

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT WORK SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA,
HELD OCTOBER 22, 2009, AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE COTTONWOOD PUBLIC
SAFETY BUILDING, 191 SOUTH SIXTH STREET, COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Mayor Joens called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Council Members Present

Diane Joens, Mayor
Karen Pfeifer, Vice Mayor
Tim Elinski, Council Member
Darold Smith, Council Member

Council Members Absent

Duane Kirby, Council Member
Linda Norman, Council Member
Terence Pratt, Council Member

Staff Members Present

Doug Bartosh, City Manager
George Gehlert, Community Development Director
Richard Faust, Parks & Recreation Director

Steve Horton, City Attorney
Dan Lueder, Utilities Director
Richard Smith, Deputy Clerk

Planning & Zoning Commission Members Present

Pat Dixon Jake Gonzalez Richard Kevin
Ed Kiyler, Chair Diane Lovett, V.C. Raymond Cox

Commission Members Absent

Judd Wasden

ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF OPEN SPACE/RECREATION ELEMENT

Mr. Gehlert stated this was another meeting to update the Council on the General Development Plan mandated by the State. The plan was adopted in 2003 by the City Council and ratified by the voters in 2004. The two elements to be discussed tonight were part of nine elements required by the state. These included an inventory of open space, an analysis of needs for open space, the development of a system of recreational access to open space, and management policies for that open space. Much of the information used to create the plan was now almost a decade old and would have to be readopted soon. Open space was expected to be coordinated on a regional level, with key areas identified and divisions signified, including areas for active and passive recreation. Standards were to be set for maintaining facilities in recreation areas.

Plans were to be integrated into a network of regional planning, keeping in mind the expressed desire for communities to maintain separation from each other. A citizens' advisory group had been formed to address open space issues. Little could be done to further development of plans for the present because of a lack of funding. Regional plans focused on identified key areas and included working with Dead Horse State Park, maintaining the rural face of Mingus Mountain, preserving the blocks of Forest Service land

along Highway 260, creation of a primary trail loop to anchor a future trail system and the creation of a stronger bond with the Verde River in keeping with the Strategic Initiatives adopted by the Council last year.

As part of the Plan there was to be a balance maintained between passive and active recreation forms. Sidewalks were being upgraded as they could and trails were planned. There was to be a pedestrian corridor on Seventh Street. Long range plans call for a new city hall/cultural center complex. Consideration was to be given to State Trust Land annexation and to Special Area Planning within the city.

Council Member Elinski asked for more detail on Mingus Mountain.

Mr. Gehlert stated its significance was as the backdrop whose views and vistas it was desirable to retain. Much of the view-shed which constituted the face of the mountain was held in private hands and subject to wildcat development, particularly around the area of Jerome and Clarkdale.

Mayor Joens stated she had a couple questions regarding the "Open Space and Recreation" section of Mr. Gehlert's handout. Why did we say that State Trust Blocks would be open space when they would be owned privately?

Mr. Gehlert stated it was our concern for the land.

Mayor Joens stated "hard edge of development" was mentioned and we were always talking about that. We say we don't want to grow together, but what happens when someone, a private property developer, wants to be within the city limits and they may be closer to another one of those entities. How do we address private property rights when we say hard edges?

Mr. Gehlert stated it really hadn't come to that. The concept was intended to apply to large blocks of land such as State Trust Lands, which it was hoped would remain intact and not be filled in.

Council Member Smith stated there was more and more development on the outskirts of the city but the developers weren't looking at the interior as much. It wasn't to preserve the open space, but taking a look inside the city where we could do some development with pedestrian access.

Mr. Gehlert stated it was something to be encouraged. A plan had not been put in place yet but was intended to be addressed in a special area planning.

Mayor Joens stated when we talked about State Trust Land and open space and recreation, part of the planning process we're working on right now addresses that in great detail.

Mr. Faust stated the Parks & Recreation Department had plans to extend a trail system along the washes and connect with forest lands and the state park which depended on future funding.

Ms. Lovett stated the importance of cooperating with the Verde Front Plan to help our open space plans and requirements.

Mr. Cox stated the biggest problem was to get the cooperation of all the private land owners along the Verde River to help create a public corridor.

Mayor Joens stated the Council had just passed the Verde Front Resolution and Mr. Scully has distributed a nice map of proposed trails. It would be great if copies could be distributed to both the Planning & Zoning Commission and the Parks & Recreation Commission to see what the Council supported.

ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ELEMENT

Mr. Gehlert stated another state required planning element was that we have a safe and healthy environmental policy. We practiced good regional collaboration and participated in many groups and committees involving water, conservation, and land use.

Mr. Lueder distributed a handout regarding the creation of a conservation committee to provide the Council assistance in reaching water conservation goals. The opinion of counsel was the demands of the state's open meeting law would apply to any committee appointed by the Council. Since this would require staff time and expense which the city could not afford at this time, it was thought a citizens' committee could be formed to advise the Utility Department which in turn could relay suggestions to the Council, but because of changes in the open meeting law the committee had been disbanded.

A second handout from Mr. Lueder showed the reduction in water use between January 2008 and January 2009 by about 8 million gallons throughout the city. January was chosen as the base month because pumping was not affected by fluctuations in use as much as other months. Much of the savings was due to system repairs. Previously, huge amounts were being lost to leaks. Conservation efforts were continuing through participation in such programs as Project WET and other educational efforts with children in schools which was thought the most effective way of affecting adult behavior and use.

Mr. Gehlert stated conservation efforts were included in revised Planned Area Development codes being devised as well as the simplified version for smaller developments. Both were part of an intended streamlined permit process. As far as conservation efforts were concerned, the city had purchased private water companies, had amended its Landscape Code, required dual plumbing for grey water discharge in new construction, and wished to implement reclaimed water for irrigation. The removal of the slag pile was to commence shortly. There was now a ban on wood burning fireplaces to help promote better air quality.

Environmental programs to be developed include those for air quality, dark sky, noise, heat islands, drainage, storm water control, riparian zone buffering, soil conservation, slope ordinances, view protection, solar orientation, energy efficiency, and green development. This would include public education.

Mr. Cox asked if there any way to identify how many residences had old toilets and if there was some way to give them a benefit to go and trade out their toilets for low-flow ones.

Mr. Lueder stated it was something where we needed to establish the type of toilet that was best and actually didn't use any more water the old fashioned type of toilet even though it was marketed as "low-flow".

A discussion of disc golf ensued with a view to its low cost to install and maintain and its current popularity, as well as the fact there were no facilities for it between Prescott and Flagstaff.

Mayor Joens stated one thing about some of these things we're doing with our economic development plan is sustainability has some things that might end up being added to some of this.

GENERAL UPDATES AND DISCUSSION REGARDING ON-GOING PLANNING PROGRESS

Mr. Gehlert stated the City Council recently approved the Bicycle Plan. The Landscape Code will be recommended for approval by the Council at its November 3 meeting. Some months ago the Mayor expressed an interest in a Slopes Policy which is being looked at. More recently the Council has asked us to take a look at historic preservation. We are also working on a Design Review Manual which addresses different areas geographically as well as addressing different types of uses in architecture. It is intended as a guide to types of design principals that should be incorporated at different locations.

The General Plan Amendment item has to do with the calendar. This is a yearly calendar that needs to be mapped out. By state law we can only schedule a major Plan Amendment at a single meeting in the year. Generally, most municipalities identify that month as December, so the things that have to be mapped out first start around March or April because it takes that long to do.

Mr. Bartosh stated he and Mr. Elinski met earlier regarding historic preservation and whether to put together a committee to actually begin to develop some strategies as a precursor to a formal committee.

Council Member Smith asked if they would be grandfathered in on the new Landscape Code.

Mr. Lueder stated they would probably embrace it as it required less landscaping and watering.

DISCUSSION OF NEXT SESSION DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Gehlert stated the next joint meeting would be held the second Thursday in January 2010.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Joens asked if there were any comments from the public. No one from the public chose to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Smith moved to adjourn. Vice Mayor Pfeifer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The joint meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Diane Joens, Mayor

Richard Smith, Deputy Clerk