



Memo

Department of Planning & Housing

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TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Steve Osguthorpe, Planning & Housing Director

DATE: March 20, 2012

SUBJECT: Joint Meeting - P&Z/Council Discussion

In preparation for the City Council's joint meeting with the Planning & Zoning Commission, I am attaching a copy of the memo the Commission sent to the City Council on January 4, 2012. You will note that the Commission's focus this year is not so much to suggest specific priorities to the Council, but to identify the types of issues the Commission hopes the Council will consider as they pertain to ongoing activities and to other items the Council incorporates into the planning process.

While the Planning & Zoning Commission is not recommending specific projects, it may be helpful in the course of the workshop conversation to be reminded of the referrals that Council has already given to the Planning staff. As a reminder, I have attached a table listing outstanding referrals.

It is also hoped that at the joint meeting the Council will begin discussions regarding prioritizing the Planning Division's work plan. Staff has included on the attached table a proposed prioritization which gives first priority to those referrals that are already in progress and near completion. It then places customer initiated proposals next in the order of priority. However, it is understood that the Council may have other ideas on how it wishes to prioritize these items. Staff will be prepared to talk about the status of these items in more detail at the workshop.

Cc Planning & Zoning Commission



Memo

Department of Planning & Housing

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Planning & Zoning Commission

DATE: January 4, 2012

SUBJECT: Planning & Zoning Commission Topics for Conversation with Mayor and City Council

The Planning and Zoning Commission devoted two sessions, December 21, 2011 and January 3, 2012, to discussing topics and/or issues the Commission wished to forward to City Council for consideration during the Council's goal setting session in January. Prior to the first meeting, each member individually listed their choices from the Commission's working list of identified priorities created in 2009, as well as any additional topics they felt merited further discussion. At the first meeting, the Commission members engaged in a group discussion regarding the choices that were listed most frequently. At the end of that spirited discussion, it was determined that further discussion was necessary to focus the list of topics to be forwarded to the Council.

Throughout the discussions on all of the topics, there were continual references to "quality of life" and "livability". Commission members are often aware of how planning and zoning choices and recommendations brought before them, on specific issues, may have broader long-term implications for livability and the quality of life for Ames residents and visitors as a whole. Through our discussions, we questioned whether these overarching concepts may not currently be an integral part of the planning process. The Commission members recognize that the concepts of quality of life and livability are difficult to measure in a traditional or quantitative fashion; nevertheless, we feel these concepts are critical considerations and essential pieces to incorporate into the planning process with the intent of improving the planning process and eventual outcome in the built environment.

Listed below are six topics identified by the Commissioners. These are topics that the Commission members would like to use as the basis for a conversation with the Council at a joint meeting in the spring. Not included in the list below are specific examples within each topic that can be used to better illustrate the nature of the Commission's questions, most of which are issues that have come before the Commission for consideration to make recommendations to Council. The topics are:

1. Industrial Lands
2. Traffic Impacts and Intermodal Transit
3. Tax Base Diversification
4. LUPP/Codes Review for Consistency with Sustainability
5. District Planning—Niches
6. Flood Mitigation Efforts

The Planning and Zoning Commission members appreciate the opportunity to meet jointly with the City Council at a future date to engage in a conversation about the topics noted above.

Outstanding Council Referrals (3-16-12)

LUPP Amend	Code Amend	Other	Description	INITIATED BY:	ASSUMED RANKING	ASSUMED ORDER
		X	Downtown Survey / National Register Nomination	HPC*	High	1
			Consultant to complete survey and submit nomination for National Register	In Process		
	X		Adopt in zoning code a definition of "story"	Staff	High	2
			There is currently no definition of "story" in the zoning code, even though the term is used in the code. We currently rely upon definition of "story above grade" in the building code.	In Process		
	X		Update to Chapter 31	HPC*	High	3
			Update Historic District Design Standards	In Process		
	X		Master Plan and Zoning process	Staff*	High	4
			Develop more flexible criteria for requiring master plans associated with rezones and subdivisions.	In Process		
		X	Urban Revitalization Plan for SE 16th Street	Customer	High	5
			Requested tax abatement to mitigate costs associated with fill dirt along this corridor.			
	X		Binding Site Plan Subdivision Option	Customer	High	6
			Allows review of site as one site for zoning standard purposes, but allows subdivision of site for ownership purposes			
	X		Auto Dealer Landscaping	Customer	High	6
			Develop alternate means of landscaping auto dealer sites.			
	X		Auto Dealer Parking Lot Striping	Customer	High	6
			Exempt auto display areas from parking lot striping requirements.			
X		X	Annexation of Quarry Estates	Customer	High	7
			Annexation of property north of Ames along 190 th Street.			
X			Subdivision of Oaks Golf Course	Customer	High	8
			Proposal is to subdivide property but not annex the property. Referred as minor amendment			
X		X	Annexation of Athen Property	Customer	High	9
			The property lies just west of George Washington Carver. Referred as major amendment, which will require bigger commitment of time to process.			

Outstanding Council Referrals (3-16-12)

LUPP Amend	Code Amend	Other	Description	INITIATED BY:	ASSUMED RANKING	ASSUMED ORDER
	X		Review City-wide Landscape Standards	Staff*	Medium	10
			Review standards to address those issues presented to Council in PowerPoint presentation last fall.			
X	X		Revise Industrial policies East of I-35	Council	Medium	11
			Includes review of Fringe Plan policies as we review extension of sewer to area.			
	X		Report on Digital Signs	Staff	Low	12
			The market trend is to install these types of signs, but the current code does not address this new technology.			
	X		Address Parking for Existing Buildings	Staff*	Low	13
			This would provide parking credit for existing buildings that have deficient parking.			
X	X		Airport Protection Plan	Staff	High/low	14
			Identify alternative ways of regulating land use within airport flight paths			
X			1st Five-year Scheduled Review of LUPP	Council	Low	15
			This would be the first major update to LUPP since Council adopted new review procedures.			
X			Boone County/Ames Urban Fringe Plan	Boone Co.	Low	16
			This project is in response to Boone County Board of Supervisors request to re-open discussions of possible Fringe area agreement.	(* Will benefit customers)		