

**M**INUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT VERNAL CITY COUNCIL AND VERNAL CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 13, 2014 at 6:00 P.M. in the Vernal City Planning Conference room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah.

**PRESENT:**

**CITY COUNCIL:** Councilmembers Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Bert Clark and JoAnn Cowan. Mayor Sonja Norton and Councilmember Ted Munford were excused.

**PLANNING COMMISSION:** Kimball Glazier, Adam Ray, Mike Drechsel, Ken Latham and Kathleen Gray. Rory Taylor and Isaac Francisco were excused.

**APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO TEMPORE:** *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to appoint Bert Clark as the Mayor Pro Tempore for this meeting. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Clark and Scott voting in favor. Councilmember Cowan was not present for the vote.*

**WELCOME:** Mayor Pro Tempore Bert Clark welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING:** *Councilmember Samantha Scott moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Clark and Scott voting in favor. Councilmember Cowan was not present for the vote.*

**UINTAH WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT AMENDED PETITION FOR WATER – RESOLUTION NO. 2014-18:** Ken Bassett reminded the Council that they approved the purchase of additional water from Red Fleet Reservoir through the Uintah Water Conservancy District (UWCD). The District is preparing to close the bonds with the Community Impact Board for this purchase, and their attorney is insisting on additional language in the agreement with the City to comply with a provision of State law relating to delinquent payments. If the City becomes delinquent, the UWCD can impose a lien on the City. He noted that the changes to the agreement are highlighted. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to approve Resolution No. 2014-18 authorizing the amended petition. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

- Councilmember Cowan.....aye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everett .....aye;*
- Councilmember Scott.....aye.*

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT:** Ken Bassett explained that the City will receive a grant through Homeland Security to purchase twelve mobile radios for the police department. The grant is for \$8500 and is facilitated by Tal Ehlers, the Emergency Manager with Uintah County. Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$8500. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan seconded

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the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Cowan, Scott and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.

**GENERAL PLAN REVIEW:** Mr. Mike Drechsel, Chair of the Vernal City Planning Commission, explained that the Planning Commission members have met several times to discuss proposed changes to the general plan map. The current general plan map, for the most part, reflects the zoning map, leaving the Commission in a tough spot when land owners request a zoning change. The main purpose of the general plan map is to act as a projection of what the community will be in the future and encourage growth in that direction. The current map does not provide guidance as a future land map should. Allen Parker explained that the general plan, including the maps, was adopted in 2010 after extensive review and meetings. The current general plan map is labeled as the “future” land use map with hard boundaries similar to the zoning map.

Mike Drechsel brought the Council’s attention to a draft future land use map as a starting point to consider including a more blended area between zones or densities and eliminating any hard lines. The blended edges extend out between ½ to 1 block on the map so there is an overlay of uses. This concept allows a major distinctive difference between the future land use map and the zoning map. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated she was comfortable with this concept to give more flexibility for a more compassionate approach to zoning. Mike Drechsel stated he understood how property owners would rather see the map more defined so it does not affect their property. However, parts of this map may change the nature of a neighborhood. Allen Parker explained that the green and yellow areas of the map are residential, the orange and red are commercial, and the purple/blue area is industrial. If this map is adopted, it will not change any zoning, simply provide guidance for future growth.

Councilmember Clark asked Corey Coleman for his opinion of this change in philosophy. Corey Coleman stated he likes the concept and has been involved with the Planning Commission to develop this map. Councilmember Cowan stated that originally it was thought that commercial enterprises would extend from Main Street north to 100 North and south to 200 South which is the way many cities have grown. However, the commercial seems to remain along the highway. Ken Bassett noted that the meshing of the zones, administratively, is a good concept. However, there has to be a point where the meshing ends and another land use begins. In areas where there are geographical features such as a canal, that feature could be the basis for splitting the land use. In the central commercial area of the City, the blending or mixed use designation makes sense. Councilmember Dave Everett stated this crossover of boundaries seems to be happening already such as where the Curry Manor restaurant and office buildings are located. Allen Parker agreed that with growth, mixed uses happen with retail and office space in the same building or even living space on the top floors which is known as urbanism. Allen Parker explained the different areas on the map where mixed uses or blending of zones is being considered. Councilmember Clark suggested neighboring entities be invited to give feedback on this concept as well. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked the staff to meet with them and explain the logic in this concept. Mike Drechsel agreed it would be wise to communicate and cooperate with Naples

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City and Uintah County. Ken Bassett explained how annexation laws have changed and how some of the City boundaries were set. Allen Parker continued to explain how land use is designated for the City from the west to the east. Ken Bassett asked how the meshing from medium density residential to low density residential would be managed. Allen Parker stated that if the City received a rezone request in an area straddling the blended area, the Council could consider either density / zoning giving more flexibility for development. Any motion would need to be clear why they are making that decision on a case by case basis. Ken Bassett noted that the City ordinances would need to be changed to allow discretion to determine what is the appropriate zoning. Mike Drechsel stated there is always an argument to be made when rezoning property, and the Council simply needs to use legitimate governmental reasons, rather than relying on the map to limit the development. The current map could also be limiting development because of the uncertainty of allowing zoning changes. Allen Parker indicated the most dramatic shift would be the downtown corridor with mixed use, south Vernal Avenue changing to commercial, and the corner commercial approach along 500 South Street. The area surrounding Western Park is also shown as commercial so that area can continue to grow that direction. Mike Drechsel stated that the store fronts on 100 North may be more consistent with the way they look on Main Street in the future, and the City needs commercial enterprise to sustain the tax base. If there is no place for commercial to grow in the City, it will develop in the County.

Allen Parker explained that the character of the road frontage along 500 South will serve as a buffer to lower density residential with each intersection having characteristics of commercial enterprises which seems to be heading that direction now. Councilmember Cowan clarified that 500 South Street becoming a commercial corridor is long term. Kimball Glazier agreed that the vision of 500 South Street in 30 years is different from now. Allen Parker stated that the density could allow offices, but not retail, except on the intersections. Mike Drechsel stated this will keep the feel of residential along the middle of the blocks even though there may be a restaurant on the corner. Ken Bassett stated that the rounding and meshing makes a lot of sense which is a profound and significant change to the land use map. He asked if the Council would like to use a simple public hearing process or have the community more involved by hosting large public meetings. He noted that by law the City must notice a public hearing to amend the general plan. However, if the Council wants more participation, a larger effort can be made to invite citizens to give input. Councilmember Cowan voiced her concern that only those with a vested interest will attend rather than the average citizen offering input. Mike Drechsel stated this seems to be more than just a run of the mill function of government and encouraged the Council to be transparent. Councilmember Cowan suggested that an article be placed in the newspaper, after the first of the year, with a copy of an updated map and invite property owners to give input. Councilmember Scott suggested the map also be placed on the City's web page. The consensus of the Council was to host public meetings in 2015 with both the Council and Planning Commission members being present to answer questions. There was some discussion regarding the importance of development agreements.

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Kimball Glazier stated this document should be used to shape the community while respecting personal property rights which is an important part of living in America. Ken Bassett agreed.

The Council thanked the Planning Commission for their service.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business, Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to adjourn. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.

ATTEST:

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Mayor Pro Tempore Bert Clark

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Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

( S E A L )