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**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION WORK MEETING ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2016,
AT THE SPRINGDALE TOWN HALL, 118 LION BLVD., SPRINGDALE, UTAH.
THE MEETING BEGAN AT 5:00 PM.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jack Archer, Allan Staker, Randy Taylor, Liz West and Scott Taylor

EXCUSED: Mike Marriott and Jack Burns from ZNP

ALSO PRESENT: DCD Tom Dansie, Associate Planner Toni Benevento and Town Clerk Darci Carlson recording. Please see attached list for citizens signed in.

Mr. Archer welcomed Scott Taylor to his first meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Allan Staker to approve the agenda; seconded by Liz West.

Staker: Aye

R. Taylor: Aye

Archer: Aye

S. Taylor: Aye

West: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

Commission discussion and announcements: Mr. Dansie announced Scott Taylor was joining the Commission as a recently appointed alternate. Allan Staker was appointed to replace Joe Pitti on the Commission. Mr. Staker was previously an alternate but was now a regular, full voting member.

Mr. Dansie said in the last Town Council meeting, the Council interpreted an ordinance that would allow reconsideration of a variance request made to the Appeal Authority if the information being reconsidered could influence the decision and was not heard during the initial hearing. Since this change affected Town policy it needed to be reflected and clarified in the ordinance. Therefore in the January regular Planning Commission meeting, the Commission would consider an ordinance amendment related to this technical issue.

Ms. Carlson discussed the installation of television screens in the Council chambers. These would provide for more effective and professional presentations during future Council and Commission meetings. The project would be completed later this month.

Ms. West asked about stop signs at Serendipity and Wanda Lane in the Kinesava Ranch subdivision. Mr. Dansie said there should be stop signs at these streets however the Streets Department did not know who put them up.

- Mr. Randy Taylor indicated the sign on Wanda Lane was not at the legal height.
- Mr. Dansie said the Town would continue to investigate.

Mr. Archer commented the remodel at the Bit & Spur looked larger than what the Commission approved.

- Mr. Dansie indicated he and Ms. Benevento recently conducted a site inspection before Christmas. It appeared the development was according to the plan.

Mr. Staker questioned the color of the new signs at the shuttle stops. He wanted to confirm the signs would be compliant with the Town's color palette.

- Mr. Dansie said he met with the Park Service and their sign company to discuss the color. A lot of time was spent ensuring the color would be compliant. Mr. Dansie said the Town ordinance makes special allowance for shuttle stop signage but, they needed to follow the same design standards.

Discussion/Information/Non-Action Items

Discussion of wireless communication facilities ordinance – Mr. Dansie said in previous meetings the Commission looked at a preliminary draft of the ordinance based on St. George and Washington County as templates. Both the National Park and an industry representative also provided input.

Town staff has since looked closely at other municipal ordinances, specifically those from Sedona, Arizona and Park City, Utah, whose language was more rigorous in regulating wireless communication towers. Mr. Dansie recommended the Commission consider a significant overhaul of the draft to make language more robust and protective of visual resources.

With the aid of Google Earth, the staff created visual simulations to help illustrate how various cell towers would look in various locations in Town. Mr. Dansie said Ms. Benevento had also done research on consultants who could help with the technical aspects of the ordinance.

Mr. Archer asked if access to fiber optic would make towers obsolete.

- Mr. Dansie said he was unsure. A professional could help answer technical questions. Mr. Dansie thought a fiber link would allow data to be transmitted more efficiently but that a tower would still be needed. The currently installed fiber optic was a private utility owned by First Digital. Any cell provider wanting to use the fiber optic cable would have to contract with them.
- Mr. Staker commented with constant advances in technology it was possible the need for cell towers was declining.
- Ms. Benevento said based on her conversations with consultants, having fiber optics makes Springdale more desirable to wireless communications companies.
- The main corridor in Town would likely get good service but other areas such as Anasazi Plateau, the upper reaches of Kinesava, Valley View and Canyon Springs may not. Mr. Archer said in order to service these areas small towers may need to be installed.

Mr. Dansie said staff sought as much free advice from professionals as they could but lacked the technical expertise to know what was feasible. A consultant would cost the Town tens of thousands of dollars.

- Ms. West asked if expert review fees could be passed on to providers. Mr. Dansie answered the costs to develop the ordinance could not be passed on but the Town could charge fees during the application process for reviews and studies once the ordinance was in place.
- Mr. Archer said the ordinance must be detailed so the Town can plug any possible loopholes.

Mr. Randy Taylor said the biggest issue was visual intrusion. He felt the Commission should concentrate on an ordinance that regulated visual impacts.

- There were two competing interests. One was to achieve good cell communication. The other was to minimize visual impacts.
- Mr. Dansie said Park City was very restrictive in regulating design and appearance. In addition, heights could not exceed limits in each of their zones. They have the advantage of being able to locate cell towers on ski lifts. Mr. Dansie commented wireless companies have shown a willingness to adapt and comply with local design ordinances.
- Mr. Randy Taylor said towers erected on hillsides would create scars due to the roads built to get to them. He suggested the ordinance also contain language stating all the provisions of the grading ordinance must be met.

Mr. Staker said the Town has competing ordinances and asked which trumped.

- Mr. Dansie said all development was required to adhere to all standards. The Telecommunication Act of 1996 requires municipalities allow cell towers and make them feasible to operate. The goal was to develop an ordinance that preemptively reduced the potential for variance requests and lawsuits, protected visual resources and made allowances for wireless communication in Springdale.
- Mr. Randy Taylor said the ordinance should guide providers to locations in Town with the least amount of impact.

Mr. Archer asked if the Town spoke to the Park about cell towers and if they had higher ground that could service Springdale.

- Mr. Dansie said they spoke to the Park in general about cell towers. The Park was contemplating installation of a structure at the Visitor's Center and there was discussion if this could possibly provide service for Springdale. There was no coordinated plan for cell towers however.

Ms. West said she liked Sedona's ordinance. Their process was very detailed and comprehensive. Springdale's ordinance needed to work aesthetically with the Town.

- Mr. Dansie agreed and said Springdale could pattern their ordinance similar to Sedona's. He commented Sedona did allow much taller towers. In order for the Town to achieve what it wanted it would be necessary for the ordinance to be detailed. A well-constructed ordinance would help the Town protect itself. Mr. Dansie cautioned the Town is never immune from lawsuits.
- Mr. Randy Taylor said wireless companies would have to prove they cannot work within the confines of the ordinance before they could challenge the Town. He commented it appeared most companies were trying to comply with municipal ordinances.

Mr. Dansie said request for funds for a consultant would need to go before the Town Council. The Council would determine if the expense could be budgeted in the current year or next.

The Council directed the Commission to begin work on a wireless communications ordinance in September. Per state law, the Town had a period of six months to develop this ordinance and suspend application requests. After this time, even if the ordinance remained unfinished, the Town would have to process applications. If the Council agreed to spend money on a consultant, the Town must go through a competitive selection process. Ms. Benevento conducted research on consultants.

Mr. Staker said before spending money on a consultant staff should craft the ordinance based on Sedona's.

- Mr. Dansie said the ordinance should include standards that make towers as low and unobtrusive as possible. The burden of proving why a tower should be higher or located in another location would fall to the applicant. They would pay for the technical analysis and reports necessary to demonstrate they cannot install a tower at the standards set in the ordinance. Mr. Staker and Mr. Randy Taylor agreed.
- Ms. Benevento recommended monetary incentives whereby the approval process was easier if wireless providers agreed to place antennas at the height and location the Town wanted.
- Mr. Dansie noted if the Commission prohibited towers in residential zones this would eliminate the majority of Town.

Ms. West suggested antennas be integrated with light poles.

- Mr. Archer said this scenario would address the main corridor. Smaller towers could be installed to service pockets in Town where reception was less consistent.

Mr. Dansie said previously the Commission pushed for colocation to reduce the total number of towers in Town. However Park City did not push for this because it generally led to taller towers.

Placing antennas on street lights was a possibility but a limiting factor may be how far service could be transmitted from them. This would have to be determined. Mr. Dansie said the street light poles were currently being manufactured and were engineered for wind loads without antennas. This may also be a factor for the Town to consider.

- Mr. Randy Taylor said cell companies may have to provide a compatible pole that meets the engineering requirements.

Looking at the Google Earth simulations the Commission preferred towers were placed on the valley floor to avoid potential scarring on hills.

Mr. Dansie asked if the Commission wanted to request funds from the Town Council for a consultant or move ahead with a revised draft that was more in line with Sedona. It could require an applicant provide an analysis or report.

- Mr. Archer favored revising the draft.

- Mr. Randy Taylor said asking the Council for money would delay the process and likely put the Town over the six month window to have the ordinance in place.

Mr. Dansie said the ordinance could be drafted to incentivize wireless companies by making the application process streamlined if they use street light poles. If a wireless company preferred something different they would be required to demonstrate why and pay for the technical analysis. Commissioners liked this approach. Mr. Dansie said this might make the ordinance more defensible.

- Ms. West thought they should not push for colocation in order to keep the tower heights down.
- Mr. Randy Taylor wanted to be sure the ordinance had provisions about grading and height allowances specific to Springdale.

The Planning Commission directed staff to move ahead in drafting a more robust ordinance patterned after Sedona. At this point the Town would not pursue a consultant. Staff would research distance of coverage if antennas are placed on street light poles.

Mr. Scott Taylor said professional guidance was important for the long haul and he was in favor of using a consultant up-front before the ordinance was adopted.

Discussion of revisions to the General Plan: Chapter 15 Education Program – Mr. Dansie said staff provided a rough framework for the Education Program chapter but it needed more fine tuning. He wanted to ensure it was in line with what the Commission envisioned. The draft identified educational topics and strategies the Commission wanted to promote.

Mr. Archer felt a better tool to inform and educate the community would be the newsletter. He doubted the General Plan was looked at by citizens and felt the Town newsletter would be beneficial to get word out to residents. Mr. Archer said a link on the Town website would also be effective and efficient.

- Ms. West said the Education chapter was designed to promote and highlight topics the Commission wanted to educate about. It was a guideline and reference only.
- Mr. Randy Taylor said the intent of the chapter was to identify ways in which to disseminate educational information. The chapter would not contain pages of content.

Mr. Dansie said the chapter did not have to be overly complicated. It was a guide to identify the tools the Town would use to communicate educational topics to the community.

- Commissioners wanted to better utilize the Town newsletter and website to provide educational information as identified in the chapter.

Mr. Dansie said the next step in the General Plan review process would be to schedule informal public comment and then a public hearing. Staff would polish up the chapters and put them online for the community to review.

- Mr. Archer suggested the Commission schedule time for public comments during the February work meeting then set a public hearing in March.
- Ms. Carlson said staff would distribute a special mailing to promote public participation.

On a side note, Mr. Staker commented the biggest items facing the Town this year were the reconstruction of SR-9 and parking issues. He asked if the Commission should be considering these issues.

- Mr. Dansie said the Town hired engineering firm Jones & DeMille to develop a transportation master plan. They conducted a public open house in December but there were always opportunities for input. Mr. Dansie said he would let the Planning Commission know when the next consultant meeting was scheduled. Two Commissioners could attend without the need to post a public meeting.

Ms. West suggested the Town work together with the animal shelter to get information out.

- Ms. Carlson said the Town received information from Luci Francis about animals in need of adoption. Information was also posted on the Zion Animal Lovers page on the Town website.

Adjourn
Motion to adjourn at 6:43pm made by Allan Staker; seconded by Randy Taylor.
Staker: Aye
R. Taylor: Aye
Archer: Aye
S. Taylor: Aye
West: Aye
Motion passed unanimously.



Darci Carlson, Town Clerk

APPROVAL:  _____ DATE: 1-19-16 _____

