

City of Greeley, Colorado
PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

March 8, 2022

1. Call to Order

Chair Yeater called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

2. Roll Call

The hearing clerk called the roll.

PRESENT

Chair Justin Yeater
Commissioner Erik Briscoe
Commissioner Jeff Carlson
Commissioner Chelsie Romulo

ABSENT

Commissioner Brian Franzen
Commissioner Larry Modlin
Commissioner Christian Schulte

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no corrections or additions to the agenda, and it was approved as presented.

4. Approval of February 22, 2022 Minutes

Commissioner Romulo moved to approve the minutes dated February 22, 2022. Commissioner Briscoe seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioners Franzen, Modlin and Schulte were absent.

5. Appointment of Liaison to Arts Commission

Upon question by Commissioner Yeater, Becky Safarik advised that the Arts Commission meets once a month to review public art installations and select artists to work on contracted pieces. She added that there are occasional special installations or activities that the entire Arts Commission might be invited to attend, but attendance is optional. She estimated the time commitment to be one to two hours a month. Those present agreed to table the item until all commissioners are present to discuss and recommend an appointment. Commissioner Romulo moved to table the item until the next meeting or until the full Commission was available. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioners Franzen, Modlin and Schulte were absent.

6. Public hearing to consider a Use by Special Review request to allow for the construction of an office and warehouse/shop on a 13.311-acre site within the C-H (Commercial High Intensity) zone district, located on Lot B, Recorded Exemption No. 0957-2-3-RE-491, Greeley, Colorado (Project No. USR2021-0010)

Kristin Cote addressed the Commission and introduced the request as a Use by Special Review request by Ground Solutions West that would allow development and use of an office and warehouse/shop with an enclosed outdoor vehicle storage area on a 13.311-acre site. Ms. Cote noted that the property was annexed and zoned Commercial High Intensity in 2018. She presented a map showing the location of the property and described the surrounding uses and zone classifications.

Ms. Cote presented a site plan and noted the location of a detention pond on the north side of the property. She described the proposal to construct an 8500 square foot shop/warehouse and a 5525 square foot office building, adding that the proposal includes 42.55 percent of landscaped area and 31 parking spaces. Ms. Cote presented a landscaping plan that includes an 8-foot solid fence and vegetation on the western boundary for visual and sound buffering.

Ms. Cote presented proposed building elevations depicting the use of multiple materials that are consistent and compatible with the surrounding area. She advised that notice of the hearing was sent to 19 property owners within 500 feet of the site and signs were posted on the site. Staff received one email from a nearby property owner asking about the proposed fencing and general appearance of the site. Ms. Cote advised that the proposal meets the five criteria used to evaluate USRs. Staff recommended approval.

Commissioner Briscoe asked for clarification about the intended use on the site. Ms. Cote advised that the proposed use was for an office building and warehouse space to store products as well as a vehicle storage yard for vehicles and equipment for the business. She added that materials will not be stored on site. Upon question by Chair Yeater about the proposed fencing materials, Ms. Cote reported that Trex material will be utilized along the western and southern property lines, adding that the applicant proposes to add landscaping to provide screening and noise mitigation. Chair Yeater asked about fencing on the other portions of the site and Ms. Cote stated that the owner of this site is the same as the property owner to the east, which is a separate Planned Unit Development and not part of this application, adding that she believed the owner would coordinate construction that would result on one material used for fencing.

Commissioner Romulo asked how the existing detention pond is currently being used and how construction might impact the continued use of the pond. Ms. Cote advised that it would continue to be utilized as detention for the site and surrounding area and that the owner would be required to record an operation and maintenance manual for stormwater control. She noted that the existing site is covered by a well-established mix of native grasses and recycled asphalt material from previous development with no areas or features unusually sensitive to erosion, adding that the detention pond should function as it does currently.

Upon question by Commissioner Carlson, Ms. Cote stated that the landscaped area was independent of the area for vehicle storage. She also reported that the 8-foot fence would provide adequate screening for vehicles stored on the site.

There was no additional information provided by the applicant.

Chair Yeater opened the public hearing at 1:24 p.m. There being no comments, the public hearing was closed at 1:24 p.m.

Commissioner Romulo moved that, based on the application received and the preceding analysis, the Planning Commission find that the proposed Use by Special Review for an office and warehouse/shop use with an enclosed vehicle/equipment storage yard on a 13.311-acre site within the C-H (Commercial High Intensity) zone district on a lot that is more than five acres is consistent with the 1998 Development Code criteria of Section 24-480(a) (Items 1 through 5); and, therefore, approve the Use by Special Review as submitted. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioners Franzen, Modlin and Schulte were absent.

7. Water & Sewer Design Standards and Specifications

Sean Chambers, Water & Sewer Director, addressed the Commission and provided an overview of the informational item. Mr. Chambers advised that the Design Standards and Specifications were last updated in 2008, adding that a goal of the proposed update is to guide infrastructure design and make sure that water and sewer design meets the needs of the community now and in the future. He introduced Adam Prior who provided more detail about the process.

Adam Prior advised that a key piece of the process was integrating the Master Plan into the Design Standards and Specifications. He briefly went through each section, outlined the changes and new criteria, and invited input from the Commission. Mr. Prior also described the review and engagement process with citizens, stakeholders, and other City departments and stated that the item would go to the Water & Sewer Board and City Council in April or May.

Mr. Prior responded to questions from the Commission as to whether any major concerns were identified by various stakeholders and how the various stakeholders were identified. He advised that there were very few questions during the meetings with stakeholders, adding that a list was generated, in part, using information from Planning and Engineering Development Review. Commissioner Briscoe stated that he would like to see a list of the stakeholders and any feedback provided. Mr. Prior offered to provide a list and invited the commissioners to provide names of anyone they thought might be invited to engage in the process.

There was dialog between Mr. Prior and the Commission about the proposed water changes and potential overall impact to the development community. Mr. Prior reported that the impact could vary depending on the circumstances, including size of infrastructure required, number of lift stations required, and cost of materials. Mr. Chambers advised that rather than guiding policy through the design criteria and standards, the goal is to increase precision of the policy and drive equity and

cost savings for builder-developers, adding that creating precision through policy should create equity across all types of development. Mr. Prior explained that historically, payment for all raw water was required up front but is now done at the building permit stage. He added that installing non-potable water systems will help with reduction of plant investment fees.

Upon question by Chair Yeater, Mr. Prior stated that currently Engineering Development Review and Water & Sewer review irrigation designs. He added that consideration is being given to creation of a conservation staff to review designs in the future. Commissioner Briscoe asked about landscaping standards and how the design criteria might address concerns about requiring native grasses and creating a balance between aesthetics and water conservation. Mr. Prior admitted that it is a difficult question with several factors to consider.

Chair Yeater expressed that this will provide opportunities to identify highly visible parks and referenced the varying public opinion about planting native grasses at Bittersweet Park. He suggested that design standards would lead to better use of resources and how the City is portrayed. Chair Yeater commended the Water & Sewer Department on its ability to acquire and manage water resources. He added that this provides an opportunity in the landscape standards to give thought to landscaping in highly visible corridors. Commissioner Romulo noted the importance of communication to provide citizens with a better understanding of design and implementation. Mr. Chambers thanked the commissioners for their feedback and noted that their comments tie back to engagement. He added that Bittersweet Park and other projects point to the fact that better communication and thoughtful engagement that engages a larger cross section of community are important. Ms. Safarik noted that the Communication and Engagement Office is embarking on a major engagement service to help with focus groups. She thought it might be helpful for the Commission to consider whether there are certain parts of the community that need overlay zones identifying areas where higher aesthetic levels are expected by the community.

Upon question by Chair Yeater, Mr. Chambers stated that many of the parks are on a water budget and feedback is provided to those who run the irrigation systems. He added that over the last four years, a concerted effort has been made to manage water in the parks and eliminate water waste. Mr. Chambers described some of the methods to increase efficiency and optimization, noting that the City will continue to build on its water portfolio and take a progressive path towards water conservation and use efficiency.

Commissioner Briscoe thanked the Water & Sewer Department and City leaders for making a choice to protect the City's water portfolio. Commissioner Romulo added that the City has been put into a good position by sound historic management and that promoting those efforts to citizens will become important in supporting good decisions. Mr. Chambers agreed and stated that the update to the Design Standards will best serve the customer. Upon question by Commissioner Romulo, Mr. Prior advised that many of the same standards will apply to infill projects or redevelopment. He stated that infill projects would be addressed on a case-by-case basis depending on the location.

8. Staff Report

Mike Garrott, Planning Manager, stated that training workshops would resume and described potential upcoming topics over the next several months. He added that staff will be bringing Development Code amendments over the next several months, at least quarterly. Ms. Safarik reported on the recent staff retreat with City Council where one of the discussion topics was areas of recent growth. She noted that staff has prepared several maps and reports and offered to share them with the Commission, adding that a training session about growth projections might be beneficial.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the Commission, Chair Yeater adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.

Justin Yeater, Chair

Becky Safarik, Secretary