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**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

Date: June 14, 2023

Time: 8:30 am

Members Present Chair: Council Member Francoise Bergan, Council Member Angela Lawson

Others Present Adrian Botham, Alicia Montoya, Andrea Amonick, Andrea Barnes, Becky Hogan, Bob Gaiser, Brad Pierce, Brian Rulla, Bruce Dalton, Cathy DeWolf, Crystal Vigil, Daniel Brotzman, Daniel Money, Darcy Dodd, David Schoonmaker, Gregg Johnson, Ian Best, Jacob Cox, Jason Batchelor, Jeffrey Moore, Jennifer Orozco, Jessica Prosser, Julie Patterson, Kelly Bish, Laura Perry, Laurie Womer, Marcia McGilley, Marisa Noble, Mark Smith, Michelle Gardner, Mindy Parnes, Morgan Cullen, Rachel Allen, Robert Oliva, Scott Berg, Stephen E Rodriguez, Steve Timms, Steven Durian, Sunny Banka, Timothy York, Tod Kuntzelman, Tom Oldenburg, Yuriy Gorlov

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF May 10, 2023, DRAFT MINUTES–COUNCIL MEMBER BERGAN

2.a. The minutes were approved.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.a. UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AMENDMENT– RELATING TO TURF AND ORNAMENTAL WATER FEATURES

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Kelly Bish, Senior Planner II and landscape architect in the Planning Department, presented the proposed amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) which aim to align it with the Non-functional Turf and Ornamental Water Features Ordinance, passed in 2022. K. Bish explained the reasons for the amendment, including addressing the inconsistencies between the UDO and the turf ordinance. The changes proposed included limiting the use of turf to the rear lots of residential homes, eliminating the use of turf in curbside landscape areas within medians and buffer zones around developments, refining terminology used in plant species references, and clarifying front yard landscape requirements.

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K. Bish further elaborated that projects submitted before the Non-Functional Turf Ordinance came into effect on October 1st, 2022, are grandfathered under the UDO provisions and any master plans that were applicable at the time. Thus, these projects may still have sod in front yards or curbside areas. K. Bish raised a question of whether the Committee supported moving these proposed changes through the planning process, which would necessitate the Planning Commission's recommendation before final consideration by the City Council. K. Bish also mentioned that Tim York from the Water Conservation Division was available for any questions regarding the turf ordinance.

- CM Lawson expressed her support for the proposed amendments to align the UDO with the Non-functional Turf and Ornamental Water Features Ordinance. She asked if there were plans to review other city ordinances for alignment with the UDO. J Batchelor responded by stating that they are in the process of going through the entire UDO. The Planning Department is collaborating with other departments to perform an overall assessment of the UDO, and the review will be done in phases or "trunks". The aim of this effort is to fine-tune the UDO based on staff observations or input from the community and the city was undertaking the review and it would be divided into three segments. CM Lawson gave her approval for moving the amendment forward.
- CM Bergan mentioned that she was trying to expedite the UDO amendment process, aiming to bypass Study Session and directly move it to a July council meeting. She brought up a case involving a constituent who wanted a water-wise landscape instead of turf. However, the developer insisted on installing turf, citing adherence to the old code. CM Bergan wondered about situations where construction on homes might not start until a year after the plan's submission, in which the old code would still apply. T. York stated he is still working with the residents and the builder to find a resolution. He explained that while the city doesn't mandate the installation of turf in order to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy, it cannot force the builder to follow the customer's preference if the builder is grandfathered in under the old code. T. York said he offered solutions to the builder, including the option to compensate them if they chose to comply voluntarily with the new ordinance. He acknowledged the challenges in communication and education regarding the effective dates and application of new ordinances.
- CM Bergan expressed her concern about the difficulty of communicating this to metro districts and new residents. Mr. York agreed, pointing out that it is always challenging to communicate changes when a new ordinance is introduced or when existing rules are altered. CM Lawson gave her approval for moving the amendment forward.

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Outcome:

CM Bergan and CM Lawson approved this item to move forward to Planning Commission.

Follow-up Action:

Staff will add this item to the July 12th Planning Commission Meeting.

4. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

4. a. Aurora Economic Development Council

- Yuri Gorlov
NO REPORT

4.b. Havana Business Improvement District

- Chance Horiuchi
NO REPORT

4.c. Aurora Chamber of Commerce

- Kevin Hougen:
NO REPORT

4.d. Planning Commission

- Becky Hogan
NO REPORT

4.e. Oil and Gas Committee

- Brad Pierce:
NO REPORT

4.f. Business Advisory Board

- Garrett Walls
NO REPORT

4.g. Retail

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Bob Oliva reported on their recent visit to ICSC, where he, CM Bergan, and J. Batchelor attended 35 meetings and secured three new major projects, the details of which will be shared when they become more concrete. B. Oliva then provided an update on small business growth since February, with 1,274 new businesses opening and hiring about 1,300 employees. He reminded the council that approximately one third of new businesses are sole proprietorships. Since September, there have been 3,600 new businesses launched with an estimated 4,417

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employees. B. Oliva mentioned that a more detailed update on their ICSC visit would be given in a future PED.

- B. Oliva invited Council Members to share their experiences at ICSC and addressed CM Bergan's question about the ratio of new businesses to businesses that have closed. B. Oliva explained that the city has struggled to track closed businesses due to inconsistent license renewals.
- CM Lawson's inquired about the locations of the new businesses. B. Oliva mentioned they could potentially use business addresses to determine their wards, though the data is not currently formatted in that way. Tom Oldenburg added that sorting by zip code would be an easier method. He also noted that some of the "new" businesses were just existing businesses that had changed names or owners.
- CM Lawson showed interest in seeing a breakdown of businesses by ward, suggesting it could reveal gaps or trends. Both B. Oliva and T. Oldenburg acknowledged the limitations of their data, explaining that they could only track new employees, not those who were lost.
- CM Bergan suggested might have more detailed data on Chamber of Commerce business openings and closures. Oliva affirmed that they do work closely with the Chamber and could potentially obtain this data from them. CM Bergan also inquired about the new Executive Director of the Chamber, to which Andrea Amonick responded that a selection has not yet been made.
- CM Bergan shared her experience at ICSC, describing it as very productive and busy with constant meetings. She found the conversations with brokers enlightening and affirmed a positive perspective of Aurora. CM Bergan appreciated the booth's placement, the walk-in traffic, and the networking opportunities that occurred during the event's evening activities. B. Oliva agreed with CM Bergan's sentiments, noting the conference's vast size yet familiar feel due to the small industry where everyone seems to know each other.
- CM Bergan praised Cesarina, whose presence at the conference was helpful for addressing detailed planning inquiries. She found Cesarina's ability to answer specific project-related questions invaluable. B. Oliva echoed CM Bergan's praise for Cesarina, acknowledging her fantastic performance at the conference for the second year.
- A. Amonick emphasized the importance of the Office of Development Assistance (ODA) and their role in handling ongoing issues at ICSC. She shared that they make sure developers feel secure with the city of Aurora and have the information they need.

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- CM Bergan acknowledged the effectiveness of having tools like iPads and TVs at the ICSC, as they helped show interested parties various developments in Aurora, which could lead to new opportunities.
- B. Oliva reinforced the value of having someone from the ODA, specifically Cesarina, at ICSC meetings. When someone raises a complaint about a process they aren't directly involved in, Cesarina can quickly look up the actual status of the situation, thus shifting the dynamics of the meeting and reaffirming control. Both B. Oliva and CM Bergan recalled a situation where they could help a businessman with an issue regarding homelessness in his area. This act underscored the ICSC meetings' importance in addressing specific needs, facilitating further investment in Aurora.
- CM Bergan congratulated the team for a successful ICSC meeting, and Oliva expressed gratitude for the opportunity to discuss their experiences, noting that a more detailed update would be given in a future PED.

4.h. Small Business

- Marcia McGilley

NO REPORT

- Marcia McGilley informed the Committee that she'd be giving a presentation at the next meeting about the 16th Annual Small Business Veterans Conference. This conference, sponsored by the City of Aurora and AURA, is scheduled to take place on September 18th, with an opening reception for VIPs the night before.

4.i. Visit Aurora

- Bruce Dalton

NO REPORT

- CM Bergan inquired when the ICSC follow-up presentation would take place, to which A. Amonick replied that they were targeting August after having recently held a debriefing. CM Bergan also expressed a desire to have an update from the Denver Airport. She suggested reaching out to Rachel Gruber, who recently gave a presentation to the Denver City Council. CM Bergan specifically wanted an update on Plan 100 and its potential impact on Aurora from an economic development perspective. J. Batchelor interjected that Gruber had made a presentation at a TAPS meeting and they were trying to organize a briefing for the whole Council at a Study Session.
- CM Bergan emphasized that her interest was more on the economic development aspect than transportation, prompting J. Batchelor to say he would relay the request. CM Bergan suggested that even if it isn't directly presented to

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them, they would like to know how they're planning for the Denver Airport expansion and how they can capitalize on it for the city.

- CM Bergan asked for updates on new developments throughout the city in future meetings, emphasizing the importance of keeping the Committee briefed on developments related to retail, commercial, or housing. A. Amonick acknowledged these requests and agreed to work on them.

5. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE

Scheduled for July 12, 2023, at 8:30 AM MT.

6. ADJOURNMENT



APPROVED: _____

Françoise Bergan, Committee Chair