

City of Alamosa
Planning Commission
January 25, 2017
6:00 p.m.
Minutes of the Meeting

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order on the above date at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Mark Manzanares. Present were the following members: Shirley Adcock, Debbie Clark, Darrell Cooper, Robert McWhirter and Scott Travis. Excused: Farris Bervig. A quorum was declared. Staff present: Pat Steenburg, Harry Reynolds and Julie Scott.

Agenda Approval: M/S/C. Adcock, Clark. Motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. (Unanimous)

Approval of the Minutes: M/S/C. Clark, Adcock. Motion made to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2016 meeting as presented. (Unanimous)

Public Comments: None

Regular Business - Conduct Public Hearings- Zoning Issues

The request of San Luis Valley Habitat for Humanity for a variance from the City Code of Ordinances. The applicant seeks relief from the required depth of a residential lot to not exceed two and one half time the width thereof (Section 17-79(c)). The property affected is Lot 40 adjusted, McClain Fink Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County.

The public hearing opened at 6:02p.m.

Manzanares: Is there someone here to speak? State your name and address.

Liu: Audrey Liu, 704 Stadium Dr., Alamosa. I am the Executive Director, San Luis Valley Habitat for Humanity and we appreciate your consideration for a variance on the lot on Edison Ave. We would like to serve two Habitat for Humanity families in the future. Not only is it a benefit for the home owners in the greater community we believe it will help to bring more stability in the neighborhood through home ownership. We also support the local economy by buying building materials locally and with that employing sub-contractors, electricians and plumbers and by paying property taxes. We would like your consideration for the variance so we can serve two more Habitat families.

Manzanares: Thank you. Have a seat and we will call you up if we have questions. Is there anyone here that would like to speak for this request? Please state your name and address.

Jones: Marty Jones, 710 Diamond Dr., Alamosa, CO. Since I retired from Adams State University about 4½ years ago, I have been volunteering at least on an irregular basis and helped on three homes. I've worked with the homeowners and seen them develop confidence a portion

of their responsibility is to work on the house. I've seen the owners develop the skills necessary to do repairs as well as perhaps get a job with a contractor. This is something Habitat develops and the pride of the owners as they occupy their home. In the dedication ceremony this is their home not just a house. There is an opportunity to do two more houses in the same vicinity and build some collaboration and good will. I'd like to speak in favor of this.

Manzanares: Thank you, Marty. Is there anyone else that would like to speak in favor of this?

Chisholm: Mary Chisholm, 94 Bell Ave., Alamosa. I'm retired and volunteer at the Habitat Store. I have a really good friend that was able to build a Habitat home. She wasn't able to get a mortgage and it's been so good for her and to own her own home and would like to support this. I would recommend that this be allowed and they be allowed to build two more homes. Thank you.

Manzanares: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak in favor? Against?

Steenburg: We did one receive one verbal request to deny the request but they did not submit anything in writing and obviously has not come to the public hearing.

For the record all adjacent property owners were notified of the request.

The public hearing closed at 6:07 p.m.

M/S/C. Adcock, Travis. Motion made to approve the variance request of San Luis Valley Habitat for Humanity. The property affected is Lot 40 adjusted, McClain Fink Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County. (Unanimous)

Planning Issues

The request of San Luis Valley Habitat for review of a final plat. The property affected is Lot 40 adjusted McClain Fink Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County. (Unanimous)

The public hearing opened at 6:09p.m.

Manzanares: This is redundant but please come up Audrey and state you name and address.

Liu: I'm Audrey Liu, 704 Stadium Dr. Along with the variance we want to divide Lot 40 into two lots.

Manzanares: Thank you. Anyone else that would like to speak on behalf of this?

Jones: Marty Jones, 710 Diamond Dr., Alamosa. For the reasons already stated and not only for the Habitat's business but for the benefit of the neighborhood and the City.

Chisholm: Mary Chisholm. I would just like to add that this would be in everyone's best interests.

Manzanares: Thank you. Is there anyone else? We will close the public hearing. Questions, motion?

The public hearing closed at 6:10p.m.

M/S/C. Travis, McWhirter. Motion made to recommend approval of the request of San Luis Valley Habitat for Humanity for a final plat. The property affected is Lot 40 adjusted McClain Fink Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County. (Unanimous)

The recommendation would go to City Council at the meeting to be held on Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter.

Next item:

The request of Crown Castle for an expansion of a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow modifications to an existing cell tower. The property affected is Lots 1-8 inclusive, Lots 25-35 inclusive, Block 61, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County also known as 702 San Juan Ave.

The public hearing opened at 6:11p.m.

The applicant was not in attendance. Steenburg presented the request on their behalf.

Steenburg: What they want to do is they have existing 3 antennae's and want to add 3 more.

Manzanares: Is there anyone else that would like to speak? We will close the public hearing.

The public hearing closed at 6:13 p.m.

Adcock: As I stated before, if they are interested enough the applicant should be here.

Travis: This is gaining additional coverage for the public.

McWhirter: In the past when the applicant was not present, we have tabled requests and also have also moved on it.

M/S/C. McWhirter, Travis. Motion made to recommend approval of the request of Crown Castle for an expansion of a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow modifications to an existing cell tower. The property affected is Lots 1-8 inclusive, Lots 25-35 inclusive, Block 61, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County also known as 702 San Juan Ave. (Five yes's, one nay.)

This recommendation would go to Council on February15, 2017 as a consent calendar item.

Next Item:

The request of Verizon Wireless for an expansion of a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow installation of additional telecommunications equipment on a City owner water tower. The property affected is Block 78, Lots 9-11, School Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County, also known as 701 Ross Ave.

The public hearing opened at 6:16 p.m.

Manzanares: Is there someone here to speak for this request? Please state your name and address for the record.

Perlman: Adam Perlman, 188 South Logan St., Denver CO. Verizon representative. As Pat mentioned, we also are looking to densify coverage for the city by adding additional equipment to the existing tower. We have worked with Pat and Harry for the last 8-10 months and submitted a structural analysis and Pat has okayed that. I can answer any questions you may have.

Manzanares: Thank you very much. Is there anyone else that would like to speak for this request?

Thompson: Don Thompson, 924 8th St. I received a letter regarding the hearing as an adjacent property owner. I assume the city will receive additional payment to the City when they add more equipment. Living across from the tower I would like to suggest the additional money may be used to add a state flag or another American flag, City logo perhaps on the south side of the tower as there is an American flag on the north side. Something instead of leaving it just white. Thank you very much.

Manzanares: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak for this? Against? We will close the public hearing.

The public hearing closed at 6:13 p.m.

M/S/C. Adcock, Clark. Motion made to recommend approval of the request of Verizon Wireless for an expansion of a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow installation of additional telecommunications equipment on a City owner water tower. The property affected is Block 78, Lots 9-11, School Subdivision, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County, also known as 701 Ross Ave. (Unanimous)

The applicant was informed the recommendation would go to City Council as a consent calendar item to be held on February 15th beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Other Business:

Election of Officers

Chairman nominees: Mark Manzanares. By paper ballot, Manzanares received the majority vote and accepted the position.

Vice Chairman: No nominations. By paper ballot, Scott Travis received the majority and accepted the position.

Next Item:

Comprehensive Plan presentation.

The presentation began at 6:25 p.m.

Pat introduced Gabe Preston and thanked Shirley Adcock and Scott Travis for being part of the advisory committee in the whole process which began about 1 ½ years ago. Their service is greatly appreciated. There were many public meetings and comments. We are currently working on the zoning code and wide sweeping changes to streamline the process. Planning Commission is the body that officially adopts the plan.

Gabe Preston, owner of RPI Consultants, Durango gave a complete synopsis of the Comprehensive Plan with a thorough power point presentation and addressed questions from the Commission and the audience. Alamosa is unique in many aspects. This is a road map for Alamosa for about a life span of about a decade, a work program for the city and guiding policy for zoning code, reviewing development applications, and land use.

Three different tools are incorporated; a Comprehensive Plan, Downtown needs assessment Master Plan and the revision of the zoning code. It is revising the entire planning system and all works together.

This is an opportunity for the community to say where it wants to go with the City's future. This is based on the communications we had with the citizens at the public meetings and survey results, keypad polling. Meetings took place at various sites, churches, Zapata Park with an interpreter for Spanish speaking citizens, Boys and Girls Club and City Hall. There was a tremendous amount of public input.

The summary of the plan included:

- Economic development and the City's role
- Core Services and Infrastructure – this is what the City does
- Future Land Use Plan and Designations- the beginning of implementation
- Future Land Use Map
- Downtown Needs Assessment- the public right of way and the private sector
- Public Involvement Process
- Youth Vision
- Implementation matrix

The City of Alamosa being a regional center for services of all types for the entire San Luis Valley and even areas outside of the valley is an advantage and a huge responsibility.

One of the most important aspects was communications and the businesses are the backbone and they get the support they need. People who come here and make investments, start businesses want to be here. One of the main things the City can do is revise the zoning code and make it easier to get the information needed.

Should the City take a leadership role in economic development? The consensus was that it should which would take additional staff in a planning role and business support. There needs to be a staff point of contact for this.

The educational capacity is here to help provide work force training in various fields.

Outdoor recreation is an area that consistently came up in all the meetings. Smoother roads came up consistently as well as law enforcement and crime prevention as priorities.

There was also an inventory done of all the City buildings as well as sidewalks, bike lanes. The library, parks are valuable assets and it seems that one area lacking in dedicated park areas is the south west quadrant of the City. The most popular area of recreation discussion by far is to better utilize the river corridor and more trails. Landscaping standards need to be addressed and water conservation, storm water standards.

The Downtown needs assessment was realized as a huge market opportunity in many areas including increased retail and entertainment, professional offices etc. A new zoning district specific to downtown would be beneficial. Parking is extremely important and Preston went into detail on the information gathered.

Sharrows were explained (shared lanes) for bicycles and vehicles. Alley improvements would help make downtown more pedestrian friendly. Sixth and 4th Streets were touched upon. Way finding signage, street furniture, public art display areas, gateway signage were all discussed. The Chamber of Commerce should be involved with all the efforts to enhance downtown marketing and work together with all businesses.

Preston concluded the presentation and thanked the Planning Commission and encouraged them to use it as a tool.

Comments from the audience included Don Thompson, 924 8th St. who was impressed with the City and the Plan and pleased to see the bicycling and walking as important aspects. Opening sections of the levee that are currently not open to public hiking would be beneficial. He also felt economic development has not trickled down to benefit the middle class in the last 35 yrs. Infrastructure improvements should be the priority of the City. Perhaps economic development issues could be managed in the private sector by businesses instead of using City resources.

The following two motions were made:

M/S/C. Travis, Adcock. Motion made to adopt the Comprehensive Plan as presented by RPI Consultants and reviewed by Planning Commission. (Unanimous)

M/S/C. Travis, Adcock. Motion made to recommend the City of Alamosa adopt the Comprehensive Plan as presented. (Unanimous)

This recommendation will go to City Council as a regular agenda item on February 15, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter.

After no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Scott
Recording Secretary