

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
 REGULAR MEETING
 MARCH 30, 2016
 PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

MINUTES of the PRESCOTT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING held on MARCH 30, 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
Councilman Lamerson	Darla Eastman, Administrative Specialist
Councilman Blair	
Councilman Lazzell	

III. REGULAR ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of the March 2, 2016 Minutes

Mr. Lazzell, MOTION to approve the March 2, 2016 meeting minutes. Mr. Sheats, 2nd. VOTE 6-0; passed.

2. Continued discussion of Proposed General Engineering Standards (GES)

Henry Hash, Director of Public Works, thanked the Commissioners, staff, and Sandy Griffis, Yavapai County Contractor's Association for their support and time at the last meeting. Gwen Rositsch reviewed the proposed changes and modifications to several chapters of City Code, including the Land Development Code as part of the adoption process of the GES. She stated that in addition to the changes to the City Code and LDC, the Financial Assurances and the Quad City Standard Details were included for review.

Tom Deveroux, Prescott Contractor, stated that he is proud of the subdivisions he has built and the ones he has been involved in. He said that there are many things that concern him with the proposed GES and the main item is Section 601P, Roadway Prism that was obviously copied from the City of Mesa's GES where they are working with "onion fields" that are perfectly flat ground. He then recited the first sentence from the LDC that states the purpose is to maintain the integrity of natural ground, the rock, trees, and the landscape. He said that blasting the right-of-way out to the property line is unnecessary and you wouldn't have a lot that anyone would want to buy. He continued by saying that it is his understanding that [Public Works] is going to allow a waiver for the one he is currently involved in, the Preserve at Prescott, and that

he takes offense to that. Because what that says to him is that everything we have done in the past is wrong and now [Public Works] is going to make it right. That means none of the subdivisions he has worked on would have been built if the new GES was in place.

Mr. Deveroux continued to give examples to Commission of how the roadways are designed currently and compared them to how the GES is requiring future roadways to be built. He stated that another example of how the GES mitigates the increase of cost and time on his projects and the prescription may not be effective and it puts more and more burden on the developer in turn passes the costs to the customer. Mr. Deveroux said that he feels that the design engineers who develop any project should have more say and shouldn't have their hands tied, as well as, in all the categories of the GES.

The Committee members then discussed the GES in more detail. The Committee wants to hear more about what doesn't work for the developers and what will assist them in project development. They are trying to figure out what will the 5% of the developers who oppose the GES and what can we do to fix the issues before we send it out as part of the Code based on the input we receive. The goal is to develop a set of standards for all the engineers to follow so that there is not mis-interpretation for the majority of the categories in the GES. Eventually these projects will be turned over to the City for maintenance.

Currently, they are seeing many of the projects that should last for 25 years needing repair or replacement within 5-7 years. The Committee has asked City staff to develop these standards so the project doesn't come back for the City to pay again. Another discussion item was that they did not want to see developers flatten the topography just to make it easier to put in utilities and other infrastructure. The designers who work with Prescott's unique landscape to build beautiful structures should be commended. If standards are written in a book, there may not be flexibility for someone with a unique situation to have the ability to work around it.

The Committee agreed that they do not support a document that doesn't have flexibility for unique situations, and if there is a unique situation the developers should not have to ask for a waiver. They also agreed that a special meeting with all the stakeholders to go through the GES and the changes that are being proposed would be beneficial. Another discussion by the Committee of the GES was that Prescott has various landscapes, soils and within the City and one standard will not fit into every site. There needs to be a review and dialogue for each site as to what will be accurately designed. If the bar needs to be raised on standards of the products that is different than infrastructure design.

Henry Hash commented that the Public Works staff have been more transparent than ever and have provided the best communication in the development of the GES. There have been many public meetings for months inviting contractors, developers, and engineers to attend and provide comments. The GES has changed dramatically in the past few months with all the comments by the stakeholders are included. He said he was very surprised to hear that contractor's were contacting the Committee members with questions about design standards. Mr. Hash stated that it is our intent is to provide our City with the best customer service we can provide and on day one, stakeholders know exactly what the City expects so there are no surprises, delays or extra costs.

The Committee continued to discuss the issues with the GES and what it requires and the lack of flexibility written within it. Mr. Hash stated that the Committee requested that staff develop the standards to protect the City against project failures. However, the Committee wants developers to be able to make changes at will and go the less expensive route.

Unfortunately, we can't have it both ways, he said, and he is going with what works best for the City and what will last. The standard changes over the years because our climate changes, population, infrastructure, and many other factors that would make the need for change.

Sandy Griffis, Yavapai County Contractor's Association, stated that we have had many meetings and have worked on hundreds of issues with developers, builders, architects, and surveyors (Public Works, YCCA, and stakeholders) and have solved many of those issues and have made corrections. Ms. Griffis stated that she feels there are "two elephants left in the room," and I don't know which of the two or what percent makes up the 5% who we do not have on board. Those elephants are the required use of ductile iron pipe (dip) on water installations; and rubber gasket reinforced concrete pipe (rgrcp) on all culvert and storm drain installations. The engineers in the community want to use pvc and hdpe or a cmp product. This is the case where one size does not fit all. By going to this "Cadillac-type" of material, we are losing our complete edge in the City of Prescott when the price of building structures goes up. However, there needs to be decision of what type of products the GES requires, when to use it, and how to use it and it make it financially manageable for this community. She stated that products fail, but sometimes it's how it's installed and that will be an issue in the future.

The Committee decided that due to time constraints, the continued discussion of the GES, the sign regulations and remaining agenda items will be continued to be discussed at the next meeting on April 13, 2016. The Committee also requested that staff review and identify the changes in the UDC due to the GES standards.

3. Continued discussion of Revision of Sign Regulations

George Worley reviewed the Sign Regulations staff report and stated that a presentation was made to the Commission regarding changes to the sign code for a couple of reasons. They were initially triggered by the changes to the City's dis-allowance of the right-of-way signs. Also, to re-focus Prescott's sign code on the acceptable time, place and manner criteria are significant and resulted in staff considering a major conceptual change in the way signs are regulated and to simplifying the sign code.

Mr. Worley continued to discuss the sign codes and the two general categories, permanent and temporary within permanent signs into commercial zoning districts and residential zoning districts and then a further breakdown into free-standing and building-mounted signs. Temporary signs are broken down into commercial uses and residential uses.

The Committee discussed signs on commercial property and they felt it should be up to the property owner to decide what signs will go on the property and how many. Also the Committee discussed vegetation on the signs and if vines were allowed to grow over the sign and should they stay up if it's not visible to the public.

Mr. Scamardo, MOTION to forward the Revision of Sign Regulations to the next meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission and for staff to review the section on vegetation and placing signs on commercial property should be at the owners' discretion. Mr. Lazzell, 2nd. VOTE 6-0; passed.

4. Residential Density in the Downtown Business District

Frank Hall reviewed the staff report and stated that the purpose of the proposed amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC) is to increase the multi-family residential density standard in the Downtown Business District (DTB). He said that currently, the increase in lot area needed for more than three (3) units decreases when open space or recreational amenities are included in the multi-family development. Mr. Hall provided an example of a fourth multi-family unit with a courtyard or gym would require the lot to be 8,150 square feet. He said that all other residential types permitted in the DTB district do not have a recreational or open space amenity requirement. The proposed amendment, if approved, would permit up to nine (9) multi-family dwelling units on a 7,500 square foot lot as compared to the current limit of three (3) units for the same size lot. It also complies with the goals of the General Plan to preserve the identity and image of downtown as a historic area and to encourage an expansion of the mix of commercial and residential uses in the downtown area.

Mr. Lazzell, MOTION to forward the the Residential Density in the Downtown Business District item be forwarded to the next meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Scamardo, 2nd. VOTE 6-0; passed.

The Committee then decided that due to time constraints, the discussion of the GES and the LDC Amendments will be continued at the next meeting on March 30, 2016.

IV. CITY UPDATES

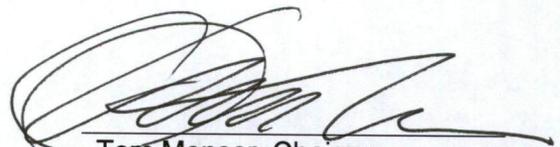
V. SUMMARY OF CURRENT OR RECENT EVENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Tom Menser, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:10p.m.



Darla Eastman,
Administrative Specialist



Tom Menser, Chairman