



**City of Newport  
Planning Commission Minutes  
July 21, 2011**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson McElwee-Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**2. ROLL CALL -**

Commissioners present – Katy McElwee-Stevens, Susan Lindoo, Janice Anderson, David Engfer, Daniel Flood

Commissioners absent –

Also present – Brian Anderson, City Administrator; Tom Ingemann, Council Liaison; Sherri Buss; TKDA Planner, Tim Geraghty; Mayor; Steven Gallagher, Council Member, Tracy Rahm, Council Member

**3. APPOINTMENTS WITH COMMISSION**

A. Resolution No. P.C. 2011-7 Receiving of the Station Area Plan for the Red Rock Corridor Transit Station and the findings of the Red Rock Corridor Station Area Planning Report

**Admin. Anderson** – Andy Gitzlaff, Transportation Planner with Washington County, is here to present the final Station Area Plan for the Red Rock Corridor Transit Station. The resolution states that the Planning Commission received the Station Area Plan and the findings of the Red Rock Corridor Station Area Planning Report.

Mr. Gitzlaff presented on the Red Rock Station Area Planning Report as outlined in the July 21, 2011 Planning Commission packet. Mr. Gitzlaff invited the Planning Commission to submit any comments to him prior to the Red Rock Corridor Commission adopting the final plan in September 2011.

**Janice Anderson** – Why wasn't the St Paul/Lower Afton and Hastings areas were not included in the packet that we received?

**Admin. Anderson** – They were included in the initial report, however I did not print those out for tonight's discussion.

**Mr. Gitzlaff** – The entire report is included on the website.

**Dan Flood** – Thank you for all the time and effort you have put into this project.

**Admin. Anderson** – I would like to thank Andy and the County as well. We've had a lot of community participation in this project and received a lot of positive support on it.

**McElwee–Stevens** – I would like to say thank you for the report, I know it was a lot of work and this has been a really transparent process.

**Motion by Lindoo, seconded by Flood, to adopt No. P.C. 2011-7, receiving the Station Area Plan for the Red Rock Corridor Transit Station and the findings of the Red Rock Corridor Station Area Planning Report. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.**

B. Red Rock Gateway Implementation Study – Background and Zoning Focus

**Admin. Anderson** – Sherri Buss, TKDA Planner, will be presenting on this item. This is only for discussion purposes and we won't be making any decisions on it tonight.

Sherri Buss presented on the future land use and zoning in the Red Rock Gateway area has outlined in the July 21, 2011 Planning Commission packet. The City cannot take development proposals for this area until land use and zoning is determined for it. This process is being paid for by a Livable Communities grant that the City received from the Metropolitan Council. The grant will allow the City to complete an Implementation Study for the Red Rock Gateway area. The Study includes the following activities:

- Developing zoning and land use implementation tools, including a zoning map, development code sections, and comprehensive trail system plan for the area
- Market Study
- Redevelopment strategies, including financial strategies such as land banking and land acquisition strategies

Barb Dacy of WCHRA provided the Planning Commission with a summary of the Developer Forum discussion that took place on June 9, 2011. The Planning Commission reviewed the summary and added the following comments:

- The City should include a wider diversity of developers in discussions about the future of the site as this study continues, including developers who specialize in in-fill development in St. Paul and neighboring communities.
- The City should include another developer forum in the study process.
- The developers seemed overly-pessimistic about the future of the site. Other areas with significant problems have been successfully redeveloped, and the City should look to those examples for what is possible, such as the Phalen Corridor redevelopment in St. Paul.
- Experience with other successful redevelopment projects suggests that leadership from the City and collaboration with others such as developers are critical to redevelopment success.
- One take-away message was that mixed-use housing (housing above retail) may not be a successful use on the Red Rock/Knox site. It may be better to capitalize on the potential for jobs on the site, and this would fit well with commuter rail transit. Light industry and business park uses may then generate other commercial uses such as services on the site.
- A key point the developers made is that the whole city needs to be behind the redevelopment plan for the site. Developers do not want to walk into a battle. The City should provide leadership, and involve Newport's citizens effectively in planning for redevelopment.
- The spur line is a significant issue for redevelopment.

- Amenities that the City could provide such as trails, trees, etc. will be important to attracting some uses to the site.
- Lions Park may be an amenity for redevelopment. It is currently hidden from view by trees—the City could consider making it more visible from the Gateway area.
- The temporary levee and island area are close to the redevelopment area. The study should consider how to tie these areas and the Mississippi River to the Gateway Area and how to coordinate them with potential land uses.
- The City needs to develop its “brand” identity to help to sell redevelopment.
- The City needs to invest in itself to spur development:
  - Address clean up issues in the area.
  - Purchase potential redevelopment sites.
  - Beautify the area—add trees, trails, green space. St. Paul Park’s tree-lined streets were cited as a local example. This should involve the Park Board.
  - Involve the HPC—take advantage of the City’s history and local gems.
- New housing near existing residential neighborhoods may help to spur new commercial development. Need to consider those uses in developing the new land use and zoning maps.
- Building height will be an important consideration for the area. Not sure the very tall buildings on the concept plans will work on the site.
- The study should include the roadway network in the area, and options for pedestrian bridges/crossings to improve connections over the spur line.
- Need to develop a vision and implement it consistently

The Commission reviewed existing zoning in the area, and made the following comments:

- The Gateway Study should include a wide area—at least to the River to the west, and to approximately 17<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. Relationships with other potential redevelopment areas in the city should be considered—including the commercial areas along Highway 61.
- Approximate one mile zone around the Red Rock Commuter Rail site

Mrs. Buss also provided a summary of approaches that other communities have taken to zoning in similar rail transit areas. She talked with planners who work in the communities along the Red Rock Corridor to determine if they use their plans, how they picked their approach and whether or not they find it useful. Communities take on the following types of zoning approaches:

- Traditional Zoning (sometimes called Euclidean zoning)
- Overlay districts for Transit-Oriented Development
- Planned Unit Development or other Special Districts
- Form-based Zoning

The zoning approaches listed above are outlined in the July 21, 2011 Planning Commission packet.

The Planning Commission members discussed the options and agreed to invite planners and developers that have worked on zoning in redevelopment areas to come to a future meeting and provide some more information.

#### **4. COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS**

**Katy McElwee-Stevens** – The “Night to Unite” event is being held on Tuesday, August 2 from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm at the Newport Lutheran Church. There will be a lot of activities so please come and attend.

**Susan Lindoo** – Nothing to report

**Janice Anderson** – Nothing to report

**David Engfer** – Nothing to report

**Daniel Flood** – Nothing to report

**Admin. Anderson** – The Community Garden is on Glen Road by Fire Station #2. There are 20 plots and 8 of those are going to the Friends in Need Food Shelf. I would like to invite people to go and look at it.

The City did receive a grant for \$4,000 to purchase signs. The sign is of a pedestrian bike and trail map and there are eight of them that will be going up around the City in the next couple weeks. I would like to thank Sherri that helped with creating the map.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business

## **6. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

City Council Meeting	August 4, 2011	5:30 pm
City Council Meeting	August 18, 2011	5:30 pm
Planning Commission/Council	August 18, 2011	7:00 pm

Pioneer Days is on Sunday, August 14 in Pioneer Park. There is also a movie in the Park on Saturday, August 13 in Pioneer Park beginning at dusk.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Flood, seconded by Engfer, to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting at 8:37 P.M. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Katy McElwee-Stevens, Chairperson

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Helm  
Executive Analyst