

**ST. GEORGE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
WORK MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2021 4:00 P.M.
ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE ROOM**

PRESENT:

**Mayor Michele Randall
Councilmember Jimmie Hughes
Councilmember Bryan Smethurst
Councilmember Gregg McArthur
Councilmember Dannielle Larkin
City Manager Adam Lenhard
City Attorney Shawn Guzman
City Recorder Christina Fernandez**

EXCUSED:

Councilmember Vardell Curtis

OPENING:

Mayor Randall called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. The invocation was offered by Reverend Jimi Kestin and The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Community Director John Willis.

**REVIEW THE PROPOSED TECH RIDGE ZONE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT
AGREEMENT:**

Community Development Director John Willis presented a PowerPoint presentation covering the following topics: Tech Ridge Zone Plan; PD zone plan; and Residential/commercial ratio.

A discussion took place regarding the number of proposed residential units as there are concerns because what is being proposed is more than doubled from the original agreement. Isaac Barlow with Tech Ridge pointed out that the proposed office space is more than the original plan.

Councilmember Larkin commented that with the additional proposed units and office space, there is not as much space at Tech Ridge. She asked what the capacity on the hilltop is, roads, parking, etc. Mr. Willis explained the building would go up or have smaller units.

After being asked by Councilmember Hughes, Mr. Barlow explained the plan is to build higher.

Mr. Willis continued with his PowerPoint presentation covering the following topics: Density intensification; Building setbacks; Building height plan and ridge edge setbacks; and Planning area 1.1-1.3 building heights section.

Councilmember Larkin noted that height may not be an issue in this area; however, she asked if the ridge could handle that many residential units.

Mr. Willis explained the applicant will be requesting to encroach on the ridgeline setback at a future date in some areas. After being asked by Councilmember McArthur, Mr. Willis explained this is the area where the stadium is proposed and may need a bit more room.

Mike Bradshaw with Alliance Consulting explained the need for encroaching on the ridgeline setback. With the rim trail there is an opportunity to build some span bridges so it expands some of the ridgetop.

Mr. Willis continued with his PowerPoint presentation covering the following topics: Ridgeline building height; Permitted uses; Parks, trails, and open space concept plan; Typical linear park connectors section; Vehicular and active transportation plan; Parking; Parklet options; Entry monuments, signage, and wayfinding; Signs; Stadium plaza; and Deviations from zoning regulations.

Public Works Director Cameron Cutler explained staff will review the request for reducing the driveways and intersections as the construction plans are submitted. There is a bit of leeway when deviating from the assessment management policy.

City Manager Adam Lenhard commented the zone plan that the Council received in advance of this meeting is the result of a lot of work. Staff is excited about what is being proposed tonight. The concept has support of staff. The main concerns relate to traffic, water, and utilities due to the number of units being proposed.

Councilmember Larkin asked if there is a possibility to stick with original number with the idea to see how that plays out first.

Mr. Barlow explained that they did a traffic study based on the proposed densities; therefore, traffic will not be a problem. Looking at the access roads, traffic will increase on the north side but the majority of the traffic should shift to the south side. He then provided and highlighted portions of the Tech Ridge newsletter from August, 2021. With regards to utilities, everything was designed based on what they are proposing tonight.

Clint Reid with Zonos explained they started with about 34 employees, by the end of this year, they will be at about 130-140 employees; by the end of 2022 they propose to have 220 employees and at 1,000 employees in five years. Their biggest challenge is space as their current space is too small for them. It is very important to think faster and quicker. They are trying to bring talent to St. George; however, their prospective employees, who most of which relocated here, are finding a hard time with housing.

Stephanie Sparks with Zonos noted the feedback from survey shows there are issues with the current housing situation.

Mr. Barlow commented he hopes the newsletter will help to get the information and vision out there. He showed a video of the proposed Skyview Building.

City Manager Adam Lenhard compared this proposal to Joule Plaza and the number of units and acreage. This proposal achieves a much more efficient use of the footprint.

Councilmember Larkin noted her biggest concern is having the utility capacity to take care of the units.

City Manager Adam Lenhard commented that water is an everyday conversation. He hopes the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) will soon be able to give countywide numbers showing what the water resources will allow. He explained until final plats are recorded and the WCWCD signs them, water is not guaranteed.

Councilmember Hughes stated this argument can be made for all of St. George with regard to the number of units, employees, and housing.

Councilmember Smethurst noted he is concerned with traffic. If everything is built off the north end, everyone will exit off the same access. He stated Mr. Barlow will need to figure out how to have cars use the other access roads.

Mr. Barlow commented that which access road cars will use depends on where they are headed.

City Manager Adam Lenhard stated it is reasonable to expect that fewer cars will exit off the west side. He asked from the study, at buildout under this scenario, what level of service are the major intersections coming down off Tech Ridge.

Mr. Bradshaw explained currently, the level of service for Tech Ridge Parkway and St. George Boulevard is almost an F. When traffic is added and things get worse, pushing traffic to a different location. He explained when Exit 5 was built, it completely alleviated the concerns with Bluff Street and Black Ridge Drive. People will take the easy access; however, if there is heavy traffic, they will use a different exit next time.

Assistant Public Works Director Wes Jenkins stated staff read the traffic study approximately two years ago; however, he will review it again soon.

Mayor Randall commented that staff needs direction from the Council.

Mr. Bradshaw spoke about Councilmember Larkin's question as to whether they can stick to the original number and see how things go. He explained that is a challenge with as they have to plan for density. It is difficult to return in five years to upscale the density. Mr. Barlow agreed.

Mr. Reid stated they are willing do whatever they can over the next couple of years as long as they know it's going to happen.

Councilmember Larkin commented the density makes sense, but she is concerned. She asked if staff is confident the City can provide the necessary infrastructure and if the ridge can support this density.

Councilmember Hughes mentioned he likes the vision, but the same argument can be made throughout the City – more housing is needed.

Mr. Barlow noted one of their thoughts is that you cannot go back to low density. He commented that Tech Ridge has no ability to expand.

Councilmember Larkin asked what will happen if things don't go as planned.

City Manager Adam Lenhard explained the zone plan is for entire property. There is an advantage to know upfront what is being committed to in the partnership with the developer. The best way to go about this is to decide what works, what is acceptable, and move forward.

Community Development Director John Willis noted there are the ratios that will control the residential units. He explained if the office or commercial is not built, there will not be as many residential units. After being asked by Councilmember Smethurst, Mr. Willis stated staff is working on being comfortable with the proposal.

Councilmember McArthur commented that density is a big concern in the City. He wants Tech Ridge to be successful; however, he believes the proposed density is extremely high for this area.

Mr. Barlow stated they want this project done right and they know how important this is to the City. Their biggest issue is that you cannot go back from too low density.

Mayor Randall mentioned it is hard when this proposal is compared to Joule Plaza.

Community Development Director John Willis reiterated this proposal is different from Joule Plaza as it is a better utilization of the land. It is hard to compare density since the parking is underneath at Tech Ridge, omitting surface parking. Staff can analyze the utilities and get a better understanding of the traffic.

Mr. Bradshaw explained the master plan design and all discussions have been based on this density. He believes it is still going to be some work, but the project is still viable.

City Attorney Shawn Guzman advised Energy Services Director Laurie Mangum sized the utilities based on the information they had. He asked if Mr. Barlow if he would be willing to pay the costs to upgrade the facilities that have already been installed, if there were any additional cost due to the changes in the plan. He noted that Ms. Mangum is confident her department could get power to the site.

Mr. Barlow replied they would expect to pay the additional costs.

Mr. Bradshaw noted their master plan with regards to utilities has been based on the 2,400 units.

Administrative Services Director Trevor Coombs inquired about churches and grocery stores have been considered. Mr. Barlow explained they considered this in their mixed-use areas.

Councilmember McArthur inquired there are any examples of similar communities.

City Manager Adam Lenhard noted a lot of effort was put into this model. He asked if they could create a web based 3-dimensional model. Mr. Bradshaw replied that it could be done, but it would not look as good as the video.

City Manager Adam Lenhard asked the developers to get exact numbers on Dixie Tech and the Vaison building, and have the engineers review the traffic study.

Mr. Barlow noted there are many models outside of St. George to show comparisons.

City Attorney Shawn Guzman commented this area is contained with three exits down the hill.

City Manager Adam Lenhard explained that staff is trying to gauge the concerns of the Council.

Councilmember McArthur commented about Tech Ridge's active transportation plan – it is a big thing to put stairways going up the hillside in four areas. He would like to see more on that as he believes the community will have concerns.

Community Development Director John Willis noted that staff is working on developing those standards.

Mr. Bradshaw explained they do not have a lot of detail on the proposals yet. It is important to capture the idea in a zone package or development plan.

A brief discussion took place regarding the proposed stairways. The Council is okay with them as long as they lead somewhere.

Assistant City Manager Deanna Brklacich asked about unit prices and attainable housing.

Mr. Barlow noted they are not targeting the average wage of the county; rather, they are targeting the average wage of those employed at Tech Ridge.

Assistant City Manager Marc Mortensen added what is being proposed is not attainable housing.

Economic Vitality and Housing Director Shirlayne Quayle clarified that attainable housing is housing for all ages and income levels; however, this is a good definition of attainable house for Tech Ridge.

City Manager Adam Lenhard commented another way to think about this is the biggest way to make a difference in the overall pricing of housing in the city is to add more units.

Mr. Reid asked for any advice from the Council. If they don't think something would work, he is open to ideas.

REPORTS FROM MAYOR, COUNCILMEMBERS, AND CITY MANAGER:

Councilmember Larkin mentioned an email she received regarding a request to help sponsor an event to encourage children to get into the construction industry. The consensus of the Council is to waive the fees.

Councilmember Hughes commented that he would like to see another columbarium at the Cremation Gardens rather than redoing the road at cemetery.

Assistant City Manager Deanna Brklacich noted there are funds in the current budget for the columbariums but the fountain was not budgeted for.

Councilmember Hughes noted the fountain is what draws people to the Cremation Garden, he would like to see the project move forward.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:50.

Christina Fernandez, City Recorder