plane in the R-3 zone where concerning single family homes, R-3 will have multiple setbacks when there are more than 1 unit; approved 4 3.

To allow reasonable encroachments that may be acceptable in the Bulk Plane and support for Planning Commission discussion for in-depth, long term analysis for residential height standards and architectural design standards; approved 4-3

3. Elected Officials' Report(s)

Monica Duran: West Metro Wheat Ridge fire merger vote is tomorrow with three locations for voting.

Janece Hoppe: Tuesday October 18th, location TBD, City Treasurer Jerry DiTullio will have a question and answer session regarding Ballot Question 2E.

Zachery Urban: October 9th, Prospect Valley is having their 5K at Prospect Park at 9:00 a.m.:

Tim Fitzgerald: He and George Pond will be having a District III meeting at 9:30 a.m. at the Recreation Center; there will be snacks. There will be a County Commissioner's Candidate forum at the Jefferson Unitarian Church on Oct 11th.

Kristi Davis: There is a Renewal Wheat Ridge meeting Oct 4, at 6:00 pm if anyone would like to attend.

Mayor Joyce: There will be a candidate/issue forum Friday to meet the candidates for State House Representatives, Jefferson County Commissioner Districts I and II, and District Attorney, and to hear presentations on Issues 3A & 3B, Question 69, and 2E. It will be from 9:30 am – 10 30 at City Hall on October 7th.

Heather Geyer: Wheat Ridge Optimist Club has their annual Pancake Supper this Thursday at Wheat Ridge High School from 5:30- 8:00p.m.

Robin Eaton: Reminder that the Boards and Commission Dinner will be held on October 19th at the Recreation Center at 5:00 PM.

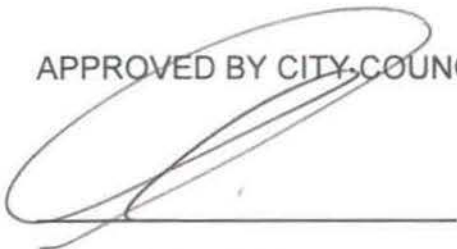
ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 9:00 PM



Robin Eaton, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON October 24, 2016



George Pond, Mayor pro tem