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PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

Date: January 10, 2024

Time: 8:30 am

Members Present Chair: Council Member Francoise Bergan, Council Member Steve Sundberg

Others Present Alicia Montoya, Andrea Amonick, Andrea Barnes, Becky Hogan, Brad Pierce, Brandon Cammarata, Brian Rulla, Cathy DeWolf, Chad Argentar, Chance Horiuchi, Crystal Vigil, Daniel Brotzman, David Schoonmaker, Elena Vasconez, Gayle Jetchick, Jacob Cox, James Schireman, Jeannine Rustad, Jeffrey Moore, Jennifer Orozco, Jessica Prosser, Julie Patterson, Laura Perry, Laurie Womer, Leah Ramsey, Lena McClelland, Leticia Callanen, Mac Callison, Marcia McGilley, Marisa Noble, Melissa Rogers, Melvin Bush, Michelle Gardner, Mindy Parnes, Naomi Colwell, Rachel Allen, Robert Oliva, Scott Berg, Stephanie Nunez, Sunny Banka, Tod Kuntzelman, Tom Oldenburg, Trevor Vaughn, Yuriy Gorlov

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023, DRAFT MINUTES–COUNCIL MEMBER BERGAN

2.a. The minutes were approved.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.a. PED 2023 Recap

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Development Services

Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Development Services, presented this item. J. Rustad provided a recap of the committee’s accomplishments in the previous year and gave a brief overview of the upcoming year. Six resulting ordinance or UDO amendments were highlighted. The first involved Turf Amendments to the UDO to align with the Turf Ordinance adopted by the Council for the Water Department, putting Aurora on the cutting edge of how they viewed

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turf. The second focused on cleanups related to the PROS Director ordinance, clarifying Parks and Open Space Provisions, and various sections of landscape dimensional parking standards. An ordinance clarified the designation of the Flood Plain Manager, amending and clarifying drainage approval authority with changes within the city. In terms of resolutions, there were two involving Oil and Gas Operating Agreements, along with an IGA with the Prairie Point CAB for ownership and maintenance of certain public improvements. The resolution sponsored by CM Bergan to improve the HOA notification process was adopted, however implementation is pending as they await Amanda to catch up with the necessary steps. The PED recommended and the Council adopted a Development Review Incentive Program, ongoing with various development review departments.

Four projects were approved for initiation, with one gaining unanimous approval from the Council. It was particularly exciting that the request for the study of a large performing arts venue led to the imminent kickoff of phase two. Additionally, a Northeast Aurora fiscal impact analysis was conducted. The economic development strategy, despite making it through the PED the first time, did not progress further. However, efforts were ongoing to work on various aspects of the strategy, recognizing the importance of the city. The approval for monument signs was given, and the details were still being worked out. On the other hand, projects that did not advance included the withdrawal of a Prairie Dog Relocation Ordinance by its sponsor. Similarly, the original Aurora Community Development Plan was still under consideration. The work of the Red Tape committee was ongoing, with ongoing improvements being made. Annual reports on development and review were provided, along with quarterly updates on progress. Development services included presentations on a retail strategy, with the initiation of quarterly retail reports. Discussions on opportunity zones and two presentations on ICSC, including reconnaissance and a conference update, were conducted. Success in this area was highlighted, with insights from Bob Oliva. Updates covered a small business event, the 2023 retail update, and an office market update, recognizing changes since the pandemic. Project presentations included updates on Northeast Aurora and Aerotropolis development, Fitzsimons-Colfax station area, and 13th Avenue station area plans. The original Aurora Special District discussion progressed through PED but not through the AURA session. General updates and presentations included code enforcement violations for Aurora businesses, a presentation on data center infrastructure from AEDC, information on A/D Works, a Careers in Construction Colorado presentation, the Aurora Business Outreach report, and an HOA registration update. The annual oil and gas division update took place in November.

J. Rustad stated that the committee had already started looking ahead to 2024 and outlined the goals for the upcoming year. They planned to follow up on HOA registration and notice requirements, emphasizing the need for two points of contact to ensure communication in case of changes. The development review incentive program was also on their agenda for follow-up. In terms of retail, they aimed to provide a recap of 2023 and discuss future goals in the next month. Quarterly retail updates were planned, covering retail strategy, annual goals, and project pipelines.

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ICSC would be a significant focus, including both previews and recaps. Currently in progress was the update of the Fitzsimons innovation community master plan, with plans to capitalize on the area's growth. Other major projects included updates on Aerotropolis, inland port, and space port. The comprehensive plan, Aurora Places, was acknowledged as something to be proud of, with a need to revisit Chapter 7 action items. The team was open to reassessing the plan with the new Council. Area-wide planning efforts, including the 13th Avenue station, were also on the agenda. J. Rustad emphasized the importance of partnerships and expressed a desire to hear from various partners, including Oil and Gas, AEDC, the Business Advisory Board, the Chamber, SBDC, and the Aurora Chamber. She mentioned that they met with CM Bergan to discuss the priorities for 2024 and invited committee members to share any additional suggestions.

- CM Bergan expressed satisfaction with their discussion, acknowledging that certain topics would naturally emerge over time. She commended the committee for their excellent work, anticipating that their calendars would be filled with great presentations.
- J. Rustad added that they had discussed various development process improvements, particularly focusing on the master planning process for planning. Another significant topic, highlighted by CM Bergan, was the examination of trees and streetscape landscaping. J. Rustad mentioned that these topics would be shared in upcoming discussions.
- CM Bergan acknowledged the need for some adjustments, having received feedback from the development community. She expressed enthusiasm for making necessary tweaks.
- CM Sundberg then shared thoughts on HOA registration and notice. He recognized the value of having current HOA presidents and vice presidents for effectively passing on relevant information to HOAs. He raised questions about the process of maintaining current registration for elected board members, particularly the president, and inquired whether they were obligated to register with the city.
- J. Rustad explained that they were required to register with the city, specifically with Housing and Community Services. However, enforcement was challenging, and even at the state level, hundreds of HOAs statewide failed to comply. She mentioned her personal experience in an HOA without a board due to dormancy.
- CM Bergan acknowledged the challenge, noting that some HOAs were voluntary rather than official homeowners' associations, citing Mission Viejo as an example.
- CM Sundberg inquired about metro districts and their registration process. He mentioned Murphy Creek as an exception to the structured registration.
- CM Bergan asked for confirmation if metro districts were indeed registered with the city.
- J. Rustad expressed a need for more information on metro districts, hoping that Jacob, who might have more answers, was present.

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- Laura Perry shared insights on the registration process for metropolitan districts. These districts, as separate governmental entities, worked through the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) on annual reports. They were also obligated to send annual reports to the city, containing contact information.
- Brian Rulla confirmed the accuracy of L. Perry's statements and added that Cesarina Dancy in ODA was ensuring compliance with the filing of annual reports by all districts.
- CM Sundberg expressed gratitude for the information.
- CM Bergan mentioned the challenge of ensuring effective communication, especially when information, like the details about snow removal, was sent to HOAs or Metro Districts. She highlighted the disconnect in communicating such information to the residents.
- CM Bergan concluded the discussion by expressing appreciation and confirming if there were any additional matters for J. Rustad.
- J. Rustad stated that there was nothing else and expressed anticipation of working together in the coming year.

Outcome:

Information only.

Follow-up Action:

None required.

3.b. Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant Application**Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Jennifer Orozco, Development Project Manager

Jennifer Orozco, Development Project Manager, presented this item. J. Orozco greeted the committee, informing them about the city's invitation to apply for the DOLA Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant. The state grant, facilitated by the Department of Local Affairs, required a resolution of support from the Council. She previously mentioned this opportunity at a PED meeting in September or August of the previous year. The focus of the grant was on the station area plan update, covering the Colfax station and the 13th Avenue station, along with surrounding properties. The planning for the update has already commenced, with the intention of holding public meetings in January and February. The motivation behind the process was the potential for two development opportunities near the 13th Avenue station. The RTD property to the north had the capacity for up to 430 new housing units, while the privately-owned Bach Homes property to the south could accommodate close to 600 units. The goal was to introduce 1,000 new homes in proximity to transit. The challenge, however, was the limited access to these properties, both situated on dead-end streets. She proposed connecting them with a bridge over Tollgate Creek, providing secondary access and meeting fire and life safety requirements for dense development. The objective was to maximize public investment in the station and promote efficient infill development that utilizes existing infrastructure such as fire stations, schools, and libraries.

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J. Orozco presented a graphic detailing the RTD site, originating from a charrette conducted in October 2022. The planning department collaborated with Housing and Community Development, hiring an architect to explore potential uses for the site. The concept, derived from analyzing constraints and opportunities, showcased a maximum potential buildout. The proposed uses included affordable townhomes in the south, permanent supportive housing in the center, traditional affordable apartments, and a mixed-income apartment project with a parking garage in the north. The total potential units for the RTD site exceeded 400. On the south side, the Bach Homes property concept included three large apartment buildings in the center and rental townhomes on the perimeter, aiming for close to 600 units on their site. Regarding the grant, it was actively sought to assist with infrastructure costs in the station area, aligning with goals of encouraging infill affordable housing. The Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant was identified as a strong possibility, and the timeline began with a letter of intent submitted in August 2023. In December, the city was informed of the invitation to apply, with the application due on February 2nd. The tight timeline for the application was acknowledged.

J. Orozco presented the application and grant details. She sought approval to proceed to the next regular City Council meeting on the 22nd of the month, where they would request a resolution of support with a waiver of reconsideration due to the impending grant application deadline on February 2nd. The requested grant amount was \$4 million, the maximum available, to aid in the design and construction of the bridge and access roads. AURA would contribute \$800,000 as a 20% local match, with potential repayment contingent on the establishment of a future URA and the flow of TIF revenues. A detailed drawing of the bridge concept from 2020, estimating a cost of \$7.6 million for the northern road and the bridge, was presented. The area had been declared blighted in 2019, a crucial step toward establishing a URA. Future steps involved running numbers, generating an impact report, and seeking support from other taxing partners in the area. Competition for the grant was intense, with \$33.6 million available from one-time ARPA funds. Out of 58 entities that submitted letters of intent in August, 19 were invited to apply, placing the project in the top third but still facing stiff competition. J. Orozco sought the committee's support for the grant application, approval to bring the resolution of support to Council, and sponsorship from PED Chair CM Bergan.

- CM Bergan facilitated the discussion, prompting CM Sundberg for questions.
- CM Sundberg expressed support for affordable housing and the need for transitional housing. He asked about the location's proximity to the RTD maintenance facility and whether it would be replaced.
- J. Orozco clarified that the location was immediately south of the bus barn, adjacent to the station. The concepts explored focused on the vacant ground south of the RTD parking lot, with the redevelopment starting from there and progressing north towards the station. The parking lot, currently underutilized, would be slowly redeveloped.

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- CM Sundberg sought clarification on the bridge, questioning if it was a pedestrian bridge spanning the highway.
- J. Orozco clarified that it was a combined vehicle and pedestrian bridge with sidewalks on both sides, primarily serving vehicular traffic across the creek. Additionally, she explained the graphic, highlighting the white area as the proposed bridge over Tollgate Creek. Dillon Way would extend from 6th Avenue, currently ending in a cul-de-sac in the apartment community, and continue north through the Bach Homes property to the proposed bridge. Another access road would extend from the north side of the bridge, passing through the RTD property and connecting to 13th Avenue.
- CM Sundberg acknowledged the explanation, expressing an understanding of the housing need at this level. He recognized the location's suitability, considering its proximity to the medical campus and transit.
- J. Orozco mentioned a recent meeting with campus planners emphasizing the primary need for housing, then CM Sundberg thanked J. Orozco.
- CM Bergan posed a couple of questions, focusing on the potential development opportunities mentioned, specifically Bach Homes and another unnamed project. She inquired about the certainty of their involvement in the city's application process.
- J. Orozco clarified that the projects were at different stages. Bach Homes made significant progress by applying for rezoning in June, which was unanimously approved by the Council. They were currently working on developing their site plan. As property owners, Bach Homes, a family-owned business from Utah, had a long-term perspective on the property, aiming to hold it for income rather than short-term development for sale. They were positioned to be the first to develop. On the other hand, the unnamed project, associated with RTD, would proceed after securing the grant and demonstrating the feasibility of the bridge through an issued RFP for development on their property.
- CM Bergan sought clarification on the involvement of RTD in another project, expressing concern about the possibility of not having any development after securing the grant.
- J. Orozco acknowledged the challenge of a chicken-and-egg scenario and explained that the grant would provide momentum for both projects.
- CM Bergan asked about the timeline for the TIF designation, given that the area had been designated as blight in 2019.
- J. Orozco clarified that there was no requirement for the funding source in the grant application, and the TIF designation could come later. She mentioned it being on hold at the moment, awaiting more details from Bach Homes to provide other taxing jurisdictions with the necessary information for partnership, as Bach Homes would primarily generate the increment.
- CM Bergan confirmed understanding and expressed approval to move the discussion forward. She then sought input from CM Sundberg, who confirmed his agreement with the proposal.
- CM Bergan concluded the discussion by stating his willingness to sponsor the item.

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- J. Orozco expressed gratitude.
- CM Bergan asked about the timeline for an update.
- J. Orozco mentioned the uncertainty of a specific date, noting a delay in the expected November update, which eventually arrived a month later. She mentioned a vague timeframe of spring for the next update, with the goal of having grant agreements in place by August. The urgency stemmed from the deadline to spend the money by October 2026, prompting a quick resolution for efficient project commencement.
- CM Bergan raised a question about the timeline for spending ARPA monies, expressing the understanding that projects needed to be in the budget by the beginning of 2024.
- J. Orozco wasn't certain about the city's ARPA funds but clarified that, from DOLA's perspective, the grant money needed to be spent by the end of 2026, with a focus on infrastructure.
- CM Bergan acknowledged this and noted the challenge of building a bridge quickly, to which J. Orozco mentioned the possibility of having some engineering work done.
- Andrea Amonick from Development Services clarified that the city's ARPA funds needed to be committed or encumbered by the end of 2024. She explained that while other state and federal agency funds had an expense deadline by the end of 2026, the city's ARPA funds required encumbrance by the end of 2024, as per her knowledge.
- CM Bergan acknowledged this clarification and shared an example of inquiring about parks improvements, where the urgency for encumbrance impacted the eligibility of ARPA funds. She thanked A. Amonick and asked CM Sundberg for further clarifications, to which CM Sundberg stated he had no further questions.

Outcome:

Council Member Bergan and Council Member Sundberg approved this item to move forward to City Council.

Follow-up Action:

Staff will add this item to the January 22, 2024, City Council meeting agenda.

4. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**4. a. Aurora Economic Development Council**

- Yuri Gorlov

Y. Gorlov expressed gratitude and provided a summary of the achievements of the previous year. The economic development team closed twice as many deals as the trailing average, encompassing various industries like aviation, advanced manufacturing, cold storage, building suppliers, and healthcare-related companies. While the deals were smaller in scale, they contributed to job growth, and the team

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is in the process of calculating the total job numbers. Notably, only one project received local incentives, reflecting the trend of companies making investments independently. Workforce development remained a focal point, with discussions involving various partners, including associations and educational institutions, addressing talent and community considerations. As part of internal strategic planning, the team aims to focus on ready sites and collaborate with the planning department. Designating overlay areas for specific industries, such as manufacturers and data centers, is also on the agenda. Y. Gorlov acknowledged the positive progress in streamlining timelines for developments. Looking ahead to 2024, he anticipates a good year, albeit with some macro-level headwinds. The team expects a slightly slower pace in companies making decisions due to uncertainties in the broader marketplace. Despite this, efforts will be made to stay proactive and collaborate with stakeholders on addressing these challenges.

4.b. Havana Business Improvement District

- Chance Horiuchi

C. Horiuchi welcomed everyone to the new year and mentioned the giveaways featured on OnHavanaStreet.com. The networking event held last year had over 135 stakeholders in attendance, and there was an announcement about the upcoming event on January 24th at Mariscos. Additionally, the first Lunar New Year celebration in Aurora was scheduled for February 4th at the Stampede. She shared recent grand openings, including the Maverick at Havana and Jewel, and the Ace Hardware at Gardens on Havana, formerly the Toys R Us space. More updates on new openings were anticipated in February. She expressed gratitude for the continued support of the special district.

4.c. Aurora Chamber of Commerce

- Naomi Colwell

N. Colwell greeted everyone and mentioned her upcoming presentation in March about the Chamber's future planning and activities. She expressed excitement about the partnership with AED and highlighted the significance of the State of the Base event, emphasizing the importance of Buckley Air Space Force Base to the Chamber. She informed about the economic impact of military construction at Buckley, exceeding \$1 billion over the last 25 years. She mentioned an event on the 24th in partnership with the Aurora Rotary Group at the Doubletree on I-225. She expressed a commitment to better communication and encouraged individual meetings for updates. She concluded by expressing her anticipation for the New Year and extended wishes for a Happy New Year to everyone.

4.d. Planning Commission

- Becky Hogan

B. Hogan reported that there were two items scheduled for the recent Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. In January, the Commission planned to

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review its bylaws to ensure effectiveness for the City Council and Aurora. They were awaiting the Council's response to the reappointment interest from two Planning Commissioners. She mentioned the upcoming visit from a delegation of 16 individuals from Seongnam City, Korea, Aurora's sister city. The delegation included the mayor, five City Council Members, and two representatives from the Planning Department in Seongnam City. She invited Council Members to attend receptions and meet the delegation, emphasizing the significance of their visit from halfway around the world.

- CM Bergan asked about the schedule for the delegation visit.
- B. Hogan confirmed that the event was on Thursday at the Aurora History Museum, with an invitation from Min Soo Song. Additionally, a private farewell dinner for the delegation was planned for Friday at Seoul Barbecue, followed by a craft brew tasting at Launch Pad. She expressed gratitude for the partnership with Y. Gorlov and the On Havana Bid, highlighting the importance of business-to-business exchange for economic development.
- CM Bergan mentioned her intention to attend the event on Thursday, expressing gratitude.

4.e. Oil and Gas Committee

- Brad Pierce

B. Pierce provided an update on the Oil and Gas Advisory Committee, announcing the existence of one vacancy for an industry applicant. The vacancy could be filled by someone from an oil and gas company like Civitas, Crestone, or Axis, or a service company involved in drilling, completing wells, or servicing wells. The announcement highlighted that the applicant did not need to reside in the City of Aurora but should work for a company registered to perform oil and gas services in the city. Interested individuals were encouraged to visit the city website's Boards and Commissions section to submit an application.

- CM Bergan suggested reaching out to operators, and B. Pierce confirmed that efforts, including communication with Jeffrey Moore and his staff, were being made to attract applicants.
- CM Bergan asked J. Moore about reaching out to inform potential candidates about the vacancy in the Oil and Gas Advisory Committee.
- J. Moore confirmed that efforts would be made to spread the information through various city channels. Additionally, he mentioned that two more vacancies would arise in the summer due to the term limits of current members, whose terms would expire at the end of June.
- CM Bergan sought clarification on the possibility of reappointing members after their terms expire.
- J. Moore explained that, as per the bylaws, members are limited to three consecutive terms. Members reaching the end of their third term would need to step down for a term before having the option to reapply in the future.

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4.f. Business Advisory Board

- Garrett Walls
NO REPORT

4.g. Retail

- Bob Oliva
NO REPORT

4.h. Small Business

- Elena Vasconez
NO REPORT

4.i. Visit Aurora

- Bruce Dalton
NO REPORT

5. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE

Scheduled for February 14, 2024, at 8:30 AM MT.

6. ADJOURNMENT



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Francoise Bergan, Committee Chair