

MINUTES - DRAFT

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LANCASTER PLANNING COMMISSION

December 1, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vose called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Burkey did 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, Ervin, Haycock and Jacobs, Vice Chair Smith and Chairman Vose.

Absent: Commissioner Malhi.

Also present were the Planning Director (Brian Ludicke), General Plan Project Manager (Dave Ledbetter), Principal Planner (Silvia Donovan), Associate Planner (Chuen Ng), City Engineer (Carlyle Workman), Recording Secretary (Tess Epling), and an audience of approximately 30 people.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

PURPOSE

Chairman Vose noted that the purpose of tonight's meeting is a complete review of the draft General Plan Policy Document, and begin review and discussion of the General Plan land use alternatives. In addition to the current adopted land use map, the Planning Commission will consider two land use alternatives developed from input received at community land use

workshops and monthly meetings of the General Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee (GPCAC) during 2007.

This special meeting will also coincide with the release of the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the new General Plan, and will begin a 60-day public comment period for the PEIR.

Brian Ludicke reminded the commission of their previous discussion of the consideration of higher density residential products on in-fill lots. He noted that these developments might allow for up to eight dwelling units per acre but would still be permitted in single family zones through the use of an RPD without the need for a General Plan Amendment or zone change to a multiple family designation. He reminded the commission that the General Plan currently contains an action program that calls for the amendment of the zoning ordinance to allow these types of development. Brian Ludicke then gave a PowerPoint presentation which reviewed examples of higher density residential products in other California communities.

Following the presentation, Chairman Vose inquired what General Plan designation and zone would be appropriate for this use. Brian Ludicke responded that it would be the UR designation, which includes the single family residential zones. He noted that in transitional areas such as R-15,000, we may not want to put the same provisions, and that R-7000 would probably be most appropriate. He said that one thing to consider is look for a reason why a site would be passed over. Chairman Vose asked if minimum yields could be considered. Brian Ludicke said that it depends on how it is properly situated and what it looks like. Chairman Vose commented that it was more like a planned development approach. Brian Ludicke noted that while an RPD process would be applied with these developments, it would still need to go through a CUP process. Chairman Vose noted, though, that other density housings do not need a CUP. Brian Ludicke said that if there is an area that is an infill site, you would want people to comment on what is happening there. Chairman Vose then asked if it is still possible to have an infill project that is not adjacent to existing developments, to which Brian Ludicke responded yes.

Dave Ledbetter next gave a PowerPoint presentation on the General Plan land use alternatives that covered the evolution of the Lancaster General Plan from 1980 forward, presented a recap of the process involved in the development of the land use alternatives for the current update program, and gave a comparison and contrast between the three alternatives consisting of the adopted land use map (No Project Alternative), the Balanced Growth Alternative, and the GPCAC Preferred Plan. For the purposes of the presentation, Dave Ledbetter explained that staff had divided the City into three sections: the area west of 40th Street West, the area between 40th Street West and Division. Staff had arranged each section as reflected in the three land use alternatives side by side in the presentation slide in order to allow easy comparison among the three alternatives.

Following the presentation, Chairman Vose asked if with the Preferred Plan, residential growth is not being limited, so that there will be less commercial services. Dave Ledbetter answered that since the Preferred Plan would focus a larger percentage of future population growth within the urban core, there would be less land designated for commercial services in the outlying portions of the Urbanizing Area because in theory there would be less need. Dave Ledbetter explained that additional commercial land would be added in these areas under the Preferred Plan, but not as much as with the Balanced Plan since under this alternative, a greater

percentage of the future population growth would locate in the outlying portions of the Urbanizing Area. Commissioner Haycock asked what the colors on the land use map represented. Dave Ledbetter explained the correlation between the colors and the various land use designations and indicated that staff would provide the Commissioners with larger copies of the land use alternatives and legend.

Chairman Vose inquired if the APZ (Accident Potential Zones of Air Force Plant 42) were considered south of K under the Preferred Plan. Dave Ledbetter said that the Accident Potential Zone only affects a small portion of the City east of 50th Street East in an area designated as Non-urban Residential and that this is why it is not shown on the alternatives. Chairman Vose then asked about the noise impact over K. Dave Ledbetter responded that officials at Air Force Plant 42, in cooperation with the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, completed an Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Study (AICUZ) in 1990 that showed that the 65 CNEL contour from aircraft related noise extended above Avenue K-8 in some east side areas. Following the completion of a joint land use study around the same time, the City went back and redesignated much of the area south of Avenue K and east of Challenger Way as Non-urban Residential in order to make it an acceptable interface with Plant 42. When the AICUZ study was updated in 2002, it reflected that the 65CNEL noise contour no longer extended into this area, but that the area was still affected by aircraft over flight from base. To address this, the new AICUZ study included the Overflight Zone, which affects much of the area south of Avenue K-8 since there remains the concern with encroachment of urban density development in proximity to the base. Chairman Vose said that the 65 CNEL noise contour still impacts properties north of Avenue M in the Vicinity of the freeway. Dave Ledbetter indicated that this was correct. Much of this area is currently zoned for rural or industrial land uses.

Chairman Vose noted that there is a portion within the city and the county consisting of 65 acres of public facility on the north side of Avenue G between 92nd and 95th, which should be blue. A letter comment was received on that so that should probably be included.

Chairman Vose asked when staff anticipated that the General Plan public hearings would begin. Dave Ledbetter said that there are a number of items that the Commission still needs to review. He indicated that staff needs to respond to comments submitted by the Planning Commission and compile an addendum to the Policy Document and land use map concerning corrections that have come to light during the special meetings. There is a 60-day review period for the PEIR and following the close of the comment period, staff will work on responding to public comments and getting other documentation in order. A special Planning Commission meeting is scheduled on January 6 to receive comments on draft PEIR. Towards the end of January and during February, additional special meetings could be arranged in preparation for the beginning of the public hearings which could tentatively begin in late March.

Chairman Vose noted the importance of the relationship between the Policy Document and the land use map and the impact that changing policies could have on the land use map and urged to public to comment on these procedures. Brian Ludicke reminded the Commission that the land use alternatives were developed as a function of the community outreach program during 2006 and 2007, and that this is important to keep in mind as the Commission moves forward toward crafting recommendations to the City Council regarding the General Plan program. Chairman Vose inquired if minor adjustments to the policy document and the map would have any major impact on the EIR. Brian Ludicke answered that there is flexibility that will allow some change to the land use map and policies as long as the overall intent of the Preferred Plan

alternative is preserved. Chairman Vose noted that the PEIR is available on the website and that public copies of the draft were distributed.

Chairman Vose opened the session for public testimony.

Albert Praw, CEO of Landstone and speaking on behalf of Lancaster Highlands, which is a proposal for a 1,600 acre assemblage of communities bound by Avenue L on the north, Avenue M on the south and 110th Street West on the west. About 2/3 of the property is located within Lancaster (designated UR/NU) and 1/3 is county. He would like to propose a revision to GPCAC Preferred Plan and had sent two letters to the commission before. He would like to see a Specific Plan overlay designation on the Preferred Plan for the proposed property to allow Landstone to submit a proposed plan to develop their project. He indicated that the proposal will not increase existing density under the current General Plan. It will be a good planning tool and draw on the housing element and allow the city to consider or require different lot sizes and prescribe design. He noted that Policy 18.1.5 calls for a variety of lot products in urbanizing areas and indicated that this is an example of how a specific plan will allow the creation of a sustainable community.

Nicole Parson, Lancaster resident, went on about revisions to the General Plan, that the General Plan 2030 objectives are health, hope, happy place and harnessing history, unified freedom, comprehensive complex environmental health, enjoyment of future freedom for generation and superior sovereignty to preserve liberty. She ended by saying that there is no alternative without an alternative, her vision is home, and that her alternative is to sit and do nothing apart or do the right things together.

Aleks Baharlo, representing Del Sur Ranch LLC, said that their request pertains to an area that is proposed to be downzoned. He stated that it is part of the phasing of Del Sur Ranch and is part of a tentative tract map that has 2,000 units. He asked the commission to reconsider the two parcels presented to them tonight as not being downzoned. Chairman Vose clarified that there is no downzoning involved here with the recommendation. Zoning takes place after the General Plan is adopted. Brian Ludicke added that the speaker has submitted a request letter and the commission will get an opportunity to review it.

Doug Burgis, representing the Quartz Hill Town Council, stated that they just received the EIR today. He has concerns about high density around the prison, which he thinks will create problems. He has questions but he would like to relay them to the commission later. Chairman Vose said that written comments may be submitted to them.

COMMISSION AGENDA

None.

DIRECTOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brian Ludicke noted that the next special meeting is scheduled on January 6, 2009. This will be an opportunity to provide oral and written comments on the EIR. The comment period will end on January 31, 2009.

Chairman Vose inquired if staff is anticipating possible certification hearing within 30 days, and if responses to comments could be prepared within that 30-day period. Dave Ledbetter responded that it is a possibility that there could be a public hearing process in March. Chairman Vose opined that it will probably be in April or May that certification could be had.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR - NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Nicole Parson, Lancaster resident, commented that nothing in the General Plan addressed children and the way they are raised. She went on about global warming for all levels of government, arranged uniform on collaboration, waste business being a bunch of taboo subjects, water was changed and it was not conservation back then, landfill, recycling materials, dumpsters, plumbing and conserving natural resources.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Vose declared the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. to Monday, December 7, 2008, at 5:30 p.m., in the Planning Large Conference Room.

JAMES D. VOSE, Chairman
Lancaster Planning Commission

ATTEST:

BRIAN S. LUDICKE, Planning Director
City of Lancaster