

MINUTES
MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD
City Commission Room, City Hall
1101 Poyntz Avenue
June 6, 2016
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Ball, Chairperson; Neil Parikh, Vice-Chairperson; Jerry Reynard; Phil Anderson; Debbie Nuss; and Ken Ebert.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Stith

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Cattell, Assistant Director for Planning; Chad Bunger, Senior Planner; Lance Evans, Senior Planner; and Ben Chmiel, Planner; Monty Wedel, Director Riley County Planning; Bob Isaac, Riley County Planner.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mel Borst, 1918 Humboldt, discussed future development along the Bluemont Corridor including a potential building similar to the Bluemont Hotel located at 12th and Bluemont. His concerns included increased traffic congestion and removal of the tree canopy, especially when compared to the east end of Bluemont where there is a dense canopy. Borst encouraged a study of the Juliette Corridor as well.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 16, 2016, MANHATTAN URBAN AREA PLANNING BOARD MEETING.

APPROVE THE FINAL PLAT OF LEDGESTONE RIDGE, UNIT TWO, GENERALLY LOCATED 550 FEET TO THE EAST OF THE INTERSECTION SCENIC DRIVE AND THE FUTURE EXPANSION OF MILLER PARKWAY. (APPLICANT/OWNER: STONE POINTE LAND CO, LLC – TIM SCHULTZ)

Anderson moved that the Board approve the Consent Agenda. Reynard seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 6-0.

GENERAL AGENDA

DISCUSS DRAFT URBAN CORE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (UCR).

Chmiel presented the updated draft UCR District and answered questions from the Board.

Ebert asked where the 35 foot minimum building height is measured to.

Chmiel said it would be to the highest portion of the structure.

Ebert said this could be designed as a two-story structure with a pitched roof, which would not meet the intent of the zoning district. He suggested additional factors such as a four story minimum. In addition, if the 35 foot height requirement was measured to the cornice or exclusive of a pitched roof, it could prevent two story structures with pitched roofs and preventing ways around the height requirement.

Ball commented that with the cost of the land, developers are unlikely to not build as much as they are permitted. He asked if the standards have been run by a developer to make sure they are neither too restrictive nor too easy.

Chmiel indicated that have been reviewed by architects and developers of this type of project.

Ebert said he was supportive of the district; he just wanted to ensure that the regulations would help achieve the desired outcome.

Chmiel said a couple of developers have shared their past projects and ideas.

Ebert asked about accessory uses located at the corner of N. Manhattan and a side street regarding the requirement that accessory uses front N. Manhattan.

Chmiel said it was not limited to N. Manhattan only, as long as they have frontage on N. Manhattan.

Ebert asked if an entrance or sidewalk dining on a side street was permitted. Chmiel said it was.

Ebert asked where the 85 foot height limitation originated from.

Chmiel said it was influenced by the Campus Bridge Lofts located along N. Manhattan. Cattell added that ground floor commercial would most likely be 12 to 15 feet in height, still allowing for 7 stories of residential.

Ebert asked if the ground floor was not commercial, would the 30% glass requirement remain the same.

Chmiel said it would, citing several local urban residential examples including Aggie Village.

Ebert asked how close the Aggie Village apartments came to meeting the density requirement of the UCR. Looking at other local examples, Ebert said Colorado Plaza, the Carlson, and the Wareham exceed the UCR density requirement.

Chmiel said he was unsure if Aggie Village met the density requirement.

Ebert calculated that a typical lot measuring 150 feet along N. Manhattan would require two common entrances and asked if “common entrance” was defined. Chmiel said it was defined in the UCR regulations.

Reynard asked why the UCR area was not expanded another block to the east.

Chmiel responded that it was the area identified in the recent Comprehensive Plan update.

Ball said the Comprehensive Plan also took into consideration other factors such as infrastructure capacity and expanding the current UCR area could pose an infrastructure issue.

Reynard commented on the effort to keep taverns and bars out of the area for future residents. He then asked if it was possible to build a walk way over the existing alley space to connect two apartment buildings.

Chmiel said it would require vacating the alley.

Anderson agreed that a mixed use district next the university was a good idea. However looking at the whole neighborhood to the east and making it a walkable, well lighted and safe neighborhood, would require mixed residency in the area and surrounding blocks. He said he thought there should be a strategy to encourage redevelopment of existing houses in the area back to single family use. According to his research along Vattier, Kearney and other streets in the area, 40 percent are in poor condition, 30 percent are in fair condition, leaving 30 percent in good or excellent condition. He said there should be an equal attempt to encourage improving existing structures in the area to make a cohesive neighborhood.

Bunger asked Anderson what kind of strategy he was looking for.

Anderson suggested tax abatements for developers returning converted houses back into single family houses.

Chmiel commented that a house adjacent to the M-FRO recently reset their foundation and added a second dwelling unit while still maintaining the main structure as use by one family.

Nuss said that retaining residents in the area would require providing services such as a grocery store or a drug store, so they do not have to drive. She suggested seeing more area wide planning for those types of public uses, particularly in blighted blocks. She also commented on the existing shorter buildings to the east of the UCR area and how not to negatively impact them with shadows from the larger buildings.

Anderson agreed with Nuss’s comments about the grocery store and the presence of a grocery store assisting with redevelopment.

Chmiel said one developer that city staff has talked to has experience with micro grocery stores in this type of mixed use development. He also commented that with the ongoing Aggieville Plan update and future development in Aggieville, similar uses could be established there.

Parikh asked about the regulation for the restaurants not to exceed 35 percent of sales from alcohol, when alcohol sales for restaurants regularly run 15 to 30 percent and possibly more in a college town. He also asked if it was the owner's responsibility to enforce that.

Chmiel said it is an existing provision in the zoning regulations while acknowledging that it would be a difficult to enforce.

Cattell said it is determined county by county and is related to the ABC laws of Kansas. He said they could discuss it with the city attorney to clarify how to prevent taverns in the proposed UCR District. The 35 percent distinguishes between taverns and restaurants as they pertain to liquor licenses.

Parikh asked about the intent to put restaurants that restrict alcohol sales in a primarily college student living area.

Cattell said the primary intent of the UCR District is multi-family residential with accessory neighborhood services, and not to create an extension of Aggieville.

Ebert summarized his comments regarding building heights, as the Comprehensive Plan identifies structures 5 to 8 stories for the area.

Chmiel asked if he would prefer to see a regulation based on the number of stories or an absolute height.

Ebert said that's what he was leaning towards but it may warrant more consideration.

Nuss suggested bringing it up in public meetings.

DISCUSS DRAFT EUREKA VALLEY K-18 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT AND DRAFT GATEWAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT.

Evans presented an overview of the draft Corridor Overlay Districts.

Ebert asked about the regulation preventing parking to exceed 5 percent of the required parking.

Evans said it was a way to allow additional parking without creating overly excessive parking.

Ebert suggested that this regulation could be too restrictive for some uses such as large churches or places of assembly where more parking is generally needed. He said parking requirements for assembly uses is 1 space per 4 seats. His experience is that the ratio falls short of actual need and should be more in the range of 2 to 2.5. Limiting parking to 5% over required (1.05 spaces/4 seats) could be detrimental to those uses. He suggested allowing an exception to the parking maximum for those types of uses.

Reynard suggested addressing the unkempt landscaping within the corridor areas.

Anderson asked about the requirement for all utilities to be located underground.

Evans said that zoning could only control on site utilities.

Cattell added that it's an existing requirement that is already in effect for all new subdivisions within the city.

Anderson asked about the requirement for a bike rack when there are no bike lanes in the corridors.

Evans said bike trails and lanes are accounted for in the Eureka Valley K-18 Corridor Plan; however they still need to be constructed. He said it's a chicken or egg situation and that off-site bike infrastructure might come later.

Looking at the K-18 Corridor's Future Land Use map, Ebert asked where the overlay lies on the map.

Evans said it is generally within 1,000 feet of K-18's outside lane centerline.

Ebert asked if there was existing residential in the K-18 Corridor and noted that the draft district refers to residential uses.

Evans said that was a mistake in the draft, as the Eureka Valley K-18 Corridor Plan does not promote new residential development, due to the proximity of the Airport Overlay and Fort Riley noise restrictions. Cattell said the future land use map of the Comprehensive Plan primarily identifies commercial and industrial uses in the Eureka Valley to protect the functionality of the airport.

Ball encouraged thinking of future expansion of the airport and allocating sufficient land area for that purpose.

REPORTS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Cattell discussed the upcoming Planning Board meetings.

Nuss asked the new movie theatre at the south end of the mall regarding design requirements and if it was a Planned Unit Development.

Bunger said there were none required through the zoning. He said it is not in a PUD, it is zoned C-4, Central Business District, where there are no specific design requirements. Bunger thought there might be additional requirements on the lease agreement between the City and the mall. He was unsure of the specifics, but what is currently being built is what it will look like. There will be signage related to the C-4 district as well.

Cattell said the landscaping plan has yet to be implemented.

Ebert asked about the possibility of a hotel in Aggieville.

Cattell replied that it would be discussed at the June 7th City Commission meeting.

Ebert asked if they would be able to proceed with the project without consulting the Planning Board, such as with regard to the height limitation.

Cattell said that Aggieville is zoned C-3 which permits hotels and there are two options regarding the current 35 foot height limitation. A developer could propose a PUD or apply for an exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals. Cattell said the City Commission has decisions to make regarding the use of a city owned parking lot.

Anderson asked if the Aggieville Plan would be able to go forward.

Cattell said if the hotel project proceeds past the Commission discussion, it would most likely have an influence in the Aggieville Plan. However he explained that there is already the existing Aggieville – Campus Edge Plan with specific recommendations for redevelopment along the two-block section of the Bluemont Corridor.

Cattell said there would be additional focus group meetings in June to review the Draft Urban Core Residential District, in addition to a work session with City Commission as well.

Ball adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Lewis, Planning Intern