

Minutes
Cheney Planning Commission
Regular Meeting – In Person AND By Phone/Video Conference

June 12, 2023

Commissioners Attending: Richard Mount, Dan Turbeville, David Early, Ron Valencia, Jacquelyn Belock, William Schillinger and Natasha Jostad were present in person.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Attending: Brett Lucas, Mark Schuller, Todd Ableman and Susan Beeman.

Councilmembers Attending: Vince Barthels.

Call to Order: Chairman Mount called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed the two newest Commission members, Bill Schillinger and Ron Valencia, and asked them to share a little about themselves.

Citizen Participation: None.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Turbeville made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2023 regular meeting as distributed. Seconded by Commissioner Early, and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Item: #2023-07

Modifying the Critical Areas Ordinance to Include Steep Slopes or Geologically Hazardous Areas

Mr. Lucas explained that a draft ordinance was included in the agenda packets which would add some text to our critical areas ordinance to address steep slopes. He explained that the language being added was borrowed from Spokane Valley and the City of Spokane. He asked Commission members to review the text over the next few weeks and return comments to him. Once those comments are incorporated into the draft ordinance, a public hearing will be scheduled to accept citizen comments, and then a recommendation can be forwarded to City Council.

Chairman Mount asked if we have any flood plains in town, as identified by FEMA. Mr. Lucas said that there are some flood areas in the Minnie Creek drainage behind BiMart, but there is not very much identified in Cheney.

Commissioner Schillinger asked if the neighboring jurisdictions who have recently updated their critical areas ordinances are all using similar language. Mr. Lucas said that they are.

Discussion Item: #2023-08
Economic Development Activities

Mr. Lucas explained that we had technology challenges at the last meeting and the video was not available, so we're going to try it again. He showed graphs depicting population growth, median income, and other economic and employment indicators for Cheney, Airway Heights and Medical Lake.

Discussion followed. Councilmember Barthels asked about the criteria for creation of opportunity zones. Mr. Lucas said that he will do some research and report back.

Mr. Lucas described a business analytics site called placer.ai which analyzes customer traffic to businesses based on cell phone travel patterns and credit card data.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Turbeville reported that Vara Lyn Conrath, formerly a member of the Planning Commission, is working as the City's code enforcement officer now.

Staff Reports:

Mr. Lucas reported that staff is working on development alternatives for the 50-acre park, and working with a consultant to prepare a Land Quantity Analysis. He expects the findings to be shared at a joint City Council/Planning Commission workshop around October.

Mr. Lucas reported on a recent road trip he made through the Midwest and into Canada where he attempted to explain to the border crossing officials why geographers don't often travel along the shortest distance between two points.

Commissioner Early asked about the status on the cleanup of the Cheney Motel which burned down last August. Mr. Ableman explained that the City is working with our legal counsel to try to get a judgment which would allow us to proceed with cleanup of the site. The owner has taken out a demolition permit for the site, but has not followed through with cleanup yet. If the City does do the cleanup, we would place a lien on the property to recoup the costs.

Mr. Ableman reported that we have just completed water main work on Clay Street, from 3rd to 6th, and a portion of Elm Street from N 6th to N 5th. We have also completed the street overlay project for Clay Street and 6th Street. We will be advertising next week for bids for the residential street project for 2023.

The Spokane Transit Authority is putting new bus shelters along N. 6th Street, Elm and Washington, Betz and SR-904. Mr. Ableman reported that the City has awarded a bid for

construction of the advanced treatment facility for \$7.2 million, and construction will start in July. We're starting to receive equipment and vehicles that have been on back order for a year or more.

Mr. Schuller reported that activity in the downtown on Thursday nights is picking up after being fairly quiet since the start of the pandemic.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved By:

Susan Beeman, Secretary

Richard Mount, Chairman