

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes Joint Work Meeting with Planning Commission Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 5:00 pm. Gym, 111 S. Main, La Verkin, Utah

Present: Mayor Kelly Wilson; Council Members: Patricia Wise, Blair Gubler, Richard Hirschi, Micah Gubler, and Darren Prince; Planning Commission; Allen Bice, Hugh Howard, Matt Juluson, Sherman Howard, Kyson Spendlove, Richard Howard, and John Valenti; Staff: Derek Imlay, Kyle Gubler, Kyle Lovelady, and Brad Robbins.

A. Called to Order –Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

1, Mixed Use

Mayor Wilson explained that the meeting was to get an idea of the direction La Verkin City would like to take with the commercial zones, particularly if we want to see mixed-use in our commercial areas.

Brad Robbins is a part-time city employee through Sunrise Engineering, helping with city planning, and will direct the presentation and discussion.

Brad explained he had been tasked to discuss commercial design guidelines.

The purpose of the La Verkin Development Design Guidelines is to serve as a reference document and guide for the development community to reach the city's objective of providing quality, attractive, and well-designed commercial developments. The guidelines will serve as a road map for the city's consideration of acceptable design excellence. They will also provide developers/designers the ability and flexibility to provide creative, innovative solutions to design problems. As the title states, these will not be specific requirements but more of a guideline.

He will discuss four different steps in creating and implementing the guidelines.

Along with the presentation, he included photo examples, which have been added to the final packet.

First Site Design. This should include placement, access, and parking for commercial areas. These areas can be subdivided so each business owns the property the building is on. This may require maintenance, ingress, egress access, and parking agreements.

At some point, most commercial properties butt up against residential areas. When that happens, there needs to be buffering walls with landscaping, dividing the two. These walls should be decorative on both sides. Trash enclosures need to be mandatory and must be high quality. Loading spaces also need to be screened in some way and located at the back of the building.

Landscaping should enhance building design, be aesthetically appealing, and create and define spaces. Lighting should also complement the design of the associated development.

Councilwoman Wise asked if communities implement these requirements when dealing with public-owned property, such as cemeteries, trailheads, or parks.

Brad replied that yes, you will see it frequently next to parks. Commercial developers often like to have access to those properties, and there are ways to do that. However, the loading areas should always have a block wall around them. That is why these are guidelines. There will be situations in which the city would need to consider what makes the most sense.

Brad continued that no outdoor storage should be permitted in a commercial area. All storage needs to be in an enclosed area matching the surrounding commercial center design.

Equipment screening doesn't apply to most commercial developments; however, there are instances when it needs to be, and in that case, the material should complement and match the architecture of the development.

Colors are extremely important and should match the theme of the region and represent the area. Developers and architects should submit to the city for approval the color palette of how they want the development to look. Materials should be durable and attractive.

Derek suggested the city create a color palette they would like developers to use.

Councilwoman Wise likes the idea of at least a preferred palette.

Brad explained that the city can control the colors of some businesses. However, religious institutions and franchises cannot be dictated. For example, you will not be able to change the color of McDonald's golden arches.

Massing is extremely important and should be included in the guidelines. You are trying to eliminate long expanses of flat, unarticulated building facades.

Other design considerations include decorative pavement and walkways, accent trees and landscaping, bike racks, public art, awnings, and pedestrian courtyards and sitting areas.

One option is to require parking lots adjacent to public streets to have landscaping berms that provide a headlight buffer for the street.

Another thing to consider is what to prohibit. He gave examples of sea containers, chain link fencing, specific types of colors, corrugated metal roofing, and outdoor storage.

Commissioner Spendlove mentioned adding walking/biking path standards for buildings that are setback enough that people will be walking to get into the building would be a good idea.

There was a discussion on the La Verkin Flex commercial development located at 84 W Center Street. Kyle Lovelady reported that they have not submitted the structural architectural design, but he has seen some of their ideas, and they are very high-end. Architectural standards are not required for the design.

Brad feels the commercial design guidelines should apply to any new commercial development coming into La Verkin and anyone remodeling an existing commercial building.

He recommends that the planning commission be the body that implements it, simply because if a developer or architect must put together a presentation for a board or committee versus staff, they do a better job. The presentation should include the entire site plan, the architectural drawings, and the color palette.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the developer can appeal to the city council for a final decision.

Requiring planning commission approval also takes the pressure off a single person determining commercial developments.

Kyle Gubler mentioned La Verkin's State Street is a blank canvas right now, but we need to act sooner rather than later if we want to implement standards. Development is coming, and we need to get ahead of it.

Councilman Wise would like to consider separating public access areas, church buildings, and commercial properties in the guidelines. We are trying to create a walkable community that keeps people here. If they feel safe, it would be a much better experience.

She also wants to consider the active transportation component when discussing these guidelines.

Derek said the architectural standards will come into play when we work on mixed-use residential and commercial parcels.

Mayor Wilson asked for their opinion on mixed-use in the commercial zone.

Commissioner Spendlove feels it will take time and a lot of discussion, but it could be beneficial.

Commissioner Juluson mentioned the city setbacks present a problem. Parking would need to be in front of the business and the residence.

Derek commented that lot size may be one of the qualifications for a mixed-use allowance.

Brad explained that the commercial design guidelines would need to include residential for mixed-use areas. The state passed restrictions for communities regarding regulating residential buildings. A community cannot dictate the design or color of a home unless it has a development agreement.

Derek briefly reported what the planning commission had discussed regarding mixed-use. They feel the ground level of a commercial building must be for businesses. After that, they debated either a percentage of commercial and residential moving up or residential behind the commercial. Either way, the city cannot lose the tax revenue from the commercial properties. The primary property use must be commercial.

Brad stated that a mixed-use project must require a development agreement. Developers would much rather build apartments, so for a city to get what it wants, there needs to be a development agreement pushing the developer in that direction.

Mayor Wilson stated the city would want a development agreement for a mixed-use allowance.

Brad asked for comments on the commercial design guidelines.

Councilwoman Wise would like the color wording changed from the Southern Utah area to the Southern Utah natural landscape.

Parking—If parking will be shared between businesses, especially if we allow mixed use in the commercial areas, parking needs to be designated appropriately for each business and residence.

Derek went over the current parking requirements for businesses.

Brad stated that each unit should stand alone for its parking.

Mayor Wilson thanked Brad for the presentation and asked him to create something for the Planning Commission to review.

Councilman Micah Gubler would like to have a specific person at the city review preliminary plans before they go to the planning commission. He dealt with a similar issue with his business in Springdale, and having preliminary approval on color choice would have saved him weeks.

Brad mentioned that could be something he does as the city planner.

B. Adjourn:

The meeting closed at 5:58 pm.

May 1, 2024
Date Approved

ATTEST: Christy Ballard
Christy Ballard
City Recorder



