



**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF WEST JORDAN
CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION
JOINT WORK SESSION**

Tuesday, September 29, 2020 – 5:30 pm

Approved October 14, 2020

This meeting was held electronically via Zoom and streamed on West Jordan's YouTube channel
base location at City Hall 8000 S Redwood Road • West Jordan, UT 84088

COUNCIL: Christopher McConnehey, Chair; Kelvin Green, Vice-Chair; Zach Jacob (joined at 6:05 p.m., absent 6:47 – 7:10 p.m., excused at 7:45 p.m.), Chad Lamb (joined at 6:14 p.m.), David Pack, Kayleen Whitelock, and Melissa Worthen

COMMISSION: Ammon Allen, Pamela Bloom (joined 5:33 p.m.), Corbin England, Trish Hatch, Matt Quinney, Kent Shelton, and Jay Thomas.

STAFF: IT Director Robert Allred, Council Office Director Alan R. Anderson, Traffic Engineer Bill Baranowski, Community Engagement Director Tauni Barker, Police Lieutenant James Bigelow, Mayor Dirk Burton, Public Works Director Brian Clegg, Civil Litigator Attorney Paul Dodd, Assistant Planner Mark Forsythe, City Planner Larry Gardner, Utilities Manager Tim Heyrend, Community Development Director Scott Langford, Chief Administrative Officer Korban Lee, IT Administrative Assistant Rachel MacKay, Fire Chief Derek Maxfield, Senior Planner Ray McCandless, Assistant City Attorney Duncan Murray, Capital Projects Manager Dave Murphy, Parks Division Manager Dave Naylor, City Engineer Nate Nelson, IT Manager Michael Oliver, Senior Planner Kent Page, Economic Development Director Chris Pengra, Assistant City Attorney David Quealy, Council Office Clerk Cindy Quick, Administrative Services Director Danyce Steck, Assistant City Attorney Jared Tingey, Police Chief Ken Wallentine, and City Attorney Robert Wall

PUBLIC: Bob Lively, Reed Motzkus

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair McConnehey started the meeting at 5:30 p.m., and read aloud a Notice of Declaration regarding virtual meetings due to COVID-19, dated September 8, 2020 and valid for 30 days.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Office Clerk Cindy Quick led participants in the pledge of allegiance.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Current processes and related City Code

Community Development Director Scott Langford shared data regarding the number of permit applications reviewed annually only by Staff, by both Staff and the Planning Commission, and by Staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council. Mr. Langford said he would be able to provide percentages for each type of application if desired. Commissioner Quinney suggested Mr. Langford share the percentages with the Planning Commission at their next meeting.

Mr. Langford listed permit processes he felt worked well in the Community Development Department. Council Member Pack referred to the State mandate that cities could not charge a fee for business license applications and asked how the City had made up the revenue difference in the City Budget

(\$40 per application). Mayor Burton pointed out that only home-based businesses were not charged a permit application fee. Economic Development Director Chris Pengra stated he would be able to provide a breakdown of the number of home-based business versus regular business licenses processed in the future.

Mr. Langford commented that West Jordan had been able to successfully encourage industrial development within the City. He spoke of improvements to the application process in the Community Development Department, and asked the Planning Commission and Council for feedback and suggestions.

Responding to a question from Council Member Whitelock, Mr. Langford explained that Planning Commission training was the responsibility of Community Development Staff and the City Attorney's Office. He stated the Utah League of Cities and Towns (ULCT) had provided excellent online training. He said training had not been a high priority since the start of the pandemic, but would be made a priority again. Chair McConnehey suggested adding a link to online land-use training to the City website to make the information available to the community. Mayor Burton agreed to report on possibilities at the first Council meeting in October.

Mr. Langford listed the types of recommendations and approvals within the Planning Commission's purview, commended the current Planning Commission for their preparedness and efficiency, and mentioned the need to resume regular training.

Council Member Whitelock said she had been concerned in the past about Staff directing the Planning Commission how they should vote. Mr. Langford responded that Staff could be clearer with the Planning Commission regarding discretion available to them. Commissioner Allen commented that consistent format of staff reports, with a summary at the beginning, would be helpful. Commissioner Hatch stated she had never felt pressured by Staff to vote a certain way.

Council Member Green, as a former member of the Planning Commission, suggested the findings of fact provided in staff reports could be termed "proposed findings of fact" to emphasize that the Planning Commission could change the findings if desired. He commented that he cared more about things getting done right than things getting done fast. Council Member Green commented that trying to craft material during a meeting was difficult and said he did not believe the Planning Commission should feel pressure to complete issues if they were not completely comfortable with the material crafted.

Council Member Pack said he would like to see greater synergy of information between the different groups involved in an application process. Commissioner Allen suggested training new Commissioners on how to read a staff report. Mayor Burton said he had not noticed pressure for the Commissioners to vote one way or the other when he had attended Planning Commission meetings. He said he agreed that training was critical.

Mr. Langford listed the types of land use applications considered by the City Council. Council Office Director Alan Anderson spoke of a previous application forwarded to the City Council with a positive recommendation from the Planning Commission (5-1 vote) earlier in 2020. Council Members had requested information regarding reasons for the dissenting vote on the Planning Commission. Mr. Anderson presented the situation as an example of the City Council valuing and considering the opinions of the Planning Commission in their decision-making process. He also gave an example of an ordinance forwarded with favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission that was returned to Staff by the City Council to be reworked.

Council Member Lamb said he appreciated that the Planning Commission did not have to make decisions politically. He expressed appreciation for the work the Planning Commission did, and said he felt they did a good job providing insights and recommendations.

Chair McConnehey said he hoped Planning Commission training emphasized that the Planning Commission was allowed to ask for more information or direction than provided when needed. Commissioner Quinney said he appreciated the different perspectives brought by each Planning Commissioner, and said he appreciated that the Planning Commission was not influenced by the political component as mentioned by Council Member Lamb. Commissioner England said he considered the Planning Commission as viewing the smaller picture, and the City Council as viewing the bigger picture.

Council Member Green said when he was on the Planning Commission, he had the impression that the Planning Commission was to either make a favorable or unfavorable recommendation, without having the power to suggest alternate possibilities. He suggested the Planning Commission include their macro perspectives in the record for Council consideration.

Mr. Langford gathered input from the City Council and Planning Commission via internet poll regarding priority of updates to specific City codes, with the following issues prioritized at the top of the list:

- Landscaping ordinance / water conservation
- Redefine “density” in residential zones (what medium/high/low means)
- Eliminate multiple commercial zones
- Keeping green space in PC Zone
- Findings of approval on many projects

City Planner Larry Gardner commented that density definitions were a General Plan issue.

Landscaping ordinance / water conservation – Council Member Whitelock said she believed the landscaping code needed to be revised to encourage water-wise plants and discourage dominant use of rocks in front yards. Commissioner England said he would like the ordinance to encourage use of water-wise plants, and said he would want irrigation of park strips to be discouraged. Council Member Green said he was surprised how many sections of City code addressed landscaping and suggested the landscaping ordinance could be revised to reduce the need for so many individual landscaping references. Commissioner Bloom suggested the group could utilize Conservation Garden Park as a resource. Commissioner Hatch said she agreed with Council Member Whitelock’s suggestion to encourage use of water-wise plants and discourage use of rocks. Mayor Burton said he liked the idea of allowing businesses to have flexibility in landscaping.

Chair McConnehey suggested the Council Land Use Committee take on responsibility for the Landscape Ordinance update. Mr. Langford commented that the code already provided flexibility, but property owners tended to take the easier option of laying turf. Commissioners Thomas, Allen, and Bloom expressed willingness to work with the Council Land Use Committee on Landscape Ordinance updates.

Redefine “density” in residential zones – Council Member Jacob said he believed many citizens did not fully understand what was meant by residential low-density, medium-density, and high-density in City code, and suggested redefining the terms to be more easily understood. Council Member Green agreed with the need to provide clearer definitions, and suggested public education would be helpful.

Council Member Green suggested the Council General Plan subcommittee take responsibility for updating density definitions. Commissioner Quinney said he would like to participate on the subcommittee, but commented that his term on the Planning Commission expired in three months. Chair McConnehey encouraged him to participate. Commissioner Hatch expressed willingness to participate as well.

Eliminate multiple commercial zones – Council Member Green suggested updating commercial zones to be easier to understand. Commissioner Quinney expressed support for the suggestion. Mr. Langford suggested the Council Land Use Committee take responsibility for updates to commercial zones.

Chair McConnehey expressed the hope that substantial progress could be made on the three issues discussed by the end of the year.

4. ADJOURN

Council Member Green moved to adjourn the work session, and Council Member Worthen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously. The work session adjourned at 7:51 pm.

I, Cindy Quick, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes represent an overview of what occurred at the meeting held on September 29, 2020. This document constitutes the official minutes for the West Jordan City Council and Planning Commission Joint Work Session.

Cindy M. Quick, MMC
Council Office Clerk

Approved this 14th day of October 2020