

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
JUNE 9, 2020
LOWER LEVEL – COMMUNITY ROOM
702 E. FRONT AVENUE**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Tom Messina, Chairman
Jon Ingalls, Vice-Chair
Michael Ward
Peter Luttrupp
Lewis Rumppler
Brinnon Mandel

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hilary Anderson, Community Planning Director
Sean Holm, Senior Planner
Shana Stuhlmiller, Public Hearing Assistant
Alex Dupey, MIG (Zoom)
Alisa Pyszka, Bridge Economics (Zoom)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Lynn Fleming

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Messina at 12:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Ingalls, seconded by Mandel, to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission meeting on April 14, 2020. Motion approved.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Hilary Anderson, Community Planning Director, provided the following statements:

- The July 14th Planning Commission agenda has a zone change and special use permit scheduled.
- Staff is trying to schedule a future workshop with the Planning Commission and Envision CDA to do an update on the Comprehensive Plan.

ADMINISTRATIVE: ***ITEMS BELOW ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ACTION ITEMS.****

1. Applicant: Rivers Edge Apartments, LLC
 Request: A one-year extension request for PUD-2-19 & S-2-19

Ms. Anderson presented the staff report and stated that River's Edge Apartments, LLC, is requesting a one (1) year extension of PUD-2-19 and S-2-19 approved July 9, 2019.

Ms. Anderson provided the following statements:

- The approvals are set to expire on July 9, 2020, according to City records.
- Due to active and ongoing dialogue with the City on a possible land swap involving the subject property, the applicant is requesting an extension of the PUD and subdivision approvals that would

allow a 250-unit apartment facility, a mini-storage facility, a private gated residential community, and a 29-lot preliminary plat for one (1) additional year to **July 9, 2021**, which would allow additional time to come to mutually agreeable terms with the City.

- It was noted that the applicant's attorney, Edward A. Lawson of Lawson Laski Clark, PLLC, has indicated in the extension request letter that they believe their pending Request for Reconsideration extends the time for both the PUD and preliminary plat approval on the subject property, and that an extension is not required at this time. They have, however, requested the extension to ensure that the approvals remain valid during the negotiations.

Ms. Anderson concluded her presentation.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Luttrupp asked how many extensions can be requested. Ms. Anderson explained that they can do five one-year extensions on the subdivision and the Planned Unit Development (PUD) allows a one-year extension per year.

Commissioner Mandel asked if all the original conditions approved for the property still stand if the extension is approved. Ms. Anderson said that was correct.

Commissioner Ingalls said that when the request came before the Planning Commission the first time, the plan showed a 40' foot waterfront piece with some nice attributes which the Planning Commission denied because of the scale, size, density, etc. He said that the denial of the project was appealed and the appeal was denied, and then the applicant came back to the commission with a revised plan. The project now will have a mini storage and a few residential lots, with the City losing the public access to the waterfront. He further noted that the piece of property that the City owns running through the applicant's property comes with "quirks". He said that after reading the staff report and the mention of a reconsideration of the first request maybe there is hope for the applicant to bring forward a different version of the first request.

Ms. Anderson confirmed that the property has had some different proposals and the applicant is asking for an extension of the last proposal that was approved which included a mini storage and single-family lots along the waterfront. She explained that the first request from the applicant was to change the zoning and a density increase that would have included public access along the waterfront with the trail. That request was denied and appealed. Then the applicant asked for a reconsideration hearing with the City Council on the request because they felt the council didn't follow due process. The reconsideration hearing request was denied.

Commissioner Ingalls said that he liked the first request that come forward and it would be great if the applicant brought forward a version of the first request with less scale and density. He said that he approves the extension request.

Motion by Luttrupp, seconded by Mandel, to approve a one-year extension request for PUD-2-19 and S-2-19. Motion approved.

2. Applicant: Atlas Mill Development Corporation/Rivers Edge Apartments, LLC
Request: A one-year extension request for SP-1-17

Ms. Anderson presented the staff report and stated that Atlas Mill Development Corporation/River's Edge Apartments, LLC, is requesting a one (1) year extension of SP-1-17 (R-34 Density Increase Special Use Permit) approved January 10, 2017, which went into effect on June 4, 2017 when the annexation agreement and annexation ordinance were recorded.

Ms. Anderson provided the following statements:

- The special use permit is set to expire on June 4, 2020.
- Due to active and ongoing dialogue with the City on a possible land swap involving the subject property, the applicant is requesting an extension of the SUP approval for one (1) additional year to **June 4, 2021**, which would allow additional time to come to mutually agreeable terms with the City. (It was noted that the applicant's extension request was received before the expiration date and, therefore, it allows the matter to be discussed)

Ms. Anderson concluded her presentation.

Commission Comments:

None.

Motion by Ward, seconded by Ingalls, to approve a one-year extension request for SP-1-17. Motion approved.

Motion to approve carried by a 5 to 0 vote.

3. Applicant: Ben Widmyer
Request: A one-year extension request for SP-1-19

Ms. Anderson presented the staff report and stated that the Widmyer Corporation is requesting a one (1) year extension of SP-1-19 (R-34 Density Increase Special Use Permit).

Ms. Anderson provided the following statements:

- The Planning Commission hearing on the density increase was in April of 2019.
- The request was approved and subsequently appealed. The appeal hearing with the City Council took place on June 4, 2019. The City Council upheld the Planning Commission's decision to approve the request.
- Based on the appeal hearing date, the special use permit is set to expire on June 4, 2020. Due to ongoing efforts to review project costs, feasibility reports and financing options, the applicant is requesting an extension of the SUP approval for one (1) additional year to **June 4, 2021**.

Ms. Anderson concluded her presentation.

Commission Comments:

None.

Motion by Rumpler, seconded by Luttrupp, to approve a one-year extension request for SP-1-19. Motion approved.

ENVISION CDA UPDATE:

A brief update on the project plus the Economic study results was presented by Alisa Pyszka (Bridge Economics) Alex Dupey, (MIG), and Sean Holm.

Sean Holm, Senior Planner provided the following statements:

- He thanked the commission, council, CDA 2030, volunteers, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Focus groups, shareholders and the participants who have given their time to provide

feedback and explained the purpose of the meeting.

- He explained that they were going to discuss the economic data for the City of Coeur d'Alene and the region while comparing it to similar size cities, with the goal of identifying what the best strategies and options are to attract traded sector companies that provide higher paying jobs and, hopefully, everyone will walk away with an understanding of what the demographic qualities are and how to leverage those qualities to grow our local economy. He introduced Alisa Pyszka from Bridge Economics and said she would be presenting the findings and action plan on how the City can achieve the goal of regional prosperity. Alex Dupey, MIG, will follow up with a summary of what to expect in the next few months for Envision CDA and how we can help our community craft the 20-year plan.

Mr. Holm provided the following updates for the project.

- He stated that currently they are in Phase 3 of mapping and refinement and have produced an "existing conditions" document for the Coeur d'Alene transportation conditions which was done on December 19th and he would be discussing the second "existing conditions" document, which is the economic portion.
- In September, they had community partner meetings, economic development meetings, the first Community Advisory Committee meeting, and a public Kickoff event.
- In December, they had a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and a Focus Group meeting.
- On February 26th, they had their leadership briefing for the City Council and the Planning Commission, who provided feedback and direction on how to move into the future with the program.
- In March, they had the third CAC meeting and other future meetings held were Zoom meetings when the pandemic hit the country.

Alisa Pyszka, Bridge Economics

Ms. Pyszka provided the following statements:

She explained that when they go through the economic development background, their goal is to try and make sure everyone is on the same page regarding economic development.

Economic Development background:

- Traded Sector industries are companies that make things and export them to sell outside the city and region to bring money in.
- Local Sector are those industries which are found in any city anywhere in the country. Examples are doctors, dentists, grocery stores. These are important to cities because they make our community their community.
- Wages - Trade Sector wages are normally higher and called "family wage jobs." They are jobs that are the best use of tax dollars. Local Sector jobs include retail trade, construction jobs, and health care. They are considered Local Sector jobs because they are serving people in the city even though the wages are higher serving people in the Local Sector.
- Traded Sector Cluster is defined as people in the city with higher education who try and retain potential college graduates to not leave the city.
- Ms. Pyszka explained that companies go where talent goes and that is why they are seeing a concentration of talent in different cities like Simi Valley, Boston, and Seattle, etc.
- Economic Development is focused on attracting new companies, but Ms. Pyszka noted that only about 14% of job growth comes from that process. She added that the majority of jobs in the economy come from existing companies and it is critical to take care of existing companies.

Peer Bench Mark Findings:

Talent Group

- Ms. Pyszka said that Millennials are the biggest demographic this country has seen. In the future, they will be the managers making the decisions and driving the workforce. The Millennial workforce has increased by 5-8% in the City compared to other peer regions similar to Coeur d'Alene.
- Coeur d'Alene has an older population compared to the other peer benchmark cities.
- The median household income is increasing in the City because the community is growing, which is a strong data point. Coeur d'Alene leads growth compared to other benchmark cities.
- Coeur d'Alene housing value information from Zillow 2018 data shows the price of homes is high compared to other benchmark cities but Coeur d'Alene is more affordable, especially when trying to attract higher-educated people where lower home values are a bonus. The average house per the data shows the average price for a home is \$316,000.00.
- Ms. Pyszka said that Coeur d'Alene has healthy business growth and is diversified and the data is showing Coeur d'Alene is well-balanced, despite the presumed reputation for tourism.
- She commented that Coeur d'Alene is showing an increase in business establishments that are well-balanced as well as an increase in business manufacturing.
- The talent in the City contributes to the bachelor degree attainment so going forward the City should strive for and help those trade sector companies stay and retain the educated workforce.

Mr. Holm had a question about household income and if the data included retirees that were maybe moving into the community from higher cost and income producing areas. He explained that they have a lot of retirees moving into the area could that be "skewing" the data on the higher end.

Ms. Pyszka said that the retirement community was included in the data that was presented.

Commissioner Luttrupp said that earlier two things were mentioned that were a surprise about Coeur d'Alene and asked if the statements could be explained. Ms. Pyszka explained what was a surprise for them was knowing Coeur d'Alene's reputation as more of a tourist economy based on the Resort and casino. She explained that when they work with communities that are heavily tourist-based, there are a lot of retail and hospitality businesses, and noted that Coeur d'Alene still has a strong manufacturing sector, which was the second surprise. Commissioner Luttrupp said that was a great piece of information that should be shared with the City Council and community.

Chairman Messina said it was mentioned that small and large manufacturing establishments were strong in Coeur d'Alene and asked how that number compared to other benchmark cities.

Ms. Pyszka explained that the manufacturing in Coeur d'Alene is small and the data they used came from Kootenai County with the majority of the manufacturing businesses located in the City. She said that the manufacturing businesses in the City are considered small, and that the definition for "small" is 500 employees or less. She further noted that small manufacturing is a benefit to the City because that size of business doesn't require a big "footprint" and can be typically built on 5-8 acre sites.

Commissioner Mandel said that she was not surprised about the educated workforce behind some of the City's peer cities that attract some of the young talent. She asked if the businesses that are growing include the diversification in small manufacturing and if there is a mismatch in who they are hiring and are they attracting talent slowly, or are employing lower-skilled, lower-educated workforce. She said that she was also surprised about the amount of manufacturing, but not surprised about the educated workforce attracting young talent.

Ms. Pyszka said that she will include information regarding Commissioner Mandel's comments in their key recommendations for the City.

Ms. Pyszka continued her presentation:

Talent Strength

- Service Sector – The City has a large base because of tourism.
- Working Sector – The City working sector is 7% larger than the U.S. average for a city our size.
- Knowledge Sector – Ms. Pyszka said that this is where the City needs to focus since the City is 11% less than the average.
- Employment – The City is growing and the occupations that are growing are construction and healthcare, which are unique. The City has a great base.

Recommended Goals and Objectives

- Provide more emphasis on year-round economy.
- The City needs more than just living-wage jobs.
- Focus on existing businesses and sit down and meet with other companies. Dedicate one person who is responsible for meeting those people.
- Provide adequate sites and infrastructure for business expansion based on needs.
- Support local businesses by providing technical education, permit assistance, and expand opportunities for affordable entry into the market.

Chairman Messina said that land in Coeur d'Alene is expensive and asked if the City needs to consider expanding the Area of City Impact (AIC) boundary to help provide adequate sites for future business expansion.

Alex Dupey, MIG, said that manufacturing has changed and is becoming smaller. Looking at Coeur d'Alene scenarios, the City doesn't have a lot of available land and it can maybe look at areas that are undeveloped or commercial areas that could provide supported services but allow more diverse job types.

Ms. Pyszka continued her presentation:

- Invest in higher education with STEM and CTCE programs internship/apprenticeship opportunities.
- Launch a party to attract talent to the community – example: Robotics Fair.
- Enhance the ecosystem to encourage businesses to start their own companies by providing a strong ecosystem. Example: Innovation Den.
- Develop public/private partnerships to provide office space.
- Promote access to the outdoors for remote workers
- Expand partnerships with NIC (North Idaho College) including opportunities to use maker space, such as Gizmo.

Discussion:

Commissioner Ingalls said that he concurred with the goals and looking to the future, and when the Comprehensive Plan is done using it as a tool to make decisions on various applications such as Special Use Permits, zone changes etc. He questioned how the goals discussed tonight would get “embodied” into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dupey explained there are six standing principals that do have specific goals of deficits and actions under the six principles. He explained that the goals would go with the Jobs/Economy section and have some relationship between other pieces. He stated the goals will be placed in the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles framework, and underneath the goals and objections will be specific actions that are being developed now.

Commissioner Luttrupp said the City should keep these goals in mind when it wants to attract talent or other things, and asked if he could get a copy of Ms. Pyszka's presentation.

Commissioner Ingalls asked what if a manufacturing business wanted to be in the K-mart building, which would produce a lot more noise compared to the previous use. He said that there will always be some conflict with Comprehensive Plan goals, but if they want more jobs to bring higher wages it will be good to have more tools to use than what they have now with the existing Comprehensive Plan, especially when making decisions on various applications.

Ms. Anderson said they will make sure and get a copy of the PowerPoint if it is not in the packet as Commissioner Ward indicated. She explained that there are going to be six focus areas that they are including in the Comprehensive Plan which align with the six focus areas and the CDA 2030 plan. She added that the design within the Comprehensive Plan will have the goals and objectives like in the current Comprehensive Plan, but they will be adding action items with an implementation plan component that will align well with CDA 2030. She added that there will be three tiers and they are still working on how that will be organized. They are in the process of releasing a survey online that will give a chance for people to review the goals and action items. She said that when they started working on the Comprehensive Plan, the Commission and staff said they wanted to focus on jobs and economic development, transportation and how the City will grow. She added that those are the three aspects that have been "beefed" up in the scope of work with the help from MIG, Bridge Economics and Kittleson.

Mr. Holm said that the current Comprehensive Plan is City-based. For example, what are they going to do for utilities along the line of what the Commission makes their decision on is where this one is headed and the idea is how can they use the partnerships that are growing to further the City in ways beyond just the City because they don't have the people power to accomplish all those things and why they have needed the help from CDA 2030 who understands those partnerships and can help open doors.

Alex Dupey, MIG provided the following statements:

Project Update:

- He said in early 2020 they did a survey where they received over 300 responses and from that information started putting together the guiding principles, goals, objectives and mission statement for many of the topics discussed tonight.
- He said that with the onset of COVID-19, public outreach has been modified and that every community they are working with has gone virtual. He added that the process has been difficult at first but now with the changes they have been getting a great response online.
- He said that the draft policy framework will include the six guiding principles, goals, objectives and actions that they have been working on for the last several months. He further said that they do have a survey coming out in the next couple weeks asking for input on specific goals and objectives. It will be a key piece and will need input from the Planning Commission.
- Draft land use scenario planning is underway and they are looking at development capacity within the existing City limits. He explained that there is a request of an ACI expansion and they are working with staff to figure out the best way to incorporate that into the plan.
- The draft Comprehensive Plan outline is in development and they expect to have a draft ready sometime in the fall and will be looking at pieces of the plan to obtain or modify.
- He said that they have had over 17 focus group meetings.

Next steps:

- Online survey (late June)
- Land use scenarios and transportation analysis that will be coming this summer and a draft Comprehensive Plan in the fall of 20/20.

Mr. Dupey concluded his presentation.

Discussion:

Commissioner Mandel asked, in regard to the land use scenario, if Planning had taken into account some of the market factors that may be different now opposed to four months ago related to the economic impact of COVID-19 and real estate. She asked if those scenarios will likely have some worse parameters that are more conservative than what they thought in February.

Mr. Dupey explained that because of COVID-19 there is a dip in the economy where some areas are hit harder than others. He said that their land use scenarios are long term visions, so they are looking at examples based on populations that Kootenai County and KMPO are projecting and what types of employment they are looking at in a 10-15-year period based on scenarios with no predicted change.

Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Holm for his efforts leading the project and Ms. Kahler for her efforts and engaging the CDA 2030 board and committee members. She also thanked MIG, Bridge and Kittleson.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Ingalls, seconded by Mandel, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m.

Prepared by Shana Stuhlmiller, Public Hearing Assistant.