

ATTACHMENT 1

General Plan Issues Committee (Amended and approved on 1/07/10)

Meeting Summary

December 17, 2009

City Hall Mitchell Room

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: David Ferguson, Chairman, Maria Bowman, Elmer Cameron, Jon Hudson, Terry Jackson, Steve Kildoo, John Masson, Rick Paul, Lisa Prazeau, Lucas Ross, Alfredo Velasco, Joyce Wells

Committee Members Absent: Linda Bailey, Thora Guthrie, Pam Stahl

Staff Present: Charlie Grimm, Assistant City Manager; Jonathan Brindle, Director of Community Development; Jim Maher, Chief of Police; Lori Vereker, Utilities Director; Ed Domingue, Director of Public Works; Laura Mitchell, City Librarian; Jerry VanLeeuwen, Community Services Director; Pete Montgomery, Fire Battalion Chief; Robin Bettin, Community Services Assistant Director; Jay Petrek, Principal Planner.

Agency Representation: Thom Clark, Escondido High School District Facilities Director; Gina Manusov, Escondido Union School District Assistant Superintendent

Chairman Ferguson opened the meeting and provided an overview of the committee meeting held on November 17, 2009.

Member Cameron commented on the previous meeting minutes clarifying his remark “expressing concern regarding development occurring when non-critical deficiencies exist” (top of page 3). After discussing what constituted “critical” and “non-critical” deficiencies, the comment was corrected to: “Member Cameron expressed concern regarding development occurring when deficiencies exist.”

Member Paul clarified information in the summary, “Based on phasing, sizing of infrastructure, and budgeting factors it was noted that facilities will lag behind population growth...” (last paragraph of page 1). After discussion the minutes were corrected to state: “Based on phasing, sizing of infrastructure, and budgeting factors it was noted that facilities may contain excess capacity or lag behind population growth...”

I. Presentation on Quality of Life Standards

Jay Petrek summarized the Quality of Life Standards presentation from the previous meeting held on November 19th. It was noted that as each Standard is discussed during the meeting there would be a staff consideration whether to amend, clarify, or maintain the Quality of Life threshold. The Committee would consider each standard and forward their own recommendation to the City Council for direction that could be consistent with, or vary from, staff’s consideration. It was also noted that in addition to the Quality of Life thresholds, specific policies were identified by staff that could be affected by the General Plan Update and the Committee’s input was desired.

Fire QOL Consideration:

Maintain current language that acknowledges averaging of response times to achieve compliance in 90% of calls for service.

Fire Policy Consideration:

Add General Plan Policies to address taller and compact development in Smart Growth Areas.

Pete Montgomery, Fire Battalion Chief, commented on the consideration and indicated that the research had found that other Fire Departments' response times do not include provisions for multi-story structures. Instead, the response time is calculated from the time the emergency call is received to when the crew arrives at the property; additional time entering a building, or climbing stairs that may be needed to reach a victim is not included. Chief Montgomery also stated that with the recent completion of new fire stations updated information on response times is still pending.

Committee discussion and questions of staff ensued regarding monitoring response times, providing emergency medical equipment in multi-story structures, building and fire code requirements.

ACTION:

Motion by Member Kildoo, second by Member Wells to endorse staff QOL and Fire Policy considerations. Vote: unanimous.

Police QOL Consideration:

Maintain current Quality of Life Standard

Jim Maher, Police Chief, commented on the current standard and the Department's research revealing that Escondido's standards for response times were more conservative than most communities of similar size. Chief Maher stated that the Police Department utilizes a similar reporting timeframe for calculating response times as the Fire Department, which factored the time when the call for service was received to arrival at the property. He also mentioned that the city's policy to "hire ahead" allowed the community to benefit from a consistent level of sworn personnel that does not fluctuate when officers retire.

Committee discussion and questions of staff ensued regarding monitoring response times, providing non-emergency responses, and allocation of grant funding.

ACTION:

Motion by Member Jackson, second by Member Kildoo to endorse staff QOL consideration. Vote: unanimous.

Circulation QOL Consideration:

Modify current QOL language to include instances where Level of Service lower than "C" will be accepted particularly in high density, infill areas based on:

- Compact and vertical nature of Smart Growth that generates additional congestion
- Lower levels of service is considered appropriate in many communities with urban components

Circulation Policy Consideration:

Streets that will never be widened to their current designations should be downgraded in recognition of their environmental constraints (even though some surrounding streets may experience more traffic).

Ed Domingue, Director of Public Works, commented on the appropriateness of the recommendation that acknowledges congestion in high density infill areas. The provision would be applied in the urban core where traffic congestion would also be a factor in encouraging citizens to utilize transit opportunities. The Circulation Element was discussed regarding widening or extending street segments to comply with the specified classification would be infeasible; such as North Broadway, and East Fifth Avenue.

Committee discussion and questions ensued. Concern was expressed that staff's recommendation could be applied too broadly. There was sentiment that the current Quality of Life Standard already included latitude to accomplish staff's recommendation. Concern was expressed that the potential of increasing the community's buildout shouldn't come with downgrading streets.

ACTION:

QOL Consideration: Motion by Member Jackson, second by Member Bowman to endorse staff consideration. Vote 10:2 (Members Paul and Prazeau opposed and stated that they felt that the current standard already provided sufficient latitude without making formal edits).

¹ *Note: See follow up comments provided*

ACTION:

Policy Consideration: Motion by Member ~~Paul~~ **Masson** second by member Jackson that prior to formal action taken staff should further evaluate the Circulation Element and report back to the committee identifying specified streets with the reasons why downgrading should be considered (Minutes corrected at January 7, 2010 meeting). Vote: Unanimous.

School QOL Consideration:

Maintain current QOL language

School Policy Consideration:

Clarify current General Plan Policies regarding:

- Current provisions for joint-use facilities and coordination of City capital improvement projects with school construction.
- Minimum acreage requirements for school construction.

Thom Clark and Gina Manusov from the High School and Elementary School Districts commented on the Quality of Life Standard and felt it would not restrict the Districts' operations. They both stressed the need for continued communication to ensure that facilities and infrastructure needs are timed to accommodate student growth. There was consensus among the school districts officials that the policies for joint-use should be clarified in recognition of the limited access for "walk-on" recreational activities at school campuses; however, organized municipal recreational leagues do have access to use school ballfields for scheduled events. There was consensus between the district representatives that the minimum acreage requirement for school sites should be eliminated because of conflicts with school board actions to pursue smaller sites. Concern was expressed regarding the development of high density in the downtown and impacts to Central School.

The committee discussed the recommendations at length. Concerns were raised on the Districts' issuance of form letters citing availability concerns with meeting anticipated growth. Discussion was raised regarding the fees collected and their ability to satisfy the impact of growth with portable structures, and opportunities for generating additional revenue while maximizing both City and school district resources through more joint-use programming.

ACTION:

QOL Consideration: Motion by Member Masson, second by Member Jackson to endorse staff consideration. Vote: Unanimous.

² *Note: See follow up comments provided*

ACTION:

Policy Consideration: Motion by Member Kildoo, second by Member Prazeau to endorse staff consideration regarding joint-use facilities and coordination of City capital improvement projects with school construction. Vote: Unanimous.

ACTION:

Policy Consideration: Motion by Member Kildoo, second by Member Bowman to eliminate General Plan acreage requirements for school construction. Vote: Unanimous.

Water QOL Consideration:

Modify General Plan QOL language reducing current “600 gallons per day” to “540 gallons per day” to better reflect the state’s conservation goals.

Water Policy Consideration:

Include General Plan Policies clarifying “Equivalent Dwelling Unit” water demand for non-residential uses.

Lori Vereker, Utilities Director summarized information from the previous meeting and commented that the proposed amendment was appropriate considering the state’s conservation goals. The Waster Master would provide further refinements to the threshold. She also stated the providing policy direction on Equivalent Dwelling Unit information would standardize the calculations used in projecting water demand.

ACTION:

QOL Consideration: Motion by Member Jackson, second by Member Masson to endorse staff QOL and policy considerations. Vote: Unanimous.

³ *Note: See follow up comments provided*

Wastewater QOL Consideration:

Maintain current QOL language

Wastewater policy Consideration:

Amend General Plan Policies to reflect:

- *Maximized use of reclaimed water*
- *Regional Water Quality Control Board amended policies regarding re-use “Equivalent Dwelling Unit” provisions that clarify non-residential sewer demand.*

Lori Vereker, Utilities Director summarized information from the previous meeting and commented that the proposed amendments were appropriate considering the Regional Water Quality Control Board’s goals on water reclamation. The Waster Master would provide further refinements to the threshold. She also stated the providing policy direction on Equivalent Dwelling Unit information would standardize the calculations used in projecting sewer demand.

Committee Discussion ensued. Questions were raised regarding the current policy’s ability to encourage maximum use of reclaimed water. Staff responded that supporting language in the General Plan would be viewed favorably by the Regional water Quality Control Board. Comments were made regarding the need for Escondido to prioritize reclaimed water for local use.

ACTION:

QOL Consideration: Motion by Member Jackson, second by Member Kildoo to endorse staff consideration. Vote: Unanimous.

ACTION:

Policy Consideration: Motion by Member Cameron, second by Member Prazeau to endorse staff consideration with the provision that reclaimed water be prioritized for local use. Vote: Unanimous.

Park QOL Consideration:

Modify QOL language to create an Urban Park Standard that would include the expansion of Grape Day Park and supplemental public recreational facilities that are not developed in a park setting (i.e. exercise courses, walking paths, public plazas, promenades, River Walk, dog parks, etc.).

Robin Bettin, Community Services Assistant Director spoke regarding the type and nature of parks in an urban setting and the need to amend the QOL language that recognizes urban, rather than suburban standards.

Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of open space approved in recent downtown residential projects. There was discussion on opportunities for possible in-lieu programs where developers could rely on meeting a portion of their private open space requirement through such measures as upgrading on-site amenities, installing public open space, or enhancing off-site recreational features, etc., based on proximity to other public open space areas. Discussion ensued on the opportunities to expand Grape Day Park north of Woodward Avenue to Washington Avenue as a means to link northern properties to downtown. It was recognized that urban parks would typically utilize less amount of traditional “soft-scape and green space” and instead incorporate more hard-scape and unique amenities.

ACTION:

QOL Consideration: Motion by Member Jackson, second by Member Bowman to endorse staff QOL consideration. Vote Unanimous.

Member Paul requested that the topic on Parks be continued at the next meeting for additional discussion.

Chairman Ferguson noted that the next Committee Meeting is scheduled on January 7, 2010.

III. Public Comments

Barbara Benedict: Ms. Benedict expressed support for expanding reclaimed water to facilitate agricultural and bio-tech uses. She also felt that joint-use of school facilities after-hours was an effective use of public resources.

Carol Rea: Ms. Rae expressed a concern about providing sufficient public park space in the downtown area. She also felt that using Public Art funds to finance a children’s playground in Grape Day Park was not effective because such equipment has fallen into disrepair and is unavailable for use. She encouraged the installation of standardized playground equipment.

The meeting concluded at 9:12 p.m.

FOLLOW UP COMMENTS:

Member Stahl was unable to attend and provided follow up comments to actions made by the committee:

- ^{1.} Circulation: I concur with members Paul and Prazeau in opposition. Growth in the city should not be allowed with downgrading streets. This leads to an increase of deficiencies which erodes the quality of life for existing residents.
- ^{2.} School: I would oppose “maintaining current QOL language.” I think there should be stronger and more clear language which addresses that “both districts cite concerns regarding their ability to accommodate future growth.”
- ^{3.} Water: I oppose the modification of current 600 gallons per day to 540 gallons per day. This punishes existing residents while encouraging building by developers. We are in a drought so residents are asked to conserve. But are building permits restricted or reduced. The answer is no, at least at Alert Level 2. This is blatantly unfair.