

# MINUTES of the Vernal City PLANNING COMMISSION

Vernal City Council Chambers - 374 East Main Street, Vernal, Utah

July 15, 2014

6:00 pm

**Members Present:** Mike Drechsel, Kathleen Gray and Samantha Scott,

**Members Excused:** Ken Latham

**Alternates Present:** Adam Ray, Rory Taylor and Kimball Glazier

**Staff Present:** Allen Parker, Assistant City Manager; Corey Coleman, Building Official; and Gay Lee Jeffs, Administrative Clerk.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING:** Allen Parker pointed out that this meeting is a formal meeting to conduct business.

**WELCOME AND DESIGNATION OF CHAIR AND MEMBERS:** Mr. Parker reminded the Commissioners that they needed to nominate a Chairman for this particular meeting since the Chair, Mike Drechsel, will be late. *Samantha Scott moved to nominate Kimball Glazier as Chair for this meeting. The motion passed with Samantha Scott, Kathleen Gray, Rory Taylor and Kimball Glazier voting in favor.*

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF A MASTER SITE PLAN FOR KYLE ASHWORTH FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 390 WEST MAIN STREET, VERNAL, UTAH – APPLICATION NO. 2014-017-MSP-ALLEN PARKER:** Allen Parker introduced the applicant, Kyle Ashworth, and explained that this is a time sensitive application for a master site plan approval. The master site plan for Kyle Ashworth for the property located at 390 West Main Street, Vernal, Utah, Application No. 2014-017-MSP is to place an existing structure onto a new site. The structure is currently located by the new convention center site and Mr. Ashworth would like to relocate the structure to the new location at 390 West Main Street. Staff and engineering have conducted a full review and found a few corrections that have been completed. This application is in substantial compliance with Vernal City Code, and staff finds that it is an approvable application. Corey Coleman stated that a firewall may be needed behind the building; however, this will be reviewed during the plan review process. Mr. Ashworth informed the Commission that the brick on the structure will have to be removed prior to moving it and will be replaced, after moving the structure onto the new location. Mr. Glazier asked what the structure would be used for, where the storm water was located and if a fire hydrant was nearby. Mr. Ashworth informed the Commission that the structure would be used for office space and the storm water is already installed on the property line. Mr. Parker stated that there is a fire hydrant located on the corner by Betty's. *Rory Taylor moved to approve a master site plan for Kyle Ashworth for the property located at 390 West Main Street, Vernal, Utah – Application No.2014-17-MSP subject to all corrections noted by engineering and staff. Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with Rory Taylor, Kathleen Gray, Samantha Scott and Kimball Glazier voting in favor.*

**WORK SESSION ON THE VERNAL CITY GENERAL PLAN:** Kimball Glazier

introduced the Vernal City general plan to the Commission. Allen Parker clarified the map from last month and reprinted. The Commission was able to see where everything was designated on the reprinted general plan map. The reprinted map was made available to be drawn on and also to put thoughts and ideas into a visual form onto the map.

Mr. Parker started by talking about the high density area around Springhill Suites Hotel, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Café Rio and other businesses in that area. The property surrounding the previously mentioned businesses, are zoned industrial, commercial, manufactured home and low density residential. There is no cohesiveness to the area. Glenna Jones owns property in the area which is zoned residential and she feels her property should be zoned commercial. Uintah County has been taxing her for commercial property for several years. Mr. Parker would like the Commission to talk about some of these areas.

Mr. Glazier reminded the Commission about last month's meeting in which the Commission agreed that 500 South needs to have better planning for the future. The Commission had Mr. Parker mark a commercial node on the map from Walgreens to Springhill Suites Hotel and properties previously discussed which included Ms. Jones' property. Mr. Coleman asked if the front set back is zero on commercial zones. Mr. Parker answered there are several types of commercial zones and the zero set back is not entirely correct. Only the CC-1, central commercial 1, zone has a zero front set back and it is only in the downtown area. Part of Ms. Jones' property is very shallow and a developer would have to be creative when developing that piece of property.

Mr. Glazier asked what the zoning is for Esquire Estates. Mr. Parker answered it is zoned MH, manufactured home. Mr. Glazier stated that he feels MH zoning gives way to commercial at times. Mr. Parker pointed out that the general plan the City is working on for the future does not affect the current zoning plans; however, it will allow property owners to rezone if they so choose in the future. Mr. Glazier suggested creating a buffer between residential and commercial zones. Mr. Parker pointed out that the general plan in the future will restrict the zones owners can choose, but will not restrict what can be done on the property presently. Mr. Glazier added that when a developer looks at properties, it will help direct them to property that would be suitable for their plans. The general plan now reflects current zoning, and a developer does not have that direction, unless they are able to find a bare piece of property. Mr. Parker stated that the current map is not a vision for the future, but a reflection of today. That is why the City is going to convert it into a vision for the future. Mr. Coleman informed the Commission that Esquire Estates is not a trailer park, but a trailer subdivision. To put a trailer on that property, the owner must first have a foundation. That is deterring a lot of owners due to the expense and the owner will buy a piece of property instead. Esquire Estates is not really growing. Mr. Parker commented that not only are we creating a vision for the future, but that vision is implemented by economics.

Mr. Parker talked about the round-about by the University and the land surrounding it that belongs to the University. That particular piece of property is zoned strictly for educational purposes and cannot be used for any other purpose. Another piece of property near that site is designated in the general plan for high density residential. There is also property near that site

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that is in the County and is zoned by the County as high or medium density residential with another piece designated as commercial. There is some low density residential as well, which is completely out of character for what is going on nearby the round-about. Maybe the area could be zoned mixed use and some zoned commercial moving out to high or medium density and on to institutional to match areas already in existence, so that the focus at the round-about is commercial/institutional/high density uses. As it transitions away from the round-about, it could become more medium and low density uses. The City could designate the whole area as mixed use, anything goes, or it could guide a little more specifically and have commercial in one area and high density in another area. Mr. Glazier commented that mixed use in a way seems better for allowing a developer more flexibility to make a profit and make a plan work. Mr. Parker reminded the Commission there is only a small portion in the area around the round-about that the City has any control over. Rory Taylor suggested that as the University campus grows, the area south of Main Street becomes a prime commercial target. Developers will take a good look at that area and there might be people that would want to take advantage of a research industrial park as was suggested in last month's meeting. Mr. Parker stated that the area could contain commercial or high density zones that would allow for offices, but will not allow for industrial. Industrial areas allow for a lot of different kinds of businesses, including sexually oriented businesses which are not compatible with college and high density residential areas. Mr. Glazier stated the City needs to be able to support itself, and commercial businesses help with the financial aspect of the City. Mr. Parker informed the Commission that residential areas cost the City money. A study was completed several years ago and for every dollar of tax revenue generated, it cost the City \$1.20. Commercial is needed to support and finance the City. Mr. Parker asked the Commission if they wanted him to mark the map and enter a commercial zone and then beyond that transition to a buffer zone in the area around the round-about. A triangle was drawn showing the property inside the City limits.

Mr. Parker began a discussion concerning 500 South and Highway 40. He felt this area would eventually become a retail node. He marked that area on the map as leaning towards a commercial designated area. That area is zoned industrial and continues on until 500 East, except for a few small areas. Mr. Parker wondered if the Commission would like to see a transition to commercial in that area or leave it industrial. The Commission agreed that the City needs industrial. It is an important part of the community. Mr. Parker pointed out that by law, the City must have an area for sexually oriented business. The City ordinance says a sexually oriented business cannot be within 600 feet of a church, school or place that sells alcohol. If the City does not have an area for that type of business, the City would be breaking Federal law. Mr. Coleman suggested putting commercial in the front towards Highway 40 as a buffer and industrial behind.

Mr. Glazier stated that on 500 South there are buildings that look like a shop and on 500 East, there are office fronts with shops behind them. He wondered if these areas needed to be zoned industrial. Mr. Parker explained that there are certain types of manufacturing that are allowed in commercial zones. Heavy manufacturing will not be allowed on frontage property. Mr. Glazier suggested it made sense to connect that area with Highway 40. He also stated that Highway 40 is a prime commercial area. Mr. Parker drew commercial nodes on the map around 500 South and 500 West, 500 South and Vernal Avenue and 500 South and 500 East with high density residential zones in-between each node.

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Mr. Parker informed the Commission that on the map it shows the City's general plan extends through the City limits and into Naples City. The City's general plan reflects Naples City's general plan, so both Cities are in harmony. Mr. Parker reminded the Commission that they talked about the corridor. He did not want to draw anything on the map concerning the corridor until the Commission decides what they would like to go there. Mr. Glazier asked how the City would like the corridor to blend out. The plan is really starting to affect some major residential areas connecting those corridors, 500 East to Highway 40 on the west side is mostly residential now. The City is looking to the future, and that is how the Commission needs to look at it. He also asked about the areas on 400 and 600 and how the City might want those areas to blend out, to transition. Mr. Glazier mentioned that he would like to see areas from Main Street outward transition from commercial to high density to medium density to low density residential. Mr. Taylor suggested that hard lines between zones are actually desirable in planning, because it creates a more walkable community. People can move there and walk to businesses easily.

Mr. Glazier commented that 500 South is a dividing line. The north side is fully developed, but the south side is only about 50 percent developed. The City needs to decide what would be best in the areas that are not developed. Mr. Parker reminded the Commission that the City needs to designate a number of areas as higher density, more than is already in place. If it is not designated high density when needed, the City will have created a problem by not planning for the future. Mr. Glazier stated that he feels as a developer that the City is not able to meet adequate needs of developers with the current general plan. Mr. Taylor commented that with the desire lines of 500 South, it will become the new Main Street and the current Main Street will become the old Main Street. Mr. Parker suggested that the City decide now what the general plan will allow and what the general plan will not allow. The residents there do not want the area to be turned into strip malls. Mr. Taylor stated the City should protect some of those lower density nodes, especially on Vernal Avenue. Mr. Glazier stated that Vernal Avenue is growing from Main Street south on Vernal Avenue.

Mr. Glazier commented he would like the City to consider revitalizing downtown. The City needs a healthy downtown. Mr. Parker stated he could work with the current general plan for the downtown area. Mr. Glazier commented that the City should promote the downtown area. Mr. Parker agreed and added that box stores, destination retail, etc. does not belong downtown. Boutiques, offices, high density residential, etc. belong downtown. He explained that downtown is a concentration area and big box stores are driving destinations. Box stores will be placed in appropriate areas to service the community. The City needs to focus on the intensity of people, activities and accessibility in the core. If people have many reasons to go downtown, it is like gravity and will pull them toward downtown. It is not just retail, but there needs to be entertainment and fully integrated parking, and there needs to be people living downtown. Mr. Parker shared his experience with a beautiful city in Michigan and their struggles about the downtown area because of the lack of a residential component to the downtown area. The City cannot forget about the residential component of downtown.

Mr. Glazier asked what the plan is going to be with the airport. Mr. Parker explained that the airport will be staying where it is currently located. It will not be moving. There is some expansion going on with the runway. The airport is one of the weak points in the general plan. Mr. Glazier stated it makes a major impact on how the City will zone in the future. Mr. Parker

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informed the Commission that most of the airport is outside the City limits. There is some in the County and most of it is located in Naples City. Mr. Glazier asked if it is better to zone industrial around the airport. Mr. Parker stated that industrial zoning seems to be more reasonably compatible with the airport. However, there are some residential areas around the airport as well. Mr. Taylor reported that McCarran airport in Las Vegas is close to commercial areas and there does not seem to be a problem. Mr. Parker informed the Commission that the area around the airport is already industrial within the City limits.

Mike Drechsel entered the meeting and the chairmanship was turned over to him. Mr. Glazier updated Mr. Drechsel on the previous discussions. The Commission decided from 500 East to Highway 40 should be industrial activity. Mr. Taylor suggested having gradient zones around the nodes and fading to R-3/R-4. Mr. Parker informed the Commission that on 500 South, there is an area designated for a park. There could be points of penetration for low density in that area. Mr. Glazier stated that he feels 500 East, as far as residential goes, should be high and medium density areas. Low density should be buffered out from there. He also feels that up Vernal Avenue from 500 South to Main Street should be commercial zoned. Mr. Parker added having mixed use and high density to that area as well. Mr. Parker stated that he has talked to Glade Allred about south Vernal Avenue putting planters, decorative lights and trees to connect the downtown area to the Recreation Center. Mr. Glazier commented that it would add to the downtown area. Mr. Parker stated that years ago commercial was excluded from residential areas, and it is not that way anymore, but it still makes sense to exclude industrial from that area. Mr. Drechsel added that society has become more informal with their homes and with the way they interact with each other. Mr. Glazier mentioned that other cities purposefully design their city for mixed use. They are more functional that way than being “stuck in a box”. He suggested Vernal City getting “out of the box”. Mr. Ray commented that years ago the mixed uses had their place in society, but it got away from that and started segregating uses and now society is going back to the way it used to be.

Mr. Parker talked about 500 West and north Vernal Avenue. The residents have a lot of strong feelings in that area. There will be a rezone request going before the City Council next month for 500 West and 100 North. He has received several letters that are opposed to the rezone. There are people that do not want to see changes made in that area. Mr. Glazier stated that people are going to feel the same way on 500 South.

Mr. Drechsel noted that heading north on 500 West, the speed picks up from 25mph to 35mph and around the corner on Highway 121, the speed is 45mph and heads out to Lapoint. That road is owned by the State, and there is no way the City can change the speed limit for that road. The City should contemplate in the general plan, higher speeds, higher density and activity that is not primarily single family residences in that area. Mr. Glazier pointed out that the only way that can change is by going down 500 North Vernal Avenue. It was pointed out that Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) owns and maintains Highway 121. UDOT would like to turn it over to the City, but the City is not going to take it over. Mr. Parker suggested taking that area and designating it as high density, but overlaying it with mixed use.

Mr. Glazier asked how to incorporate where the round-about is and the Maeser corner as they should coincide. Mr. Parker explained that those areas are currently designated mixed use by the County. Mr. Glazier stated those areas should be more like north Vernal Avenue. Mr. Parker

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talked about the huge mixed use area there, and looking at that area, showed the Commission how it was drawn on the map to be commercial use transitioning into residential rather than mixed use over the top. The City cannot change the institutional use for the college area. Mr. Glazier asked if that was what the City wants if someone annexes that County area into the City. Mr. Parker wondered if the City would like to make that area different from how the County shows it in their general plan. Mr. Drechsel stated he thought the County's plan worked fine and he felt that area would not become a more important hub in the next 15 to 20 years.

Mr. Drechsel asked if 2500 West traveling north and south bound from Aggie Boulevard to Main Street was a highly used road. Mr. Parker suggested it could be if the City put in a stop light. Mr. Drechsel stated that if a stop light went in there, it could redefine and change how people get around in that area. Mr. Parker informed the Commission that the County feels that area is not really a destination point, but a service area to go to and from the university. There was general discussion about where stop lights could be placed within the City and County. Mr. Glazier added that it makes sense to access the round-about area by driving down Aggie Boulevard instead of pushing traffic down 2500 West in a residential area. He also asked if Aggie Boulevard would become an access to that area. He was informed that it is designed to become an access point. He stated it would become a true mixed use area.

Mr. Parker commented that the canal road is a tricky situation and that because of established patterns, 500 West will always be a major corridor. Mr. Glazier asked if it made more sense for the area around Aggie Boulevard to become high density instead of commercial. Mr. Parker answered that the Commission could assume the college will develop into a destination college and ask what land uses support it most effectively. Mr. Drechsel pointed out that most campuses do not have commercial located nearby. They seem to be in walking or biking distance from their homes. It was pointed out that not all commercial users are retail business, but could be offices or research facilities. Mr. Glazier commented that the commercial area would be a fairly small area and that the City would take commercial only to the round-about and not all the way to the highway. Mr. Drechsel asked if institutional would fit inside a high density residential area. Mr. Parker answered it will, but residential will not fit inside an institutional area. The Commission agreed to have the area around Aggie Boulevard written on the map as high density. Mr. Glazier would like to keep a commercial area going up 500 West near the Basin Clinic. Taylor stated he thought that area would be more high density and mixed use. Mr. Parker agreed with the high density area, but added it needed to logically progress away to commercial areas. He stated the City needs to find ways to pull retail off of that axis or at that axis. He commented that on the north side of the road, the County has it designated as medium density, but the City side has a number of mixed uses. Mr. Parker stated it made sense to have medium density across from institutional and parks. Mr. Drechsel asked how that encourages commercial at the intersection of 500 North and 500 West. Mr. Glazier commented that he did not think that commercial needed to be pulled from that point up to the Maeser highway. Mr. Drechsel clarified that commercial and high density would extend from Main Street at 500 West to 500 North. Mr. Glazier commented that with the speeds increasing at that point where it turns west, it would make sense to be at least a medium to high density. Mr. Parker pointed out that UDOT really dislikes having to reduce speed limits and granting accesses.

Mr. Drechsel asked how to deal with the connection at 500 North/500 West across to 500

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North/Vernal Avenue. He also asked if the general plan idea is to stay relatively low density. Mr. Parker answered yes. Mr. Drechsel voiced his concern about making 500 West high density. Mr. Parker stated that there are some really nice homes in that area and some that might not be around in the future. Mr. Drechsel stated that the entire area from Main Street to 500 North and from 500 West to Vernal Avenue could become high density/commercial based. There was discussion about the hospital area and how satellite businesses have grown around the hospital. Also, how much of an area the hospital consumes with possibly more in the future. Mr. Drechsel commented that the change would be super aggressive and not everyone would be pleased, but it makes rezoning permissible. Mr. Parker suggested not discussing the hospital area for a few more months as there could be changes from the hospital.

There was discussion about traffic patterns and maybe swapping roads with the County or State, but the City is not considering a road swap at this time. Kathleen Gray commented that she has seen people come into town from the north and they might want to go out to the Quarry so they put it into their global positioning system (GPS) and find the shortest route and could possibly bypass the Main Street area.

Mr. Drechsel stated that the Commission has addressed a lot of the key areas in Vernal City and asked if there were any other areas that might need to be addressed. There was no additional comments. Mr. Parker stated that the Commission has built a skeleton they can be happy with right now. He suggested that he draw a map with colors that make more sense for the next meeting. Mr. Drechsel suggested using colors that show a more accurate portrayal of the ebb and flow of the zones. He asked if there was anything else to be discussed and hearing none, he entertained a motion to adjourn. ***Samantha Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Adam Ray, Kathleen Gray, Samantha Scott, Rory Taylor, Kimball Glazier and Mike Drechsel voting in favor.***

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Mike Drechsel, Planning Commission Chair