

CARSON CITY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AND
GROWTH MANAGEMENT COMMISSION WORKSHOP
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A special Carson City Regional Planning Commission and Growth Management Commission workshop was held on Monday, February 24, 1997, at the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada, beginning at 6 p.m.

PRESENT: Vice Chairperson Alan Rogers and Commissioners Alan Christianson, William Mally, and Richard Wipfli

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager John Berkich, Community Development Director Walter Sullivan, Deputy Utilities Director Jay Ahrens, Senior Planner Sandra Danforth, and Recording Secretary Katherine McLaughlin (S.P.C. 2/24/97 Tape 1-0001.5)

A. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM - Vice Chairperson Rogers convened the meeting at 6 p.m. Roll call was taken. A quorum was present although Chairperson Horton and Commissioners Pozzi and Uhart were absent.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Commissioner Christianson moved to approve the Minutes of November 12, 1996, as presented. Commissioner Wipfli seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

C. COMMENTS (1-0018.5) - None.

D. WORKSHOP - PRESENTATION FROM THE BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN NEVADA, THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND THE NORTHERN NEVADA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NND) (1-0027.5) - NND Executive Director Chris Holt distributed informational sheets. (A copy is included in the file.) He explained the report and graphs. Projects now underway were described. They include surveys of the manufacturers to determine their payroll, the amount space occupied, and the amount of land available for expansion throughout his area. This will prove data indicating the amount of vacant land and buildings available for use by other manufacturers. He then explained the statistics on "hot prospects", his recruitment programs, and his client activity report. He responded to questions concerning his selling points, Western Nevada Community College's role in his recruitment efforts, his selection process, the wage scale requirements, the amount of building expansions and total space available for use, the amount of space initially required by each manufacturer, the quality of life and infrastructure issues considered by firms when relocating to the area. Mr. Holt did not feel that the Commission needed to revise any of its ordinances in order to recruit additional businesses. Carson City's understanding of the business world and its needs makes recruiting easier. Contractors would have a better understanding of the Code and its problems than Mr. Holt. Mr. Holt felt that there are between 6 and 700 acres available for manufacturing development. He uses this statistic in his recruitment process. It does not allow for a lot of large distributors. The surrounding Counties have a considerable amount of space available which could be used by these firms. He pointed out that Carson City has done well in recruiting manufacturers without have any rail service. Comments indicated that future projects may include rehabilitation/reconstruction of sites. Vice Chairperson Rogers thanked Mr. Holt for his comments.

(1-0465.5) Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice President Larry Osborne cautioned the Commission about making any major changes to the Growth Management Ordinance due to the long-term impact they could create on the City's economic future. Problems which were perceived to have been created by rapid growth where cited. The impact a flat line growth rate would have on the economy was indicated. The City should administer the growth in a manageable fashion for the benefit of all. The current three percent rate provides this management. The nationwide rate is between three and five percent. Housing turnover should be encouraged and redevelopment allowed. He then questioned Dr. Judson's population figures. Mr. Osborne's knowledge and experience with surveys was noted. Population forecast programs were explained. Every ten years the population figures must be adjusted based on the actual count provided by the census. Even though Dr. Judson had revised his figures, Mr. Osborne was unsure of their accuracy. He again cautioned the Commission against using Dr. Judson's revised official numbers to indicate that the Growth Management Ordinance does not work. The need for the City to continue to grow and diversify was explained. The City's population base and total draw provides an appropriate customer and labor base necessary to support the community. Any change in the ordinance would accelerate the

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cost of housing and negatively impact the economy. This would result in higher taxes on the residents and businesses, lower the quality of life, and force the employees to live outside the City. This would further impact the traffic load and quality of life. Reasons for overcrowded schools were given which were not the result of population growth. Growth cannot be prevented. It could not be drastically reduced without creating a negative impact on the community. Discussion noted that the sales tax comprises of 47 percent and property tax comprises of 13 percent of the City's budget. Mr. Osborne did not have any specific recommendations for the Commission. He elaborated on his original reasons for concern. Commissioner Christianson pointed out the conflicting information provided by the School District to obtain support for its bond question. Mr. Osborne agreed and indicated that growth does not create all of the problems as indicated. Without growth the community would stagnate and die. The impact created by the surrounding counties' growth was pointed out. He also pointed out other methods for establishing the population which may not be as viable as that used by Dr. Judson. These methods may provide better figures than he had given. Vice Chairperson Rogers explained the reasons the Commission was making an in depth study of the issues related to Growth Management. As a result of this stand, it was determined that Growth Management may not be the issue but that infrastructure could be the issue. From this a study was undertaken to consider how to manage the infrastructure and the questions related to a sustainable community and the future. Mr. Osborne supported this approach. He encouraged the City to continue to approach the situation by determining what it wants of the future and establishing a mechanism for reaching that goal. Vice Chairperson Rogers indicated that the Growth Management Ordinance had attempted to control the housing growth. Comments had urged the Commission to place limits on manufacturing, retail, etc., growth. Mr. Osborne felt that controlling and regulating the free market by restricting commercial and retail growth would eliminate all growth and interfere with the free enterprise system, which he would oppose. He felt that the current zoning regulations control growth and the type of businesses which would locate in the community. Additional restrictions should not be implemented although it may be possible to revise the ordinances and improve the process. Comments indicated that the quality of life is a part of the equation and essential to the future of the community.

BREAK: A ten minute recess was declared at 7 p.m. A quorum was present at 7:10 p.m. when the meeting was reconvened. Chairperson Horton and Commissioners Pozzi and Uhart were absent as originally indicated.

(1-0935.5) Vice Chairperson Rogers explained the packet of information available for the public.

(1-0952.5) Dwight Millard reviewed the history of his involvement with Growth Management, the ordinance, and its Commission. Criteria used to establish the original ordinance was explained. Over time the ordinance has been revised. Today it is used to establish construction data for future development. This criteria is still valid and should be re-enforced. He urged the Commission to maintain the current ordinance as it coordinates growth to everyone's benefit.

(1-1325.5) Jim Bawden explained the builders' support for the current ordinance which makes it work. Homes are constructed which can be sold. Homes are not constructed on speculation. The banks support the program. The ordinance gives the builders stability in seeking loans and selling the homes. A majority of the homes are constructed for individuals already living in the community. Radical changes to the ordinance would create a negative impact on the industry and community. He thanked the Commission for having the workshops. He urged the Commission to analyze the multi-family apartment two for one permit policy and requested an opportunity to participate in the review process on this item as well as the impacts on police and fire protection, schools, etc.

(1-1442.5) Steve Hartman distributed his memorandum on Growth Management to the Clerk and Commission. (Commissioner Mally stepped from the room during his comments--7:40 p.m.--and returned at 7:45 p.m. During his absence a quorum was not present. When he returned, a quorum was present.) Mr. Hartman's comments urged the Commission to undertake a continuing public education program to address the feeling that growth does not pay for itself and is not necessary. The builders have bought into the program. It had stood the test of time and could be held up in a court challenge. He urged the Commission to include the relocation of residents in the study. The "new residents who have just migrated to the community" are acquiring "old housing stock". Changes in the resident equation should include the change from outside employment to at-home businesses. Alternatives and options should be established which would entice the developer and maintain the quality of life desired by the community. The changing role of government in the process was cited to illustrate the dynamics involved in the

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process. Parks are now being maintained by homeowners' associations rather than a governmental department. The original program created a misconception as to why the police, fire, and infrastructures are overburdened. Nonessential programs are now funded which should be analyzed and eliminated to allow retention and upgrades to mandated services. Reasons for rejecting impact fees and continuing to support the City's ordinance were provided. The current ordinance works and is supported community-wide. Mr. Hartman read the last two paragraphs from his memo into the record. Vice Chairperson Rogers then noted that the Boulder, Colorado, program did not work for everyone and that Carson City's program needed to fit it and not someone else. Mr. Hartman agreed and explained the reasons Boulder had succeeded with its plan. It had intensified its land usage to provide the open space. This had reduced the lot sizes.

Maxine Nietz questioned the reasons other resources are not used to limit the number of permits. The Planning Commission had attempted to include them last year but was rebuffed by the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Millard responded by expressing his personal belief that the City did not have any limiting resources. The ordinance is a "hold the line" effort which allocates the resources and allows the quality of life to be maintained. The funding limit controls the amount of services available from the police, fire, etc. The ad valorem rate is currently the lowest in the State. If additional services are necessary, the rate may have to be increased. The School District needs to address its creditability problem. Until this happens, a bond issue will not be approved. The builders and community had "bought into the current concept", therefore, it works.

Ms. Nietz then indicated that the current ordinance does not stipulate a set percentage and questioned whether it should. Mr. Bawden felt that the current annual review supports continuing the current program. It justifies the range. Any change should be justified in a similar fashion. The three percent ratio should be maintained at this time. Mr. Osborne felt that the community would support an increase in taxes if additional services are needed. The use of national statistics to support an increase in personnel should not be approved. Efficiency and productivity factors should be used to justify the increase.

Discussion ensued between Bruce Scott and Mr. Sullivan on the multi-family two-for-one permit program. Mr. Millard agreed to work on this issue. Reasons for this allowance were provided. He felt that the apartments help provide affordable housing. The City's low vacancy factor was used to illustrate the need for additional multi-family apartments. Although the study may prove that there is a lack of upscale housing available in the community, his experience indicates that the current lack of vacant apartments illustrates the need for additional low cost housing. He agreed with Mr. Hartman that the demographics of the community is changing. This may be caused by the lack of other housing options, specifically, on the middle and upper end. This creates pressure on the lower end. He urged the Commission to analyze the permits issued under the current program and determine whether it should be revised. Mr. Hartman then expressed his feeling that the City may have a housing deficiency which should be addressed by offering "carrots" or incentives to the developers. Mr. Scott suggested that growth management's list of resources be removed and the limitation be made strictly on building permits. Mr. Hartman indicated that the growth management stigma should be removed and the restriction should be handled as a quality of life or development coordination program to provide sustainability for the community. Vice Chairperson Rogers suggested that the ordinance be entitled the housing allocation ordinance. The growth management terminology should be completely eliminated. He then questioned whether the three percent factor used in the equation should be reduced to match what is occurring and being constructed. The Board of Supervisors had taken the Commission to task on several occasions on the equation. Mr. Bawden urged the Commission to maintain the equation as it had worked and everyone understood it. It provides the necessary stability for the industry. Mr. Hartman reviewed the history of the three percent including the eventual elimination of the "bank of unused permits". The process allows the market to drive the trade. He supported Mr. Bawden's recommendation that it be maintained. Mr. Millard noted that the City's growth had historically averaged three percent. Elimination of the banks had created a three percent limit on all growth regardless of the market and demand. This had created the "longest sustained recovery since World War II". He was concerned that there may come a time when all building in the community virtually stops. The three percent is an average per year cap. In the future the Commission may wish to revise this figure. Vice Chairperson Rogers noted that the builders were recommending that no change be made to the ordinance until after the housing element is finished.

Discussion ensued between Commissioner Christianson and Mr. Berkich on the history of the sales tax revenue, its ratio to the City's General Fund, and the need to protect this revenue.

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Vice Chairperson Rogers thanked the audience and the speakers for attending and participating. He then explained the meeting schedule. Dr. Judson and retail marketing representatives will be scheduled for March 4. March 18 will be a work session which he described. This will allow the Commission to determine whether additional time is needed before the May annual review of the allotment process. A joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors will then be scheduled to request support for the process. Clarification indicated that the meetings will be in Room 59 and commence at 6 p.m. Mr. Meierdierck explained his commitment for that evening. Discussion ensued on various speakers who could represent the retail market. Vice Chairperson Rogers again thanked the audience and speakers for attending and participating.

There being no other matters for consideration the meeting was adjourned by mutual consent at 8:35 p.m.

A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's office. This tape is available for review and inspection during normal business hours.

The Minutes of the Special February 24, 1997, Carson City Regional Planning Commission and Growth Management Commission workshop

1997. ARE SO APPROVED ON____July_30____,

____/s/_____

Verne Horton, Chairperson