

# **CARSON CITY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **Minutes of the Special April 16, 1997 Meeting**

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A special meeting of the Carson City Regional Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, April 16, 1997 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William St., Carson City, NV at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Verne Horton  
Vice Chairperson Alan Rogers  
Allan Christianson  
William Mally  
Archie Pozzi, Jr.  
Richard Wipfli

**STAFF:** Juan Guzman, Senior Planner  
Fran Smith, Recording Secretary  
(SPC 4/16/97 1-0000.5)

**NOTE** - Unless otherwise indicated each item was introduced by Chairperson Horton. Individuals speaking are identified following the heading of each item. 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.

**A. CALL TO ORDER** - Chairperson Horton called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. A roll call was taken and a quorum was present although Commissioner Uhart was absent and Commissioner Pozzi had not yet arrived. (Arrived at 6:25 p.m.)

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Horton.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT** - None.

**C. PUBLIC HEARING**

### **1. DISCUSSION REGARDING REVIEW OF THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE CARSON CITY MASTER PLAN HOUSING ELEMENT, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO - (1-0025.5)**

Andy Burnham, a consultant who had developed the report - Jim Kiernan, representing Northern Nevada Title - Gayle Farley, representing the Builders Association - Les Kynett - Dan Leck, real estate appraiser - Michael McKennie - Mr. Guzman said he had met with a portion of the technical advisory committee regarding the draft document. He added that the purpose of this meeting was to receive input from the Commission. It is anticipated that the Housing Element would be approved at the Commission's meeting of April 30. He said the items that had come to light were primarily brought forward by Bruce Scott regarding the mixed use zoning and the residential with office and commercial projects proposed for the future. He said Mr. Scott had questioned staff as to what kind of programs would be put in place. Mr. Guzman noted that they have already done some work with the land use Master Plan by accommodating some residential uses within commercial areas. He added that in addition to that they brought forward the design ordinance provisions in the downtown district that also allows mixed uses. They had advised Mr. Scott they expect additional amendments to the ordinance. He referred to Goal 5 and said there was clarification on the efforts for enforcement vs. efforts to maintain an existing affordable supply. He said there is a goal that says the laws should be enforced to make sure housing standards and codes are kept updated. He noted that the conclusion was that we wanted affordable housing but also that it should be safe to be lived in. He then referred to Goal 6 having to do with how decisions are made and stressing more activities that are allowed by code based on performance standards and less on discretionary reviews, special use permits, and those types of reviews. He said this has been a consistent subject since staff have met with the community, particularly the development community. He added that Mr. Rotter indicated that in the past he has observed the budget presentations of public safety agencies on how staff has told the Board of Supervisors about growth in the City where more policemen, firemen, etc. are needed and that this is discussed but the same thing happens the next year. He noted that Mr. Rotter felt this document presents a very solid basis for telling the Board about projections on population, what the housing plan is, and where public safety is in relation to being able to afford services. He said the Fire Department had already the process and the Sheriff would also like to initiate discussion on how his department can also join in.

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(1-0115.5) Principal Planner Rob Joiner had made comments regarding the emphasis lately on senior facilities, elderly care, etc. He added that Mr. Joiner had suggested the possibility of having incentives that would give additional units provided some of them were used by people with lower income resources. He added there needs to be language in the document about the Historic District. He had provided an informational article on how affordable housing is being handled in Vail, Colorado. Commissioner Rogers returned to the subject of incentives and asked about the concerns on multi-family. He said the problem is how to convey that into a policy that is accepted and serves the purpose. Mr. Guzman added that the term commonly used is inclusionary zoning. He said inclusionary zoning would read along the lines of two, three, or whatever percent of the units would be affordable and then affordability could be defined elsewhere. He said rather than going in that direction the consensus of the people at the earlier meeting was that it would be very exciting to have a program that would ask a developer, as an example, if they were willing to build 12 units rather than the 10 ten they have by right then they would be advised there is a desire to have the extra two to be affordable and somehow be connected with giving people who have limited income the opportunity to participate in those programs. Commissioner Rogers asked if he was talking inclusionary zoning or mixed use under the same roof. Mr. Guzman said he was talking specifically about facilities for the care of the elderly. Commissioner Rogers then referred to the work on sustainability the Commission has done and said they have been looking at the statistics given them by staff. He felt that takes the Commission into some of the things being dealt with in the report such as the size of multi-family units. Mr. Guzman mentioned the Master Plan and how it presently allows residential in commercial areas, the zoning districts downtown and how this presently allows mixed use. He also mentioned the ability to have granny units in certain districts, either as an overlay or by right in certain places, or other types of review. He talked about the advantages higher density provides when a certain point is reached and there is a desire to offer such as transit facilities. He noted that the builders have indicated to staff the reluctance on the part of banks to loan money to those type of mixed use projects and how there is a need to establish an education program to let people know that should not be feared as much. Commissioner Rogers said at one time there had been a concern on how spot zoning could be avoided. He felt in a planning sense it seems like that has become very desirable to discuss mixed uses and try to bring commercial and residential closer together because in talking in terms of transportation and walkable communities, etc. he was not sure how far the City wants to go as a test ground to develop that kind of a thing if it is not known it would be accepted. Mr. Burnham referred to the report and said part of the discussion earlier in the day was about standards that have to be met in order to make an application meaningful. He also talked about the public safety topic that had been discussed should be included with the listing in the report relating to utilities, transportation services, commercial services, and health services.

Commissioner Pozzi arrived at this point at 6:25 p.m.

(1-0367.5) Commissioner Mally felt that some of this appears to be contradictory by referring to two sections and provided examples. Mr. Burnham explained what the two sections were attempting to accomplish. Commissioner Mally also mentioned that additions to homes have been allowed in the case of invalids or someone like a mother-in-law and felt it should be expanded because is is so restrictive in that those people cannot cook or any other thing. Mr. Guzman said staff was looking for opportunities where affordable housing could be offered. Commissioner Pozzi said there was some activity regarding affordable house in the legislature and was not sure if the Legislators had seen the report or not and felt it could possibly have an effect on what was being discussed. Mr. Guzman said Mr. Joiner had been following that and also had been providing input. Chairperson Horton talked about deed restrictions and said these are units that are supposed to serve low and moderate income needs. He said he felt this was an important factor when the Commission is considering increased density. Commissioner Wipfli referred to Commissioner Mally's comments about guest houses and cited the possibility that people would add a second kitchen although this is not allowed. Commissioner Rogers talked about the problems neighbors have when an accessory unit has been built and people try to sub-divide a parcel into two lots. He felt there should be incentives that those accessory units be attached thereby increasing the value of the property and there would not be the zoning issues. Mr. Burnham said he would make any changes discussed and bring the document to the next Commission meeting.

(1-0629.5) Mr. Kiernan expressed a couple of concerns. One was the fact that land costs are going to escalate as units are built and the land is absorbed. He felt that, together with the financing, would directly affect the ability of the developers to continue to build affordable housing. His other concern was if staff has attempted to find out

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how affordable housing has affected other communities. He provided details on how buyers find a way to circumvent the incentives given and the restrictions placed on a unit. Chairperson Horton felt that these concerns are valid. He added it comes down to how the plan is implemented. He also felt this plan is well written and poses a variety of options. Commissioner Rogers suggested guaranteeing the first sell of a new home to be low income or promote it for first home buyers. Mr. Kiernan said he was alluding to projects in Sacramento and another in Arizona where there were deed restrictions where the developer and the first purchaser could not sell the unit at its real value for a period of ten years. He then provided details on a scheme where the houses were foreclosed on and the restriction was eliminated. Commissioner Mally said if he were a developer he would be reluctant to build these units if he had to sell them below market value. Mr. Kiernan explained how the process could work and this was related to allowing higher density.

(1-0809.5) Ms. Farley said the association had met earlier in the day and she was not sure it is a water issue but Utility Director Dorothy Timian-Palmer had said there is plenty of water. She noted that the developers are not happy about the one for one discussed in the report and that the association would be meeting again soon at which time developers Dwight Millard and Jim Bawden could be more specific about their concerns.

(1-0836.6) Mr. Kynett said the projects he builds and develops are for family members use and not put out for sale. He explained his family has a section of land in the City that is currently divided into quarter acre lots that are zoned single family units. He said he had submitted a letter to the Community Development Department indicating perhaps their property could be considered as a demonstration project for affordable housing where he could offer open space, quality designs, and rents that could be considered in the affordable range. He said the property is on East Nye Lane, close to the new industrial development, close to schools, and close to major shopping. Chairperson Horton commended Mr. Kynett on his position and expressed his belief that this is the kind of cooperation that will be seen to come forward in the community.

(1-0869.5) Mr. Leck said he deals with a lot of this information on a daily basis. He felt in his personal opinion he was not sure if this a housing development, or a housing element but rather an affordable housing element. He had a concern as to whether the Growth Management can be separated from the Housing Element. He referred to the goals and expectations in the report and expressed his desire that the report go beyond what most housing elements in communities are and that Carson City should correlate what it has. He expressed his belief that in the report the Commission has not analyzed the socio-economics of the housing element in Carson City. He felt there is a tremendous need for affordable housing and that it will get worse in the future. He said last year was the first year there was a decline in visitors and a decline in growth in industrial. However, the retail and service sectors are growing at a faster pace than other sectors such as the government, and the industrial sector. He said the service and retail sectors provide the lowest paying jobs and those people would not be able to afford to live in a single family home but rather in affordable housing and apartments. He felt that would change the complexion of the City which would result in a polarization in the community and it will eventually lose the middle class. He reiterated his desire that the Commission review the Growth Management element.

(1-0999.5) Commissioner Rogers said some of the points brought up had previously been discussed. He emphasized that this is not about low income housing but rather affordable housing. He said one area that had been discussed but left out of the report was the upper end housing. He added one reason for the exclusion was because a person with unlimited finances can pretty much choose where they want to build. He felt these are things the community needs to resolve not the City government. He added that the implementation of the plan is important and its success would rely on that. Chairperson Horton agreed that one of the major concerns the Commission has is the implementation that the sustainable community concepts need to be adopted as well. Commissioner Christianson asked if there might be factors such as whether land is available for manufacturing development vs. retail, what kind of jobs they are bringing into the community now vs. ten years ago, do they have a higher pay scale, and how would these affect the community down the road. Mr. Leck said he was seeing a transition with manufacturing looking at the City but noting the available land remaining and the price of that land. He added that the price of industrial land has gone up 100 percent and perhaps as much as 150. He then commented on the availability of land and prices in Lyon and Douglas Counties. Commissioner Rogers said he had concerns in three areas. One was issues the Commission knows have to be resolved. He then asked if Mr. Leck was comfortable that the Commission is on the right track. Mr. Leck said the process of trust me does not

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work and felt that for the community to embrace, not only the Housing Element but the Growth Management revisions, they need to know that the Commission can demonstrate they can tie them together. Commissioner Rogers expressed his belief that what Mr. Leck was asking for was the implementation of the plan but added that the Commission was not there yet. (1-1399.5) Mr. Kiernan said he took exception to Commissioner Rogers statement that if you have plenty of money you could buy any place you desired in Carson City. He said that was not true because the land has been downgraded in many areas, in particular with the Hillside Ordinance, the land is not available unless someone wanted to pay probably 200 percent of the value the property is truly worth. He also noted that the community is at a place to where the slow or no growth has started to affect the prices. He added that a lot of people could be priced out of the market and that it is not just the low and moderate income people. Commissioner Horton said the main difference is that the lower income people have no way of dealing with the issue in that they cannot pay the 200 percent and cannot move to an outlying area. He then noted that the Commission was not forgetting the upper income people because there are also needs in that area.

Commissioner Rogers left the meeting at 7:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

(1-1529.5) Mr. Guzman referred to Mr. Leck's comments relating to what the report covers or does not cover. He said they had tried to match incomes with what is available. He noted there is only so much money to do a study and so much time for staff to decide what is the most important in order to move forward.

(1-1571.5) Mr. McKennie asked if the Commission has anything to do with the quality of structures, specifically building codes. Chairperson Horton said they do not and deal primarily with land use issues. Mr. Guzman said the group he should be talking to is the Building Division or Administrator for a Uniform Building Code. Mr. McKennie said he does not see a lot of items within developments having to do with open space, parks, and any allowance for children to play and as a homeowner he would like to see more of that. He had another concern because he felt that developers have a major challenge in that that do not stay in business if they do not make a profit. He asked if there is a better way for them to make their profit and, with assistance from the City, perhaps offset some of the gains by possibly putting some of the profits into a fund that could assist the community in building schools. He felt that development of property could be tied in with the City providing services. He asked about looking at the concept of build out and ask them if they are willing to set aside a certain amount of their profit for open space and building a new school in the area and to educate the people who will eventually be purchasing the new homes. Chairperson Horton said the Commission said they have been fortunate in dealing with the developers in setting aside properties for neighborhood parks and the like. He noted that the majority of new developments contain open space and that is something the Commission has encouraged. He said a number of developers have cooperated on this in order to make more desirable neighborhoods. Mr. Guzman suggested that Mr. McKennie contact him at the office and they could discuss the issues with which Mr. McKennie had a concern. At this point Chairperson Horton solicited public testimony. There being none he closed public testimony.

#### **D. NON-ACTION ITEMS**

**1. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS** - Commissioner Christianson commended Ms. Hullinger for her letter to the editor in response to a Reno Gazette Journal item which had criticized Carson City as a community on how they have managed their growth.

Chairperson Horton said he attended an American Planning conference in San Diego which included excellent presentations and that he had come away with some very good ideas. He encouraged other Commissions to take advantage of similar meetings.

**2. STAFF COMMENTS** - None.

**E. ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business Chairperson Horton entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wipfli moved to adjourn. Commissioner Christianson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. Chairperson Horton adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

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ARE SO APPROVED\_\_\_\_\_, 1997

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Verne Horton, Chairperson