

# MINUTES

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## SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LANCASTER PLANNING COMMISSION

September 2, 2008

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### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vose called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

### INVOCATION

Commissioner Burkey gave the invocation.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Vose led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

### ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Burkey, Haycock, Malhi, Chairman Vose.

Absent: Commissioners Ervin and Jacobs and Vice Chair Smith.

Also present were the Deputy City Attorney (Joe Adams), Planning Director (Brian Ludicke), General Plan Project Manager (Dave Ledbetter), Associate Planner (Chuen Ng), City Engineer (Carlyle Workman), Recording Secretary (Tess Epling), and an audience of approximately 10 people.

### PURPOSE

Review and discussion of the City-wide General Plan update. The special meeting will provide an overview of progress on the comprehensive update, and an understanding of the scope of the project and role of the Planning Commission and City Council in this process.

### PRESENTATION

Presentation on the Lancaster General Plan Update, including the General Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee's (GPCAC) review of long-term goals and objectives, and the development of land use alternatives and GPCAC preferred plan recommendation.

Brian Ludicke stated that tonight staff would update the Planning Commission as to where the General Plan process is currently, and to give them an overview of the General Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee (GPCAC) accomplishments. He stressed that while the input received from the GPCAC represents an important phase of the public input process, it is only

one of several sources of information that the Planning Commission will examine in developing their recommendations for the General Plan. Over the next few months, they will be receiving information via the General Plan Environmental Impact Report, stakeholder input, public comment, and other information sources for consideration. Additionally, there will be the requirement to address state planning law consistency issues. He emphasized that there will be an ongoing dialogue between staff and the Planning Commission regarding these sources whereby the Commission will formulate a recommendation to be transmitted to the City Council.

Dave Ledbetter was introduced, and he gave a PowerPoint presentation on the GPCAC accomplishments with regard to review of the General Plan Goals and Objectives, and development and recommendation of a preferred land use alternative. Dave Ledbetter indicated that the GPCAC was approved by the City Council in November of 2006, and met monthly throughout most of 2007. He stated that a detailed overview of the GPCAC proceedings is contained in the General Plan Citizen Advisory Committee Final Report, which had been distributed to the City Council and Planning Commission and made available to the public.

Dave Ledbetter explained that the GPCAC was required to accomplish three major tasks that included reaching consensus on the Community Visioning Priorities, which came out of the community visioning workshops of 2006; reviewing and making recommendations for modifications to the General Plan long-term goals and objectives; and reaching a consensus on a preferred land use alternative. Dave Ledbetter indicated that the GPCAC accomplished all of these tasks by the last meeting of November 1, 2007.

Dave Ledbetter related that the GPCAC reviewed and made recommendations for minimal modifications to the goals and objectives. They found that some updating of the document was necessary since this had not occurred since 1997, but that basically the Policy Document, which contains the goals and objectives, was sound. Dave Ledbetter related that some members felt that the City was not implementing the policies and programs of the General Plan in a timely enough manner, and the land use map was where the most attention was needed.

Dave Ledbetter noted that an important part of the outreach process was the conduction of a series of community land use alternative workshops during May 2007, including a virtual version of the workshop that was included on the General Plan website. Dave Ledbetter indicated that the information from the workshops was reviewed with the GPCAC as the basis for development of land use alternatives and later for recommendation of a preferred land use plan. He stated a workshop was also conducted for the GPCAC, which gave them the opportunity to explore potential land use applications in the process of developing the alternatives. He noted that, in addition to the existing land use map (No Project Alternative), two land use alternatives were developed during the GPCAC process. These included the Balanced Growth Alternative and the Focused Growth Alternative. Dave Ledbetter further explained that elements of both of these alternatives were incorporated into the land use map that became the preferred alternative recommended by the GPCAC.

Dave Ledbetter noted that following the conclusion of the GPCAC meetings, staff and the General Plan consultant initiated the environmental review process.

Dave Ledbetter enumerated what the final steps of the process will be. For the summer of 2008, the General Plan Policy document will be released. The Housing Element went before the Planning Commission, was adopted by the City Council, and went back to State HCD for a

second review, after which the document will be awaiting certification. The draft EIR is currently being worked on for early November and there will be a 60-day review process. Within that period, there will be a public review and opportunity to receive comments. Dave Ledbetter, in closing, expressed his pleasure in being part of this endeavor.

Commissioner Haycock expressed her gratitude to the public for their opinions on the General Plan. Good things happen when the community is involved. Dave Ledbetter noted the presence of some GPCAC members in the audience. Chairman Vose requested them to stand up to be acknowledged.

Gretchen Gutierrez, representing BIA and a co-chair for the Committee, said that it was a fulfilling and satisfactory task.

Steve Rice, who was appointed by former Council member Jim Jeffra, said that the process was an educational one. He thanked everyone for their help and considered it a truly worthwhile project.

Val Holt, who was chosen by staff and consultants, commented that the most impressive thing about the project was how the effort was encompassing. Staff went above and beyond to involve the community. It is important to realize that no one could be completely happy with the process but in the end, everyone learned how to compromise and look at the community as a whole. It gave her an opportunity to consult with neighbors. She thanked the staff and past and present members of the City Council. Overall, the GPCAC did a good job.

Richard Wood stated that he has been involved in all General Plan updates. By far, he considers this one as the most exhaustive, most organized and most inclusive. It was a job well done.

Ron Hawkins had the backing of a former Council member and was able to be part of the GPCAC even though he was not a Lancaster resident. He lives within the sphere of influence. He represented the Antelope Acres area. He came in with the intent of looking out for the interest of Antelope Acres area residents to make sure that the area is not encroached upon. A good consensus was reached. He praised the good work done by staff. However, he stated that he was not convinced that the City Council will adopt their recommendation.

Raj Malhi, appointed by Council Member Ron Smith, said that it was an honor to be part of the Committee and that it was a learning experience for him. He met wonderful people in the process.

Chairman Vose inquired about Focused Growth versus Balanced Land Use, if it tends to change the uses and yield of undeveloped land and opportunity for density. Dave Ledbetter responded that the same land use is dealt with but is applied in different ways on the map. Balanced growth is more outward looking.

Chairman Vose complimented staff and committee members for the hard work and effort put in the endeavor. It is reflected in the excellent work product.

Brian Ludicke noted that there will be an opportunity for public testimony regarding the General Plan revision. As the Commission looks at the document, it should be considered as an

important resource. Listening to the comments made by the GPCAC members, it is evident that they understood our intent. There is no perfect future world. You recognize that there are tradeoffs that you should be willing to make and recognize that. There could be a great plan but if it does not get implemented, it is important to bear in mind that it is not an end in itself. Chairman Vose wanted clarification on his interpretation that the General Plan is a living document, that residents have a right to petition modification to the document. Brian Ludicke explained that Daniel Curtin, a land use attorney, opined that a General Plan is not a static document. It reacts over time to the conditions in the community. This is our best projection based on what we think is the best approach the City will take.

Chairman Vose noted that considering all the elements to make a recommendation to City Council, there are still ongoing applications for revisions to the General Plan. Brian Ludicke answered that there are projects submitted almost 4 years ago for consideration for amendment of the current General Plan allowed by the City Council and they have to be dealt with. Some of the applications have been withdrawn due to economic reasons. There will be situations where, depending on when they will be heard, will be based upon the current General Plan adopted or based on the new one to be adopted. There are two categories: changes in urbanizing areas, and request to revise what is the current urban boundary to encompass areas not designed for urban development.

Chairman Vose requested that the Commission be notified as to when they will be hearing the amendment and zone change requests, to which Brian Ludicke responded in the affirmative. Chairman Vose then inquired if the Commission will continue to have special meetings in regards to the General Plan. Brian Ludicke answered that another part of input that the Commission needs to receive will be from the public and stakeholders. The goal is to gain understanding on what the thrust of the plan is and understand the totality of the plan. This will make it easier to evaluate requests that will come before the Planning Commission. Chairman Vose asked what the Commission will be looking at on September 29. Dave Ledbetter responded that the next major document will be the policy document, which will be available for public review shortly. Brian Ludicke commented that the decisions that the Commission makes in the drafting will reflect in the Commission's recommendation to City Council.

Chairman Vose pointed out that the holding of the special meeting was posted on the website. A broader announcement should also be planned so that the community will become more aware of the special meetings and participate.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY – GENERAL PLAN REVISION**

Chairman Vose opened the public testimony at 7:30 p.m. to allow an individual the opportunity to comment on the General Plan Revision only.

There were no members of the audience who wished to make a comment.

Chairman Vose closed the public testimony at 7:30 p.m.

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**DIRECTOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The next Special Meeting is scheduled on September 29, 2008.

**COMMISSION AGENDA**

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None.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR - NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

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None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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Chairman Vose declared the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m. to Monday, September 8, 2008, at 5:30 p.m., in the Large Planning Conference Room, Lancaster City Hall.

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JAMES B. VOSE, Chairman  
Lancaster Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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BRIAN S. LUDICKE, Planning Director  
City of Lancaster