



Historic West Des Moines Master Plan Steering Committee – 2021 Update

Wednesday, June 1, 2022, 4:30 pm
MINUTES

- I. Chair calls meeting to order – called to order at 4:37 pm
 - a. Attendance
 - i. Committee members
 1. Nate Hon
 2. Meredith Wells
 3. Mark Veiock
 4. Steve Frevert
 5. Scott Hatfield
 6. Scott Cutler
 7. Steph Trannel
 8. Julie Eliason
 9. Vicki Long Hill
 10. Mitchell Callahan
 11. Cleo Underwood
 12. Ralph Haskins
 13. Renae Johanningmeier – via Teams
 14. Debbie Westphal Swander – via Teams
 - ii. Staff Members
 1. Brad Munford
 2. Christine Gordon
 3. Clyde Evans
 - iii. Consultant
 1. Mike Hoffman – Teska
 2. Erin Cigliano – Teska - via Teams
 - iv. Guests
 1. Kevin Goodlaxson

2. Sherry Mae Hedgecock
3. Robert Hedgecock
4. Nick Waage
5. Anne Marie Moreno
6. Kelly Wilson
7. Lee Scott
8. Jeff Duncan
9. Dana Duncan
10. Lola Myers
11. Brenda Cox
12. Brenda Clausman
13. Mike King
14. Marv Schneider
15. Linda Ramirez
16. Teena Shineflew
17. Jerri Meyer
18. Carolyn Gaston
19. Bob Gaston
20. Jenea Vaezey
21. Victoria Veiock
22. Jack Hon
23. Deb Dalton
24. John Dalton
25. Jimmy Waldschmidt
26. Marisa Waldschmidt
27. Jeshua Paris
28. Jeff Paris
29. Che'rae Hill
30. Richard Anderson
31. Randy Celsi
32. Katie Paris
33. Nanette Johnson
34. Jennifer Hampton
35. Steph Samuelson
36. Colin McBee

37. Susan Watts
38. MJ Hoag
39. Dennis Helty - Lowells Service
40. Laura King
41. Cari Dougan
42. Kay Schiller – via Teams

- II. Committee Approves the Agenda – Motion by Steve Frevert, Seconded by Mitchell Callahan – all in favor
- III. Approval of April 20, 2022, Minutes – motion by Mitchell Callahan, seconded by Julie Eliason – all in favor
- IV. Opening Statement is read for all in attendance – Read by Meredith Wells
- V. Discussion of Design Guidelines for Transitional District – Teska
 - a. Teska presented the slides dated 6-1-2022
 - b. Nate Hon asked why the areas were removed from Transitional
 - i. Mike Hoffman reviewed why the areas were removed
 - c. Vicki Long Hill – asked about vacant lots south of Phenix parking lot owned by City and why not put affordable housing there is we want more affordable housing
 - i. Mike Hoffman – supports housing in that area. In the past the committee has not supported developing these lots
 - d. Teska continued presenting the slides dated 6-1-2022
 - e. Nate Hon – Zoning standards – why the 10’ front setback? Rear setback?
 - i. Mike Hoffman – 10’ is consistent with what is there today – encouraging front porches
 - ii. Brad Munford – rear setback are shorter in this area. Accessory units (garages) have 20’ setbacks
 - iii. Vicki Long Hill – variances happen here and we need to look at what is happening now with nonconforming
 - f. Teska continued presenting the slides dated 6-1-2022
 - g. Nate Hon – thought people had to live in their home to have an occupation
 - i. Mike Hoffman – 500 block of 5th Street example of how properties could be 100% transitioned to commercial in the transition area. Live/Work units are an option but not required in Transition
 - h. Nate Hon – Setbacks – why are these special for Transition Area and different than the rest of us in single family zoning? And you can still put townhomes in the middle of the block – how do we have those fit into the existing housing?

- i. Mike Hoffman – Townhomes are limited to 4 units and size of total structure so it would fit into area. The setbacks were a starting point and up for discussion
- ii. Brad Munford – as Clyde mentioned earlier, precedent has been set to match existing buildings next door or less.
- iii. Mitchell Callahan – like the idea of having a margin +/- 3 feet, How do open porches vs closed porches compare? Would like us to measure of the front of whatever the front of the structure is.
 - 1. Clyde Evans – closed in porch is still considered a porch
- iv. Julie Eliason - can a visual be made for this?
 - 1. Brad Munford – we can do something similar to the height visual done
- i. Mitchell Callahan – Garages – he sees garages on his alley that are less than 20' from the back setback
 - i. Brad Munford – setbacks are because of utilities in those alleys
 - ii. Ralph Haskins – different setbacks depending on where the door is facing
- j. Vicki Long Hill – Want to hear more about housing opportunities for residents. What other opportunities for owner occupied housing? Lots new infill in the 1990's, but very little since then. Wants us to relook at the vacant lots near Phenix for homeownership development.
 - i. Mike Hoffman – that is a reason we included ADU's as an option to add housing
 - ii. Clyde Evans – there are very few lots available today. The new infill in 1990's resulted from the floods and housing that could not be repaired. Spoke of Rental Acquisition Program that will be beginning July 1st.
 - iii. Nate Hon – Wasn't there utilities in those lots? Didn't the neighbor want the open space for them? We need to respect their wishes
 - iv. Vicki Long Hill – A study was done by City to show there are plenty of parks and open space in the area. We are all neighbors and one person doesn't decide what happens to those lots.
 - v. Ralph Haskins – New programs are coming out and won't those address what Vicki is talking about?
 - vi. Meredith Wells – the new programs will be addressing existing housing and not new housing
 - vii. Steve Frevert – can we define single family detached, townhome
 - 1. Mike Hoffman – Single Family detached – single family structure occupied by one household, Townhome/rowhome (vertical) – single structure with shared wall and are generally owner-occupied, Multi-family – multiple units either rented or owned.
 - viii. Meredith Wells – Drake students did Capstone study – This is a more dense area to live, people want to live here, why wouldn't we offer more opportunities for people to live here- whether it would be owner or renter, townhome or single family

- ix. Vicki Long Hill – want to hear from residents and maybe we should reconsider Railroad Avenue 3 story limit.
- x. Debbie Westphal Swander – relationship between single family and affordable – they go together but doesn't have to be single family
- xi. Renae Johanningmeier – we need to look at keeping existing housing upkeep before we add new housing. Phenix – there is not enough green space now for the people living there. Many have dogs and need open space. Need to give residents a leg-up rather than give money to developers.
 - 1. Vicki Long Hill – we have plenty of green space in the area. And you're coming from a place of privilege.
 - 2. Clyde Evans – explained the Home Improvement Program as part of the Historic WDM Housing Fund coming out July 1st.
- xii. Vicki Long Hill – Spoke of project where Microsoft and Science Center were going to offer programming in Phenix gym but didn't happen
 - 1. Renae Johanningmeier – I heard the residents of Phenix didn't want that because of the noise and were misled and told they could use the gym as their display
- k. Public Comment period on Transitional Area
 - i. Jack Hon – Residents concerned and haven't had a chance to talk. Asked Clyde why the City didn't develop housing on 7th Street north and south of Phenix. Townhouses – if they are to built are they supposed to look like the existing housing in the neighborhood. If we are pushing businesses into this area, aren't we taking away affordable housing?
 - 1. Meredith Wells – yes they are supposed to look like existing housing. The transitional area gives the option for both businesses and housing.
 - 2. Brad Munford – Looking at 500 block of 5th Street –
 - ii. Mike King – live in 500 block of 5th Street – discussion of talking to people who live in this area – he asked everyone in this area and no one was contacted by the city for their opinion. All the neighbors have signed a petition – want no part of development in their block, do not want to be a part of the transitional zoning in this block. They will be turning in a petition to the City. They want to go back to 100% residential.
 - 1. Meredith Wells – any existing housing does not have to do anything to their house. It only applies to new commercial development coming in. Spoke to assessment being based on use of property not the zoning.
 - 2. Steve Frevert – 500 block of 5th Street – currently zoned VJ Commercial – today someone can build a 3 story building up to the sidewalk today. The transitional zone would provide a transition.

3. Nate Hon – what did the petition include? All 500 Block of 5th and across alley to 6th and 4th. So, you talked to 50-60 people.
- iii. Kevin Goodlaxson – who put the teeth in these design guidelines?
 1. Clyde Evans – staff will enforce the design guidelines
 2. Mike Hoffman – specific language will be developed
 - iv. Jennifer Hampton – utilize other commercial areas – 1st Street, Grand, etc. Ames Main Street looks beautiful. Doesn't think there should be any transitional area.
 - v. Brenda Clausman – Setbacks – what about heights? 30' means you won't have any light coming into your windows; you'd live without sunshine; you would not be able to grow a houseplant in your house.
 1. Mike Hoffman – currently buildings can be built higher than what is being proposed
 - vi. Randy Celsi – rental properties in disrepair – doesn't the city have people who checked all rental and inspect them? Put affordable housing south of Picker Knows – doesn't believe it should be drainage. Could also put affordable housing south of Railroad in industrial area – moved the industrial uses out of there.
 - vii. Helen Rodish – Should be more parking required per unit. We don't need townhomes in this area. Valley Junction has been made up of single family housing. Townhouses are not unique. What's to keep townhomes from turning into businesses? City said they wouldn't take property with eminent domain but they pretty much did for the townhomes on 9th Street. Need more parking in the area. The City will take down houses in the future for more parking.
 - viii. Nanette Johnson – have a history of infill in the neighborhood that is a little of everything. Appreciate you're trying to restrict the zoning in our block – didn't know our block was zoned commercial. I live in duplex where I live in one unit and rent the other. Doesn't have to be all single family. Biggest concern is eminent domain.
 - ix. Nate Hon – Talking about height – believe the current maximum height is too high
- I. Steve Frevert – Move approval of transitional area with revised boundaries presented tonight, seconded by Mitchell Callahan.
 - i. Debbie Westphal Swander – We are getting into the weeds and don't have a shared vision. Everyone has an agenda – whether they are honest about it or not. We need think more openly and not just at the two options. Getting input from everyone is very important. We should be looking at the vision board we created at one of the first meetings and be reminded of our vision we created at that point. She suggests we defer this topic because we don't have a shared vision.

1. Meredith Wells – Will we all agree on a shared vision for this area? No, but that shouldn't stop us from moving forward. Retailing is changing – we need an area to allow for business to expand. We have limited amount of space for small businesses in Valley Junction.
- ii. Nate Hon – 16 houses on Railroad and houses in the 500 block of 5th Street that could have been used for this and now to add more space for businesses doesn't make sense. People live here and do not want businesses near them.
- iii. Vicki Long Hill – Currently everything that they don't want could happen. If it is Transitional they have more restrictions than they do now.
- iv. Steph Trannel – a petition was signed by people who went door to door and who gave out mis-information. Maybe if people were given correct information they would not have signed the petition.
- v. Mayor Russ Trimble – Putting stake in this committee as representing the neighborhood. We cannot get 100% input from everyone every time. Make the best decision you can with the information you have.
- vi. Jack Hon – We speak and you don't hear us. In what point in time do the residents get a say in this? We are in our area and people are still not listening.
 1. Russ Trimble – it is important to frame the issue. That is what happened tonight; staff tried to frame the issue and then listened to the public.
 2. Brad Munford – Staff made the transition area smaller by 50% and took out restaurants and cafes
- vii. Roll Call Vote -
 1. Nate Hon - no
 2. Meredith Wells - yes
 3. Mark Veiock - no
 4. Steve Frevert - yes
 5. Scott Hatfield – Not present to vote
 6. Scott Cutler - abstain
 7. Steph Trannel - no
 8. Julie Eliason - no
 9. Vicki Long Hill - yes
 10. Mitchell Callahan - yes
 11. Cleo Underwood - yes
 12. Ralph Haskins - yes
 13. Renae Johanningmeier – via Teams - no

14. Debbie Westphal Swander – via Teams – Not present to vote
- viii. Motion carries – 6 Yes votes, 5 No votes, 1 abstain. 2 not present to vote
- m. Steve Frevert – approve design guidelines as presented tonight, seconded by Mitchell Callahan (includes maximum heights, but setbacks are not included)

- i. Roll Call Vote -

1. Nate Hon - no
2. Meredith Wells - yes
3. Mark Veiock - yes
4. Steve Frevert - yes
5. Scott Hatfield – Not present to vote
6. Scott Cutler - yes
7. Steph Trannel - yes
8. Julie Eliason - yes
9. Vicki Long Hill - yes
10. Mitchell Callahan - yes
11. Cleo Underwood - yes
12. Ralph Haskins - yes
13. Renae Johanningmeier – via Teams - no
14. Debbie Westphal Swander – via Teams – Not present to vote

- ii. Motion carries – 10 Yes votes, 2 No votes, 0 abstain, 2 not present to vote

- VI. Citizen Forum

- a. Jennifer Hampton – You should have the citizen forum at the beginning of the meeting so you really hear from the people

- VII. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm

Handouts

- Power point slides dated June 1, 2022

Staff Contacts:

Community & Economic Development – 515-273-0770

Brad Munford – brad.munford@wdm.iowa.gov

Clyde Evans – clyde.evans@wdm.iowa.gov

Christine Gordon – christine.gordon@wdm.iowa.gov

Master Plan on Website: <https://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/community-economic-development/historic-west-des-moines-master-plan>

Project website: <https://historicwdm.com/>

Future Meetings:

June 29, 2022 – Steering Committee Meeting