

**Missoula City Council Land Use and Planning Committee Minutes - DRAFT**

**May 4, 2022  
3:05 pm  
ZOOM Webinar**

**Members present:** Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Heidi West

**Members absent:** Stacie Anderson

**1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

**1.1 Roll Call**

Amanda Vermace called the roll.

**1.2 Approval of the Minutes**

There were no minutes to be approved.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment for items no listed on the agenda.

**3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**3.1 Referral and Staff Report – Phased Development Review for Phase W2 and E1 of Heron’s Landing Subdivision**

Pre-Public Hearing - Informational Item Only

Alex Eidam, Senior Planning with the Community Planning, Development, and Innovation department, presented on the Phases W2 & E1 for the Heron's Landing subdivision plat. Ms. Eidam provide a visual of the property location and a map of the plat highlighting the two phases seeking approval. She also covered the phased development review process and the role of City Council. She also provided some background to the review criteria and recommended amendments being proposed for the two phases (W2 and E1).

Ryan Salisbury, with WGM Group and Principle for the Heron's Landing Subdivision project, also gave a presentation. Mr. Salisbury focused on the developers concerns regarding the Irrigation Ditch Use Agreement and suggested edits to the proposal made by city staff. He also shared concerns about the shared use path and offered suggestive language for the condition #20. Ms. Eidam confirmed that a resolution should be reached before the public hearing set for Monday, May 9, 2022, city council meeting.

**3.2 Rezone 2900, 2920 and 2990 Expo Parkway – Grant Creek Village (2 parcels, 44 acres) from R5.4Residential, RM1-35 Residential (multi-dwelling), B2-2 Community Business, and C1-4Neighborhood Commercial to RM1-45 (multi-dwelling)**

Pre-Public Hearing - Informational Item Only

The Land Use and Planning chair, Jordan Hess, introduced the item for a rezone request for property located at 2900, 2920, and 2990 Expo Parkway and gave an itinerary for the meeting structure. Dave DeGrandpre, Planning Supervisor with the Community Planning, Development, and Innovation department, began his presentation by giving background on regulations and parameters of rezone requests. Mr. DeGrandpre continued by providing a visual of the parcels and described the surrounding neighborhood. He provided emphasis on the current zoning for the property which falls under multiple zoning districts and considered a split zoned parcel. Based on zoning rules the strictest zoning would be enforced. Mr. DeGrandpre also covered the development potential based on the current zoning and the potential with the proposed rezones approval. Additionally, he gave some history of the request and explained why the applicant is making the same request again. One changed Mr. DeGrandpre focused on, was regarding a proposed development agreement. He continued by giving details on how the project fits within the review criteria based on the city's current policies and regulations. He covered the proposed motion and the outcome from the public hearing held at an earlier City/County Planning Board meeting. Lastly, he explained the options for offsite improvements that would require traffic studies to determine the impact of the proposed development and ensure improvements are implemented.

The committee discussed the current infrastructure, concerns with the proposed development agreement, and why the rezone request is being proposed.

Spencer Woith, President with Woith Engineering, introduced members on the applicant team and gave a short presentation for the proposed request. Mr. Woith explained why the rezone is being requested, history on the 1980 Grant Creek development plan. He also elaborated on the development agreement being proposed. Mr. Woith also gave some visuals for wildfire risk and emergency management in the case of a need for evacuations. He also gave traffic impact comparisons for the current and proposed zoning.

Bob Abelin, with Abelin Traffic Services, explained his involvement with the traffic study that has been ongoing over the last three years. He gave input regarding the analysis on the traffic volume and found no change. Mr. Abelin elaborated on the simulation experiments provided.

Alan McCormick, representative of KJA, provided similar information already presented which included why the rezone request needs to be made, history of the proposal and additional details about the development agreement. Lastly, Mr. McCormick questioned the concerns over the traffic impact.

A recess was held at 4:50 p.m.

Due to technical difficulties, the meeting resumed at 4:59 p.m. The video for the second portion of the meeting can be found on YouTube: [here](#).

When the meeting resumed the floor was opened for public comment from member in opposition of the proposed project.

R.T. Cox, president of Friends of Grant Creek, gave introductions for other members of the public present and opted to save his presentation for a later time. The floor was turned over to Mike Cole. Mr. Cole is with the Grant Creek Fire Task Force and presented on situational awareness of the area being proposed for rezone. He focused on the fire history around the Missoula area. Mr. Cole also expressed concern for wildfire danger not being listed in the staff report. Visuals of the Prospects Home Owner Association common area was displayed. He also gave input on why the proposed zoning does not meet the criteria's discussed earlier. Mr. Cole also commented on things that could go wrong when it comes to wildfires. He also commented on traffic accidents in the Grant Creek neighborhood has increased over the years, causing more concern for development in the area.

Kim Birck, a resident in the Grant Creek community, commented on concerns that the proposed plan has no major changes from the last attempt the developer requested the same rezone. Ms. Birck expressed why she is against the rezone request. Like others, gave her opposition regarding concerns over wildfire, traffic impacts and higher density in the Grant Creek community.

Grant Parker, an attorney representation with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, introduced Rick Nys. Mr. Parker stated that Mr. Nys is a Principal Traffic Engineering with Greenlight Engineering and provided information about his professional background. Mr. Nys was hired by the Friends of Grant Creek and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to conduct research on the traffic impact study. Mr. Nys expressed concern with the study prepared by Mr. Abelin (presented earlier during the meeting). He stated the study was not complete and questioned the accuracy of the overall study. Mr. Nys pointed out flaws he found in the analysis and gave his testimony based on his professional opinion.

The floor was open to public comment for those in favor of the proposed project.

Heather Harp, with Habitat for Humanity, spoke to the committee with empathy and understanding. Ms. Harp previously held a seat on City Council and has experienced difficult situations similar to the proposed project. Ms. Harp expressed concern over the lack of support being voiced for the proposed project given the nation's current housing crisis. She weighed the pros and cons for the proposal and voiced her feelings towards the desire to create more affordable housing to assist in reducing the community's homelessness issue.

Steve Bassett, a Missoula resident, expressed concerns over the lack of housing options that has further escalated prices for home sales and rentals in the community. Additionally, Mr. Bassett added the burden the cost is having on the people wanting to reside in Missoula.

The meeting ended with requests by the committee for staff and the applicant team. The committee requested staff from Fire and/or the Police department be present during the next meeting. A similar request for someone from Emergency Service staff help answer questions about the evacuation process. The committee also requested transportation and engineering staff be present to answer questions about traffic concerns. They also requested information on residents in the higher fire danger zone in the Grant Creek

community. The last request was regarding the development agreement being proposed by the applicant team.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.