



MINUTES of the PRESCOTT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING held on MARCH 2, 2016 at 9:00 AM in COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM, CITY HALL, 201 S. CORTEZ STREET, PRESCOTT, ARIZONA.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Menser called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE

BOARD MEMBERS	STAFF MEMBERS
Tom Menser, Chairman	Tom Guice, Community Development Director
Len Scamardo, Vice-Chair	George Worley, Planning Manager
George Sheats	Frank Hall, Community Planner
Mike First	Darla Eastman, Administrative Specialist
Councilman Lamerson	
Councilman Blair	
Councilman Lazzell	

III. REGULAR ACTION ITEMS

1. Review and Discussion of Proposed General Engineering Standards

Gwen Rowitsch of the Public Works Department introduced the new draft General Engineering Standard's document and stated that it is a stand-alone document, similar to the Land Development Code and a Chapter in the City Code. The document organizes the technical engineering items, which does not set policy, into one document for the ease of application of use for the private sector, contractors and consulting engineers. The GES will require significant modifications to the Land Development Code and that is why the Unified Development Code Committee is being requested to review the document. Historically, the City of Prescott has used the Maricopa Association of Governments standard details, whenever possible.

Henry Hash, Public Works Director, stated that the City of Prescott is one of the few cities without a GES document. The purpose of the GES is to have clear, written guidelines to help both public and private development projects through engineering design and construction. The Public Works Department staff with the assistance of several local engineering firms, including Fann Contracting, the Yavapai County Contractors Association, and the Town of Prescott Valley drafted the GES so that we are all working together under the same standards, rules, and guidelines. He continued by saying that the GES document would not keep us from being flexible, and will also help us work closely with our customers and provide the best service we can. He said he understood that "one size does not fit all". We will make sure the products support the City, as well as, guide the contractors. The GES will be monitored and reviewed each year for efficiency.

Charles Andrews, Public Works City Engineer, stated that we need to set the bar for the minimum and be consistent with how we construct and the materials we use. Historically, the City of Prescott has used the Maricopa Association of Governments standard details for guidance of engineering projects in Prescott. Also, many of the items in the new document were addressed elsewhere in City Code. The new GES document compiles technical engineering items into one document for the ease of application of use for the private sector, contractors and consulting engineers. Many of the engineering failures we see today are from the same culprit, and we want to identify that in the GES so we learn from our previous mistakes.

Mr. Andrews continued with presenting the GES document and described examples of each the following areas: 1) Introduction, 2) Grading, 3) Drainage, 4) Water, 5) Wastewater, 6) Transportation & Traffic, 7) Dry Utilities, 8) Survey, 9) Alterations and Modifications, and 10) As-Built and Record Drawings.

Sandy Griffis, Yavapai County Contractor's Association, thanked the Public Works Department staff for developing the GES document. She stated that it has helped decrease the multiple layers of bureaucracy for our developers and contractors in our area. She continued by saying that it has been a pleasure to work with the City's Public Works Department and she is looking forward to the future. She also said that we need these standards and she feels they are a good thing for the City of Prescott, and our industry supports 95% of the document. We have spent over four months and many hours with stakeholders working on the document. We need everyone on the same page and clarification is the key. The 5% we do not agree with is that "one size does not fit all." A lot of that has to do with product and restricting product does not prevent failures. So we need to do our homework and figure out what are the underlying causes of the failures. There is a major cost factor with the products the City wants to include. A good part of the GES document is the Alterations and Modifications section that we have not had in the past. It's important for builders to know we have that ability.

2. Substantial Revision of Sign Regulations

George Worley reviewed the staff report and displayed information on the overhead projector stating that this is a conceptual discussion of the potential changes to the sign codes. Due to a Supreme Court decision last year relating to regulation of content based signs, planning and legal staff undertook a review of Prescott's sign regulations to assure that the City's code conformed to Constitutional protections of free speech and that we are remaining content neutral, as well as, in the Land Development Code.

Mr. Worley displayed a table of information from the Land Development Code that showed free-standing signs and sign on buildings that are not content neutral. We will have change those sections or remove them. A key component of those protections is that regulations of free speech must be based upon criteria other than the content of the message. We have spent a lot time to come up with a method to reduce the regulations to the portions of free-speech regulations that the court has supported limiting the scope of regulations to time, place, and manner components. With signage, it's often the location, size, and where it is readable. It's the ability of the sign to convey a message. We also looked at the speed limit of the roadways and compared to the need of the size of the sign with the exception of downtown. Mr. Worley continued to discuss the difference between the free-standing signs and signage on the building, as well as, commercial verses residential signs and how they are regulated.

Jon Paladini, City Attorney, discussed the difference between residential and commercial signs. He stated that residential sign and the rights of free-speech is difficult to clarify. The courts say that the residential properties should have more freedom than commercial property because of the personal views of the resident. Legally, we could say that on a residential property you are allowed content relevant, X-number of square feet of signage. We could have problems with time limitations because of political campaign signs or religious signs. It starts to get more complex once you look at the individual property's square footage. Mr. Paladini recommended staying away from time limits because that could just cause more problems in the future, especially with the political signs. Other limitations are that they cannot be lit or have moving parts, those are some objective standards. Also, he recommended to stay away from the number of signs and stay closer to the number of square feet, but again, it ties to the size of the property.

The Committee decided that due to time constraints, the sign regulations and remaining agenda items will continued to be discussed at the next meeting on March 30, 2016.

Residential Density in the Downtown Business District

This item was postponed until the next UDC meeting.

IV. CITY UPDATES

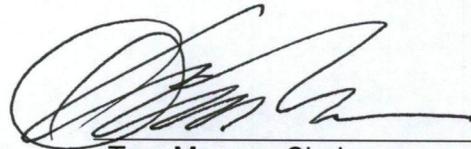
V. SUMMARY OF CURRENT OR RECENT EVENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Tom Menser, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:21 a.m.



Darla Eastman,
Administrative Specialist



Tom Menser, Chairman