



Citizen Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, August 26 2009

Topics: Preliminary Draft Plan and Implementation Strategies

Attendance

- ♦ **Committee:** 15 members present: Kelly Brooks, Susie Seeds, Denise Stephens, Loretta DiTirro Schwankel, Davis Reinhart, John Marriott, Sally Banghart, Joyce Jay, Diana Lopez, Shannon Sturtevant, Suzanne Teale, Carol Salzmann, Rick Bender, Jim Williams, Don Seyfer, Tom Abbott
- ♦ **Staff:** City – Sally Payne, Ken Johnstone, Adam Tietz
- ♦ **Consultants:** Clarion – Lesli Ellis, Shelby Sommer

Update on Planning Effort

The planning team presented a brief overview of the draft plan (see the August CAC Agenda Reader's Guide for details). Staff also updated CAC members about the recent City Council decision to place two questions on the November, 2009 ballot to seek removal of the City Charter restrictions in targeted locations generally consistent with the Urban Renewal Area boundaries for: (1) the Wadsworth Urban Renewal Area and (2) the Kipling/I-70 Urban Renewal Area.

Final Policy Topics Discussion

The team presented a few final discussion topics and asked CAC members to add additional items of interest and select their top items for discussion. Key discussion points included:

Neighborhoods – Infill, Accessory Dwelling Units and Neighborhood-Scale Commercial

- ♦ Page 48 – One committee member noted that all neighborhoods should not be open to a wide variety of housing types promoted through infill (especially senior housing, multi-family, lofts, etc.). The Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy was overly negative about neighborhoods. The language in this draft seems "too open," and could promote new high-intensity uses in areas where they are not appropriate. Small-scale infill housing should match the existing housing types (single-family, duplex, etc.).
- ♦ Another member suggested that neighborhoods could have a finer grain classification (or description) related to the different intensities of development that exist or could occur (e.g. some small embedded commercial along collectors and minor collectors).
- ♦ CAC members generally agreed that new housing types and infill of more intensive uses should mainly occur in declining neighborhood "revitalization" areas (per the Neighborhood Revitalization criteria in the plan). The links between the Structure Plan, criteria for neighborhoods, and corresponding goals and policies need to be clearer and more apparent, so potential developers and neighborhood advocates all understand the purpose of the Structure Plan and how the city will use it to: (1) identify if a potential

project is in (a) a strong neighborhood or (b) a revitalization area, and then which criteria apply. Neighborhood commercial and infill should be focused in the revitalization areas, not strong neighborhoods.

- ♦ Revise the neighborhood description to encompass existing small commercial or future commercial in appropriate “revitalization” areas.
- ♦ Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s) could be one additional new housing type to call out specifically in the Plan as potentially appropriate in parts of Wheat Ridge. Currently Wheat Ridge regulations don’t allow ADU’s (due to household definitions and second kitchen limitations), although they could add value for homeowners (giving them more options to afford their homes and age in place). Nearby Arvada has only seen about 10 applications for ADU’s in the past 3 years, so they provide a good solution for some families, although they will not likely inundate the city. Arvada requirements allow ADUs if the owner resides in at least one of the units, so that both units do not become rentals.
- ♦ Through a finger poll, 14 of the 16 committee members agreed that ADU’s should be added as a new housing type to mention in the Plan for further consideration. 2 of the 16 members were neutral about including such language, expressing concerns about increasing number of rental units in the community.

Arts and Culture

- ♦ The Arts and Culture component of the plan needs to emphasize the importance of a strong art and cultural base and their contributions to a successful city where arts and culture permeate many aspects of the city’s built environment.
- ♦ The Town Center should have an arts and culture focus that reflects the community’s historical roots. Public art and cultural opportunities (concerts, gathering spaces, etc.) should be a key element of the Town Center.
- ♦ Other areas to emphasize art include community entrances, parkways, and streetscapes (the community’s design guidelines should include public art). The City’s branding efforts and new logo should be further incorporated and tied to the community’s art displays.
- ♦ Some communities require a portion of all construction (usually public projects) costs to be devoted to public art. This could be explored in Wheat Ridge as a potential implementation strategy.

Implementation Strategies

The planning team explained that the plan will include more detailed implementation strategies, once the committee has helped to establish priorities. Committee members worked in four small groups to review and prioritize actions listed on the preliminary Implementation Strategies table, using the following key for prioritization:

- 1 – **Immediate Priority** – to be implemented with adoption of the Plan or soon thereafter;
- 2 – **High Priority** – to be initiated as soon as possible and completed within one to two years after Plan adoption;
- 3 – **Moderate Priority** – to be completed within three to five years after Plan adoption; and
- O – **Ongoing** – actions that occur continually.

The committee’s top priorities and comments are displayed in the table on the following pages. New ideas and additions are shown in **bold**. The highest priority actions (those marked with two or more “1’s” indicating top priority) are highlighted in **yellow**. Additional discussion comments about priority actions included:

- ♦ Wheat Ridge should explore state and federal money (like Stimulus Package funds) for transportation and sustainability-related improvements (such as the Community Development Block Grants for energy efficiency).
- ♦ Stormwater quality and quantity measures are not currently addressed in the Plan. Should they be? The planning team will check with Public Works staff to determine the status of compliance with stormwater regulations and will incorporate goals/policies/strategies in the Plan if necessary.

Table of Priority Implementation Strategies

Description	Relates to	Committee Priority
Economy and Land Use (Chapter 4)		
Enhance city image and identity through physical enhancements and promotion of unique businesses, events, and other features to attract residents, employers and visitors.	ELU 1.1, 1.2	1, 1, 1, 0
Develop programs and strategies to retain and increase retail and revenue-generating activities.	ELU 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4	1, 1, 1, 1
Develop programs and strategies to increase primary employment opportunities.	ELU 3.1, 3.2	1, 2, 2, 3
Address City Charter limitations in a targeted way to encourage redevelopment and infill in key locations.	ELU 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2	1, 1, 1, 1
Partner with the private sector and other agencies (Wheat Ridge 2020, URA and others) to jump-start and facilitate redevelopment in under-utilized areas and activity centers	ELU 5.1, 6.1, 6.2	1, 1, 2, 0
Guide the development of a Town Center.	ELU 6.2	2, 2, 2, 3
<i>Streetscape standards with Art & Design guidelines for commercial</i>		2
Neighborhoods and Housing (Chapter 5)		
Utilize neighborhood-level planning to develop neighborhood identity programs and standards (such as landscape standards, design guidelines, etc.) to protect and enhance neighborhood character.	NH 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2	1, 1, 2, 0
Develop programs and strategies to promote new housing opportunities to meet the needs of changing households and to attract new residents.	NH 2.1, 4.1	1, 1, 2, 3
Continue coordination with Wheat Ridge 2020 and other groups to promote investment and strong households in declining neighborhoods.	NH 3.1, 3.2, 4.1	1, 2, 0, 0
Partner with Wheat Ridge 2020, URA, the private sector and others to stimulate redevelopment in Neighborhood Buffer Areas.	NH 4.1	2, 3, 0, 0
Community Character and Design (Chapter 6)		
Enhance community identity through gateway, corridor, and civic improvements.	CC 1.1, 1.2, 2.1	1, 1, 2, 0
Revise policies and regulations to ensure quality design for public and private development.	CC 2.1, 3.1	1, 1, 1, 2

Table, cont...

Transportation (Chapter 7)		
Seek to establish a new-local (Federal and State) funding source for pedestrian and bicycle system improvements.	T 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5	2, 2, 3, 0
Invest in new bicycle corridors and enhanced connections to the trail system.	T 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4	2, 2, 2, 2
Develop new road cross-sections for priority corridors that accommodate future land uses and all modes of transportation.	T 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 4.1, 4.2	3, 3, 3, 3
Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods and future activity centers and primary corridors.	T 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1	3, 3, 3, 3
Coordinate with RTD to improve transit service and connections to future activity centers (including future rail station).	T 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 4.1	1, 2, 3, 0
Connections between parks and Greenbelt		2
Community Services (Chapter 8)		
Coordinate with non-city service providers including utility, fire and school districts.	CS 1.1, 4.1, 5.1, 8.1	0, 0, 0, 0
Continue and enhance community programs to enhance community safety and property maintenance.	CS 3.1	2, 0, 0, 0
Continue and enhance city arts and cultural offerings. Add a design component	CS 6.1	1, 2, 2, 2
Provide a diverse range of options for residents to actively engage in the civic process.	CS 7.1	1, 0, 0, 0
Sustainable Future (Chapter 9)		
Appoint a Sustainability Task Force with a mission to develop a Sustainability Action Plan	SF 3.1	1, 2, 2, 2
Coordinate with partners to develop programs and strategies to improve community health and access to healthy foods.	SF 4.1, 4.2, 4.3	2, 3, 0, 0
Revise policies and regulations to require tree preservation and/or development buffers near natural resources.	SF 2.1	1, 1, 1, 3

Next Steps: Schedule and Next Meeting

- ♦ www.EnvisionWheatRidge.com has latest drafts, project news, and updates.
- ♦ This was the final CAC meeting. Thank you to everyone for all of your dedication and thoughtful participation.
- ♦ The next public meeting (open house format) will be on Wednesday, September 2, 2009 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- ♦ A joint City Council/Planning Commission Study Session is scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2009.