

GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
August 23, 2022, 5:30 PM
MINUTES

The meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Commissioner Andrew Teske.

Those present were Planning Commissioners; JB Phillips, Kimberly Herek, Shanon Secrest, Andrew Teske, Ken Scissors, Melanie Duyvejonck, and Kimberly Weckerly.

Also present were Jamie Beard (City Attorney), Felix Landry (Planning Supervisor), Nicole Galehouse (Principal Planner), Dave Thornton (Principal Planner), Kris Ashbeck (Principal Planner), Kalli Savvas (Planning Technician), Jacob Kaplan (Planning Technician), and Madeline Robinson (Planning Technician).

There were 9 members of the public in attendance, and 0 virtually.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) from July 26, 2022.

2. Foothills ROW Vacation

VAC-2022-396

Consider a request to vacate a public right-of-way totaling 4875 square feet located south of F 3/4 Road and west of 23 1/2 Road alignments.

3. Horizon Cache ROW Vacation

VAC-2022-53

Consider a request to vacate a portion of the undeveloped G Road Public Right-of-Way on the Northeast Corner of Horizon Drive and G Road at 702 Horizon Drive.

4. Crawford Row Townhomes Vacation

VAC-2022-465

Consider a request to vacate a portion of multi-purpose easement in a PD (Planned Development) zone district.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Blue Heron Rezone

RZN-2022-459

Consider a request by JGMS Government Services, LLC to rezone a 6.15-acre parcel from I-2 (General Industrial) to I-1 (Light Industrial) located at 2415 Blue Heron Road.

Staff Presentation

Kris Ashbeck, Principal Planner, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Applicant Presentation

Applicant Ray Plienness was present and available for questions.

Questions for staff

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 16, 2022, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

The public hearing was closed at 5:48 p.m. on August 23, 2022.

Discussion

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Weckerly made the following motion “Mr. Chairman, on the JGMS Government Services LLC request from an I-2 (General Industrial) zone district to an I-1 (Light Industrial) zone district for Lot 1 of Blue Heron Lake Industrial Park, a 6.15-acre property located at 2415 Blue Heron Road, City file number RZN-2022-459, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to City Council with the findings of fact as listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Secrest seconded; motion passed 7-0.

2. Pivot Solar 27, LLC CUP **CUP-2022-290**

Consider a request for an amendment to existing CUP for Phase 2 of a 500kw ground mounted solar energy facility on 3.78 acres, part of a 14.34 acre site, in a CSR (Community Services and Recreation) zone district.

Staff Presentation

Dave Thornton, Principal Planner, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Applicant Presentation

Applicant Kyle Sundman provided a presentation regarding the request.

Questions for staff

Commissioner Scissors asked how many homes this new section would supply with power.

The applicant responded to questions.

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 16, 2022, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

The public hearing was closed at 6:08 p.m. on August 23, 2022.

Discussion

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Scissors made the following motion “Chairman, on the Pivot Solar 27, LLC request to amend a Conditional Use Permit, file number CUP-2022-290, I move that the Planning

Commission approve the expansion/change to site, development of Phase 2 of the Community Solar Farm at 2940 D ¼ Road with the Findings of Fact listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Duyvejonck seconded; motion passed 7-0.

3. Zoning and Development Code Amendment-Landscaping Standards ZCA-2022-170

Consider an amendment to the Zoning and Development Code Section 21.06.040 Landscape, Buffering, and Screening Standards; Section 21.10.020 Terms Defined; Section 21.03.030 Measurements; Section 21.03.080 Mixed Use and Industrial Bulk Standards Summary Table; and Section 21.04.030 Use-Specific Standards of the Grand Junction Municipal Code.

Staff Presentation

Felix Landry, Planning Supervisor, introduced exhibits into the record and provided a presentation regarding the request.

Applicant Presentation

Questions for staff

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 16, 2022, via www.GJSpeaks.org.

1. Ron Abeloe expressed issues with the Cottonwood being a significant tree.
2. Ivan Geer also had an issue with Cottonwoods being a significant tree.

The public hearing was closed at 6:41 p.m. on August 23, 2022.

Discussion

Felix Landry responded to public comments, noting that Cottonwoods are a major contributor to native growing shade trees. He spoke about the current maintenance of existing Cottonwood trees and that those practices would be preserved.

Commissioner Weckerley asked what City Council’s prior input was on the Cottonwoods proposal came from and wondered if Cottonwoods are appropriate for an arid landscape.

Commissioner Scissors asked if the health of the tree could be a more pertinent metric than just the caliper. He also wondered about the variance criteria and how it would be arbitrated by planning staff. Additionally, he asked if sufficient public notice was given for the Cottonwoods submission as a significant tree.

Commissioner Secrest asked if there was ever discussion if a tree (possibly Ash) could be proposed to replace the Cottonwood. He also asked about increased grading complications due to significant tree requirements.

Commissioner Herek inquired about historical data for existing Cottonwoods in the valley.

Commissioner Teske asked why Cottonwoods would be preserved over other native species (Russian Olive & Elm)

Felix Landry responded to questions and comments posed by the commissioners.

Motion and Vote

Commissioner Weckerly made the following motion “Mr. Chairman, on the request to amend the Zoning and Development Code Section 21.06.040 Landscape, buffering, and screening standards and related sections of the Grand Junction Municipal Code, file number ZCA-2022-170, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council with an amendment eliminating the Cottonwoods as a significant tree.

Commissioner Secrest seconded; motion passed 6-1.

Other Business

Adjournment

Commissioner Secrest moved to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Scissors seconded.
The vote to adjourn was 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.