

CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION  
COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 22, 2012

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 5:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room on the 22nd day of August, 2012, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Gallagher, Jungman, Lockett, and  
Chairman Griffith

ABSENT: Councilmember Williams

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Rosenthal  
Ms. Susan Atkinson, Planner I  
Ms. Susan Connors, Planning and Community  
Development Director  
Mr. Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator  
Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager  
Ms. Leah Messner, Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works  
Ms. Karla Chapman, Administrative Technician

OTHER GUESTS PRESENT: Ms. Jeanette Coker, Citizen  
Mr. Evan Dunn, Citizen  
Mr. Doug Myers, OU Parking and Transportation  
Administrator  
Ms. Janice Oaks, Progressive Independence  
Mr. Cody Ponder, CART

DISCUSSION REGARDING HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, THE COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MEETINGS, AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES.

Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development, said the City has had five (5) High-Density Residential Development Dialogue meetings from June 11, 2012, to August 13, 2012, discussing different high-density topics and using facilitators to work with the public to solicit views on each specific topic. She said the final High-Density Residential Development Dialogue is scheduled for August 30, 2012, at the Norman High School Conference Center. Staff has incorporated many of the citizens' ideas and concepts from the previous five (5) high-density dialogues, creating stations for the following four (4) scenarios as follows:

**Scenario 1 – The Status Quo**

This scenario, which is enabled by current City ordinances, would allow up to three-story walkup buildings on a 10-15 acre lot with amenities provided on site, street landscaping and buildings set back with surface parking only. This approach would not allow density any greater than that which is currently permitted by the Zoning Ordinance would require applicants to maintain conditions and requirements specified in all categories of the Zoning Ordinance, including the consideration of Special Use Permits for off-street parking in all categories that currently allow it, and would continue to require 1.8 parking spaces per residential unit.

### **Scenario 2 – Allow Mid-to-High-Density Residential Development**

This scenario would allow a residential density of up to 60 units per acre generally located along arterial streets. Design guidelines and a design review process would be required and emphasis on compatibility with community character. Maximum building height of 65 feet (5 stories) with a required step back above four (4) stories in urban settings, creating a four story street wall. Taller maximum heights could be allowed in areas outside of Central Norman and would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Connors stated this particular scenario/development would not be as intense as some of the high-density developments that have been presented recently to Council. The development may decrease number of car trips as more residential developments are located close to shops, restaurants, offices, and community destinations allowing residents to walk rather than drive. Structured parking would be required to be unobtrusively located and architecturally integrated into development. Parking requirements would be one parking space per bedroom. Developments would require a combination of private open space in the form of balconies, patios, interior courtyards, and other space for tenants as well as the construction of public open space such as plazas, seating areas along sidewalks or along walkways in between buildings.

### **Scenario 3 – Allow High-Density, Mixed-Use Development**

This scenario would require mixed-use development, allowing commercial/office uses and residential density of up to 80 units per acre, generally located along arterial streets. Design guidelines and a design review process would be required and emphasis on compatibility with community character and commercial design that activates the streetscape creating an attractive public realm. Maximum street wall height of four (4) stories in urban settings with a maximum allowable height of six (6) stories. Taller building heights could be allowed in areas outside of Central Norman and would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Connors said commercial and/or office units would be located on the first story with residential units located above. Structured parking is unobtrusively located and architecturally integrated into the development. Shared parking between uses is strongly encouraged and parking requirements would be one parking space per bedroom. Developments would require a combination of private open space in the form of balconies, patios, interior courtyards, and other types of open space for tenants as well as the construction of open space along public sidewalks or elsewhere in the public realm would be required.

### **Scenario 4 – Allow Very High-Density Residential Development**

This scenario would create a very high-density residential zoning category allowing up to 100 units per acre, generally located along arterial streets. Design guidelines and a design review process would be required and emphasis on compatibility with community character. Maximum building height would be up to 65 feet (5 stories), but taller building heights could be allowed in areas outside Central Norman and determined on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Connors said this scenario has no limitation on the street wall as to the height; therefore, the five stories can be located at the street wall side. Structured parking would be unobtrusively located and architecturally integrated into development. Parking requirements would be one parking space per bedroom. Developments would require a combination of private open space in the form of balconies, patios, interior courtyards, and other types of open space for tenants as well as the construction of open space along public sidewalks or elsewhere in the public realm would be required. Ms. Connors said Staff has been attempting to gauge how people view design requirements in order to make a development acceptable and this scenario may include “not as intense” design requirements as other scenarios.

Each of the scenario stations will include the following:

- A brief written scenario description
- Graphic depictions of the scenario
- Sample of design guidelines that would apply to the scenario
- Pictures and photos of relevant buildings that might represent the scenario
- Description of assets and liabilities of the scenario
- A board so that the public can post additional comments regarding the scenario

Ms. Connors said she will provide a presentation to citizens at the final High-Density Residential Development Dialogue highlighting the four (4) scenarios in general, explaining how the previous High-Density dialogue processes have been conducted to date, and how the process/exercise will be followed that evening. The exercise will allow participants a lot of flexibility to pick and choose what they can and/or cannot support for each of the scenarios and Staff will give each participant several colored dots and so they can indicate the following for the scenarios/concepts:

- Green = Like and could support
- Red = Dislike and could not support
- Gold = Like entire concept and could support everything

Ms. Connors said Staff envisions the information/public comment(s) gathered from the five (5) high-density public forum topics, including the assets and liabilities for each scenario, and the design guidelines that are currently being developed by Staff will give an indication of what citizens can or cannot accept regarding high-density residential development. Mayor Rosenthal asked if the design standards will be added to each of the four (4) scenarios as another sub-section when Staff has them completed and Ms. Connors said yes.

Staff will collect all the information from the high-density residential development exercise, along with the information/public comment(s) from the four (4) previous high-density residential development dialogues and compile a report for Council, which is anticipated to take approximately one month. Ms. Connors said a future Study Session and/or joint meeting with the Planning Commission can be scheduled in order to discuss the report and to direct Staff how to proceed.

Chairman Griffith asked about the likelihood that some of the scenario concepts could be homogenized. He felt Scenario 4 with five (5) stories and no setbacks would be foreboding at the street front and could be more acceptable and aesthetically pleasing if the setbacks occurred at the second or third story. Chairman Griffith requested integrations of different features of each of the scenarios into the final product/report and Ms. Connors said that is what Staff envisions. Ms. Connors felt each of the scenarios needed to be as specific as possible so that people have a good idea of whether or not they could support and/or like a different idea, concept, asset, and/or liability. She said this process will assist Staff with creating a policy regarding what the community feels about high-density development.

Councilmember Jungman asked what format the final report will be in and Ms. Connors said she was not sure of the exact format at this time but the report will certainly include the descriptions identifying the primary outcome of all the high-density residential development dialogues. Councilmember Jungman felt many citizens are sensitive about height and he has heard many constituents comment that recent proposed buildings/developments are very high. He asked what the report will reflect in terms of how people feel/regard building height and Ms. Connors said the scenario exercise will offer very specific height limit concepts. She said during the exercise people will have the opportunity to either support or not support the height concept as well as offer comments regarding their response. Ms. Connors said Staff will compile the information and comments and report the majority of opinions.

Councilmember Jungman felt some citizens may get hung up on the fact they do not like density and Scenario 1 is the only acceptable scenario to like and/or support because of the height concepts for Scenarios 2, 3, and 4. He said if that situation develops then Staff and Council will have learned nothing about their opinion. Mayor Rosenthal said there is not a lot of variability on the height issue with the way the scenarios are currently set up, because they are all five or six stories. She felt the risk of citizen reaction could be that five and six stories are unacceptable and citizens will choose to only support Scenario 1. Mayor Rosenthal requested Staff tweak Scenario 2, to allow less than five stories. She said in terms of density, the current Mixed-Use Development (MUD) is 30 units and the scenarios jump to 60 units, 80 units, and 100 units. Mayor Rosenthal felt the risk of citizen reaction might be that 30 units jumping to 60 units is not "mid-density" and suggested Staff spread the units out, i.e., 40, 70, and 100 units.

Councilmember Lockett said although 50 to 70 citizens have been in attendance at each of the High-Density Development dialogues, the Norman community as a whole may not be represented. She felt Council needed to remember that decisions regarding high-density developments should represent all of Norman and not just the group(s) who attended the dialogues.

Councilmember Lockett said the first Norman hotel was built in 1950 and it was five stories high. It basically had no setbacks, 76 rooms, shops, a ballroom and restaurant, and for a number of years had University of Oklahoma (OU) classrooms in the basement. Councilmember Jungman said that was a great point and felt the issue may not be so much the total height but rather the *relative* height. He felt high density could be developed to be 12 feet above the neighboring property, i.e., if the neighboring property has a five story building, the high-density development could construct five stories plus 12 feet, likewise if the neighboring property has only a one-story building, then the high-density development could only construct one-story plus 12 feet. Mayor Rosenthal said another point to bear in mind is the proposed proximity of high-density developments to established residential neighborhoods.

Councilmember Jungman said some people believe that high density will reduce car travel while others do not and requested Staff include citizen's thoughts and/or concerns regarding high density versus car travel in the final report. Ms. Connors said the design standards/guidelines that will be listed for each scenario will include height, setbacks, architecture, landscaping, and parking in order to hit all the topics that have already been discussed in the High-Density dialogues. She said the design guidelines will be very specific requirements that should assist people with framing each scenario and will be listed before the assets and liabilities.

Councilmember Lockett asked what cities in Oklahoma have high density and Ms. Connors said currently Oklahoma City and Tulsa have high density and Stillwater is working on it. Councilmember Lockett felt many Oklahomans are still tied to their vehicles and requested Staff research the high-density parking requirements for those three cities. Ms. Connors said Staff is not making the assumption in any of the four scenarios that citizens will give up their vehicles. Chairman Griffith said he would like to see more of a mixed-use concept when and if high-density residential developments are approved so that the community can see a reduction in vehicles and more pedestrian activity such as walking and/or biking. Mayor Rosenthal asked if shared parking spaces would yield a greater efficiency of use and Ms. Connors felt that the community would need to first become familiar with high-density development including walking and/or biking to nearby shops, grocers, restaurants, etc., before this could occur. Ms. Connors said the scenario exercises implore the theory that citizens living in a high-density development would most likely have a car, but may choose to walk more rather than drive their car.

Councilmember Jungman said height information is very important and there are several other points that will need to be included in Staff's report so that Council can understand what the community thinks overall about high density, such as parking spaces per unit and/or bedroom, notification radius, units per acre, separation from R-1 zoning, i.e., same block or what types of streets would allow high density, distinguishing between areas of Norman, and types of durable exterior building materials. He requested Staff set up charts/tables at the August 30th meeting so those in attendance can place a dot reflecting the maximum or minimum they could accept regarding the above-mentioned topics. Councilmember Jungman felt the percentage charts would be a great tool not only for the public but for Council as well when discussing/considering high-density development. He agreed with Councilmember Lockett that Council would also need to weigh in opinions from the public/citizens that were not able to attend the high-density development meetings in order to do what is best for Norman as a whole.

Councilmember Gallagher asked if the four scenarios were created by Staff or from the high-density development meetings and Ms. Connors said both. He felt citizens like their vehicles and said shared parking should be omitted. Councilmember Gallagher said he has heard the University of Oklahoma (OU) has plans to build a high-density apartment and felt the City did not need to get into competition with OU regarding high density. Councilmember Lockett said traditionally that apartments are overbuilt but Council cannot control the developer's economic decisions. Mayor Rosenthal agreed and said it is not Council's place to manage the marketplace, but rather set standards for the building demand. Councilmember Gallagher felt the location for proposed high density should be limited to the downtown area and/or OU area.

Councilmember Jungman said constituents have indicated they prefer the high-density development meetings to be a little less Staff lecture/speaking and more rolling up their sleeves, hands on work. Ms. Connors said the previous high-density meetings were more educational but the August 30th high-density meeting will include more hands on work. She said citizens will have 15 to 20 minutes at each scenario station and Staff has tried to give multiple options for citizens to like and/or dislike so to encourage discussion and opinions at each station. Ms. Connors said there will not be facilitators, but rather Staff at each scenario station to answer questions and help citizens with ideas.

Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said Staff is trying to be responsive to the fact that the citizens want a choice/vote and Staff, as well as those citizens who have attended the high-density meetings, will walk away knowing an overall account regarding high density. Mayor Rosenthal asked if citizens will have the opportunity to give Staff comment sheets on each of the scenarios and Ms. Connors said yes.

Ms. Connors said Staff will send an outline for the August 30th high-density meeting to the CPTC by August 24, 2012. Mr. Lewis said an email will also be sent to all the participants to inform them of the meeting format and what to expect at the August 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Items submitted for the record

1. Handouts highlighting Scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 4, to be discussed at the August 30, 2012, High-Density Development Public Forum

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.

Mr. Doug Myers, OU Parking and Transportation Administrator, said Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART) has been making efforts to increase the ridership on the West Norman Link by advertising in the newspaper and visiting local businesses to inform the employees of the route. He said ridership has increased a little and CART will continue marching forward. Mr. Myers said on July 1, 2012, CART returned Saturday routes and extended hours to the West Norman Link that were previously reduced. Chairman Griffith said he would like to discuss possible routes, specifically in the Ward 6 area, and will schedule a time in the future with Mr. Myers.

Items submitted for the record

1. Cleveland Area Rapid Transit Ridership Totals for the Month of July 2012

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

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City Clerk

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Mayor