

SALT LAKE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
In Room 326 of the City & County Building
451 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah
Wednesday, May 11, 2011

Present for the Planning Commission meeting were: Vice Chair, Angela Dean, Commissioners Emily Drown, Babs De Lay, Charlie Luke, Michael Gallegos, Matthew Wirthlin and Mary Woodhead. Commissioners Michael Fife, Kathleen Hill and Susie McHugh were excused

A field trip was held prior to the meeting Planning Commissioners present were: Angela Dean, Emily Drown, Charlie Luke, Matthew Wirthlin and Mary Woodhead. Staff members in attendance were Planning Director Wilf Sommerkorn, Nick Norris, Wayne Mills, Ed Butterfield and Angela Hasenberg.

A roll is being kept of all who attended the Planning Commission Meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. Audio recordings of the Planning Commission meetings are retained in the Planning Office for an indefinite period of time. Planning staff members present at the meeting were: Wilf Sommerkorn, Planning Director; Nick Norris, Planning Manager; Wayne Mills, Senior Planner; Nick Britton, Principal Planner; Elizabeth Reining, Principal Planner; Ana Valdemoros, Associate Planner; Ed Butterfield, RDA; Paul Nielson, Land Use Attorney; and Angela Hasenberg, Senior Secretary.

Field Trip Notes:

Commissioners were taken on a tour of the Sugarhouse Street Car route. Commissioners asked about the impact on the neighborhood. Members of the Planning Commission were concerned about the end of the street car route and asked if it could be extended into the Sugarhouse business district.

5:42:50

Work Session

Discussion with consultants regarding Sugarhouse Street Car projects.

Vice Chair Angela Dean recognized Merilee Utter from City Ventures and Associates and Ron Straka, design consultant.

Ms. Utter stated that their assignment was the land use, urban design and corridor design for the street car. She noted that they would be looking at the locations of the

stations along the route and small adjustments that might need to be made. The stated objective was to get ahead of the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) design process.

Ms. Utter clarified that the goal was to have the concepts in place that would be the fundamentals and framework for the vision that would be phased in and implemented over time.

Ms. Utter stated that another important goal was involving the community and having a visioning process with them along with the developers and landowners to make the street car work for them.

Ms. Utter asked for advice and thoughts about the corridor from the Commissioners.

5:45:21

Comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner De Lay said that her biggest concern was that finding property that was high density and would encourage land use planning to follow along so that Sugarhouse could have townhomes and small projects that would allow people to walk and ride. She expressed the need for high density zoning that would allow green townhomes to be built.

Commissioner Wirthlin asked what area Commissioner De Lay was referring to and stated that in a perfect world the streetcar line would go up 2100 South. He asked the question, how do we make it as good as possible, given its' location. He reiterated that the cost would be nearly three times the amount to have it moved to along 2100 South.

Planning Manager Nick Norris responded that plan was to incorporate more zoning changes.

Ms. Nutter stated that developers that they have spoken with have indicated that they would like a rezone of the 7th East area. The hope was to make the area more compatible to the neighborhoods around it.

Vice Chair Dean expressed that the stops along the route should be more commercial in nature and not necessarily in single family areas. She added that she felt like the line would not be as successful if it did not connect onto the Sugarhouse Business District.

Ms. Utter asked if the Commission if one of the guidelines should be to preserve the single family neighborhoods as they are, and to what extent.

Commissioner Luke responded that he knew the City had planned meetings with the community, and he felt that there should be more citizen input.

Commissioner Woodhead stated that she felt it was early in the process to give a lot of feedback and wanted to hear what the neighborhood felt. She stated that until the field trip of that afternoon, she did not realize how much had already been determined.

Commissioner Luke agreed with Commissioner Dean and stated that he would like to see the line extended to the commercial area.

Mr. Straka stated that he agreed that extending the line would mean the line was successful.

Commissioner Luke stated that he would like to see the line extended further east along 2100 South.

[5:55:07](#)

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Commissioner Wirthlin moved to approve the minutes of April 27, 2011.

Second: Commissioner Luke seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioners Emily Drown, Babs De Lay, Charlie Luke, Michael Gallegos, and Matthew Wirthlin all voted "aye", Commissioner Woodhead abstained. The motion passed.

[5:59:14](#)

Report of the Vice Chair:

Vice Chairperson Dean had nothing to report.

Report of the Director:

Planning Director Wilf Sommerkorn gave a preview of the Mayor's proposed budget that the City Council was considering. He included the following points:

- Adding and Urban Design Planner to staff that would be partially funded by the RDA.
- RDA would fund a Planner whose function would be to accomplish the master plan and rezoning changes that would be needed for RDA.

- \$250,000.00 in one time funding for long range planning. The money would be used for the development of a comprehensive policy plan that would be a master plan for the City. It would be considered a Consolidated Policy Plan that would be used as a reference for all future community plans.
- West Salt Lake Plan.
- East Bench Plan.

The Role of Sustainable Communities in the Economic Recovery.

Vice Chair Angela Dean recognized Planning Director Wilf Sommerkorn as staff representative.

Mr. Sommerkorn gave a briefing regarding Planning in the current Political Climate. He noted that this was a summary of a speech given by Robyn Rather of Collective Strength, Inc.

A question was asked in a recent polling about issues our nation was facing, how much of a priority should each of the following be to our elected officials, the answers were:

High Priorities (60%+)

- | | |
|---------------------|-----|
| • Jobs | 82% |
| • The economy | 85% |
| • Health care costs | 70% |
| • Federal deficit | 68% |
| • Cost of living | 61% |
| • Taxes | 63% |
| • Education | 63% |

Medium Priorities (49%+)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| • Ending the war(s) | 57% |
| • Public safety | 51% |
| • Reducing our dependence on oil | 51% |
| • Addressing poverty | 49% |
| • Clean air and water | 49% |

Just Not Priorities

- Wall Street and Banking reform 39%
- Housing market downturn 38%
- Climate change and global warming 30%
- Transportation 21%
- Land development patterns 16%

Transportation Investments Findings

- “Enthusiasm gap” when transportation is presented as a standalone issue
Transportation is a very low national priority. (-Note: Land use is even lower)
- Expanding the transportation network to handle the growing population is not supported at all in any region and neither are taking care of the system we have or investing in projects with the greatest payback.

Transportation Messages

% agree:

84% our country is too dependent on oil. We need to change that.

82% Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much

82% rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.

75% Infrastructure spending on roads, trains and buses create jobs and help the economy get stronger.

66% we need to rethink the way we develop housing and transportation in the region. The way we have been doing it isn't working for most people

58% I believe that economic growth and environmental quality are interconnected goals. We can have one without the other.

58% 35% of the US economic base. We can't fix our economy unless we fix our housing and transportation problems first.

Findings about Sustainable Communities

- Most Americans believe that their region needs to rethink housing and transportation because “it doesn't work for most people”

- Sustainable communities, as defined by their benefits, are broadly supported in every region and every region believes they need more of them.
- Sustainable communities are widely seen as important to rebuilding the economy.
- There is a clear demand for sustainable communities and it is increasing.
- The Livability Principles as defined by HUD, are also broadly supported.

A Sustainable Community is:

An urban, suburban or rural community that has more housing and transportation choices, is closer to jobs, shops or schools, is more energy independent and helps protect clean air and water.

Findings about the Economy and the Role of Sustainable Communities in it.

- Jobs and the Economy remain the number one national priority across all regions and demographics.
- Americans want the government to “stop spending money it doesn’t have” and “use the money it has more effectively”
- Increasing infrastructure spending that supports communities such as public transportation, roads, trains, water systems is widely seen as a jobs catalyst and economic boost.
- As a solution for the economic crisis, infrastructure spending ranks higher than both investing in technology/innovation and investments in clean energy and green jobs
- Dominant economic theme: Growing the economy and balancing the budget by spending what we do and have more wisely.
- Sustainable communities can be framed in a very positive way, if we are proactive about it.

Findings About Interest for Walkable Communities

- Interest in walkability has dramatically increased as a home buying factor since the last time most Americans bought a house. 58% now say it factors in, compared to 20% who said it did in a significant way when they bought their current house.
- 68% of Americans say they would accept a reduction of at least 5% in square footage if it meant their new house was more walkable to shops and means.
- The most important reasons given for accepting this trade off is that it would save transportation cost, decrease their time driving around, and be more enjoyable.

All Messages Tested

% Agree

84% Our Country is too dependent on oil. We need to change that.

84% I want the federal government to coordinate activities and funding between agencies more effectively

82% Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much

82% Rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.

78% I want my home to be as energy efficient and as "green" as possible.

75% infrastructure spending on roads, trains and buses create jobs and help the economy get stronger

70% The federal government needs to stay out of the real estate market.

66% We need to rethink the way we develop housing and transportation in this region. The way we have been doing it is not working for most people.

Messages That Do Best Across All Political Preferences

84% I want the federal government to coordinate activities and funding between agencies more effectively.

82% Most Americans spend more than 50% of their household expenses on housing and transportation costs. That is too much.

82% Rebuilding our economy and creating new jobs is the most important issue of our generation.

Messages that had Fractured Opinion Across Political Preferences.

70% The federal government needs to stay out of the real estate market.

68% The federal government should stop focusing only on car-oriented systems, and start balancing the funding more toward public transportation.

65% Distressed areas of our country should receive more resources than areas that have not been hurt as badly by crises and longstanding poverty.

58% I believe that economic growth and environmental quality are interconnected goals. We can't have one without the other.

57% Climate change and global warming are getting worse and worse. We need to something to reverse it.

When communicating about sustainable communities:

- Always define sustainable communities.
- Never use the terms smart growth, livable or sustainable without a clear definition of the benefits.
- Frame Sustainable Communities in economic and job creation terms. This will vastly increase their relevance over the next decade.

Planning Director Sommerkorn discussed strategy on how to counter opposition and present topics in a rational way.

[6:22:06](#)

400 South Project: The City received a grant to conduct a public outreach process to create a long term vision for the 400 South/University Ave corridor with the focus on improving public outreach to people who do not typically participate in the planning process. The process will include working with a broad group of stakeholders to identify a long term vision for the corridor and the areas in close proximity to the Library, Trolley and 900 East Trax stations as well as creating development regulations that support the HUD Livability principles. (staff contact: Nick Norris at 801-535-6173 or nick.norris@slcgov.com or Maryann Pickering at 801-535-7660 or maryann.pickering@slcgov.com)

Chairperson Dean recognized Nick Norris as staff representative.

Mr. Norris stated that the City had received a number of grants from the federal government that involved the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban development.

Mr. Norris spoke about the 400 South Project. The Planning Department was the sole beneficiary of this grant which was partnered with the Wasatch Choices 2040.

Mr. Norris said that the grants were created by Congress through the Livable Communities Act and the goal was to create better, more affordable places to live, work, and to raise a family.

The grant incorporates 6 livability principles which are aimed at identifying what livability is. They are:

- Transportation Choices
- Coordinate and leverage investments
- Value communities and neighborhoods
- Support existing communities
- Economic Competitiveness
- Equitable Affordable Housing

Mr. Norris discussed the two separate programs, the Challenge Grant Program and the Comprehensive Planning Grant Program

The Community Grant Program Goals are:

- Support transit oriented development
- Create and preserve affordable housing
- Improve public transportation

- Create pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares
- Redevelop brownfields
- Foster economic development

Mr. Norris discussed the area that would be impacted by the grant.

Mr. Norris discussed the goals of the 400 South project, which are:

- Increase public participation
- Review Central City Master Plan
- Remove zoning barriers related to Livable Communities Principles

Mr. Norris discussed the Public Process which involves a visioning workshop on May 19, 2011.

Mr. Norris described the Wasatch Choices Grant which includes:

- Development of regional growth model
- Facilitate vibrant neighborhood development projects at key centers
- Provide transportation and mobility choices to implement Wasatch choices 2040
- Regional housing analysis
- Compile a toolbox of strategies, approaches and lessons learned for local communities

What is Wasatch Choices 2040?

- Establishes goals or principles for region
- Regional public input process
- Can be used by local communities to understand their role in the region

The common themes are:

- Emphasis on growth centers
- Preference for a variety of housing
- Emphasis on bike and pedestrian routes

Mr. Norris stated that the two case studies in SLC would be the Downtown Street Car and the Salt Lake Central Station.

Mr. Norris added that an advisory board might be created and a member of the Planning Commission could be asked to participate.

[6:37:09](#)

PLNPCM2010-00656: West Salt Lake Master Plan – Staff will brief the Planning Commission about the ongoing West Salt Lake Master Plan process and discuss the timeline for the plan and issues that have been raised during the public process. (Staff contact: Nick Britton at 801-535-6107 or nick.britton@slcgov.com)

Chairperson Dean recognized Nick Britton as staff representative.

Mr. Britton stated that in January of 2011, staff began the process of updated int eh West Salt Lake Master Plan. The current plan for the area was adopted in 1995 and a prior update was inditiated in 2005 but was not finished.

Mr. Britton said that staff is currently holding a number of meetings to gather public input for the planning process. The first meeting was help on January 25, 2011 where people identified a number of particular issues and locations they wanted to see the plan address.

On April 28, 2011 a second public meeting was held to get more information and input on number specific site/corridors that were the most frequently identified during January's meeting. In addition, staff organized a series of smaller meetings with business owners and operators in the West Salt Lake area to identify issues that may be particular to them, especially those operating west of Redwood road.

Guiding Principles identified were:

- West Salt Lake needs to be rebranded with a unique identity that stresses its opportunities and moved beyond the perceptions of the east-west division
- The Jordan River needs to be highlighted and maintained as a community asset
- The intersection of 900 South and 900 West is a unique opportunity for a new neighborhood center
- The 900 west corridor is a key element of both neighborhoods and it should be developed to unify the neighborhoods and connect important recreation, community and business nodes
- Salt Lake City needs to address Redwood Road's character; its infrastructure, the mix of uses, and its pedestrian and alternative transportation needs
- Poplar Grove and Glendale are both stable, well developed residential neighborhood, but focus should be placed on infill housing and small business and commercial development
- West Salt Lake's industrial neighborhoods are also relatively stable, but there is room for improvement regarding their public infrastructure, the mix of uses, and the relationship between those neighborhoods and the City

- West Salt Lake has opportunities for outdoor recreation and open space that are unavailable in the rest of the city. These opportunities should be created or expanded.

Mr. Britton stated that staff was organizing a third meeting which was to be held on June 1, 2011.

Mr. Britton asked if any of the Commissioners would be willing to serve on a subcommittee for the master plan. Commissioners Babs De Lay, Emily Drown and Mary Woodhead all volunteered.

6:46:43

Meeting adjourned

This document, along with the digital recording, constitute the official minutes of the Salt Lake City Planning Commission held on May 11, 2011.

Angela Hasenberg