



Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Summary Minutes

Tuesday, August 27, 2013 10:30 AM City & County Building, Room 391

Committee Members: Robb, Chair; Montero, Vice-Chair; Brown; Lehmann; López; Shepherd

Committee Staff: Gretchen Williams

Council Members Present: Brown, Lehmann, Lopez, Montero, Robb, Kniech, Nevitt

Members Absent: Shepherd

Bill Requests

BR13-0572 Changes the zoning classification from PUD #349 (Planned Unit Development) to Amended PUD/U-MS-3 (PUD/Urban Context, Main Street, 3 stories max.) of property at 2150 South Downing in Council District 7.

Chris Gleissner, Community Planning & Development

This 5-acre site is the Safeway store at the southeast corner of Evans and Downing. The proposed PUD amendment is desired to allow addition of a Safeway fueling station. Another part of the application will rezone a small strip of land currently in the PUD to U-MS-3 to conform the zoning with the property lines of the bank's site at the northeast corner of the site. The amount of parking currently exceeds the requirement, so there is room for the station and required parking for the store.

Community Planning & Development staff found that the proposed zoning is consistent with adopted plans, as did the Planning Board. On June 2, 2013, the Board voted 8-0 to recommend approval, but it also appointed a subcommittee to work on design issues for the station kiosk. It will be at the front of the site on

Evans, and the goal is to design it along the lines of a Main Street development.

Letters received include one of support from Platt Park People's Association; one of opposition from University Neighbors; and one of opposition from an individual.

A motion offered by Councilmember Brown, duly seconded by Councilmember Lopez, to file the bill carried by the following vote:

AYES: Brown, Lehmann, Lopez, Montero, Robb(5)
NAYS: (None)
ABSENT: Shepherd(1)
ABSTAIN: (None)

Presentations

1 Forestry: Emerald Ash Borer Threat *Rob Davis, Denver Forester*

Rob Davis, City Forester, presented a report on the challenges and threats to growing trees along the Front Range. Some of the problems include the aging Silver Maples and the Elm Scale disease.

The newest potential threat is the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive species from East Asian. The theory is that it came in to Michigan on a ship. It is causing serious problems in the Mid-West. It is spread by the dispersal of fire wood and nursery products.

In the 1994 park tree inventory, 11.38% were ash trees, and ash trees have been used even more extensively since then on public and private land.

Forestry's Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan includes updating the 20-year old inventory of park and street trees to identify where the highest value ash trees are located, and treatment plans.

Denver has not allowed ash trees as right-of-way trees for other reasons for about 10 years, and that has turned out to be a good decision in the face of the borer.

Councilman Lopez expressed concerns about people not having the option to take down their own diseased trees given the high cost of tree contractors. Denver needs to offer financial assistance.

It costs \$15 an inch diameter to treat a tree. To remove it will cost about \$30-\$40 an inch.

Diversity is key to protecting the health of the urban forest. Denver only allows four trees of the same species in a row.

Councilwoman Robb asked that we schedule a few minutes at the start of the Committee meeting on Sept. 17 to review the list of allowed street trees since we are getting into the fall planting season.

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Landmark Preservation: Discover Denver

Savannah Jameson, Landmark Preservation Commission; Jessica Ugarte, Historic Denver

Discover Denver is a building and neighborhood survey to identify historic and architecturally significant structures citywide. The intent is to identify the places that matter in Denver's history; to share the value of the historic properties in order to promote public pride and awareness; and to encourage neighborhood rehabilitation and reinvestment.

Historic surveys can be very cumbersome and time consuming, but technology is improving the tools that can be applied. Los Angeles has developed software, and it has made that available to Denver free of cost. Using that and graduate students and class projects, Denver will be able to produce useful field work more quickly.

Approximately 4000 properties are included in the three target areas. It is anticipated that between 5% and 10% of properties will be identified as of particular interest.

Public outreach will be an important component. Denver Public Library's "Creating Communities" website and Historic Denver's Story Trek program are partners. The stakeholders group includes several neighborhood representatives and Councilwoman Robin Kneich.

Pilot Area 1 is the Harvey Park Neighborhood, which is full of May Cliff Homes. Pilot Area 2 is a group of 1920s-era small homes along some of the parkways. These two areas will be surveyed during the fall of 2013.

Pilot Area 3 is the streetcar commercial districts, such as 32nd and Lowell, 25th and Elliott, Old South Gaylord and Old South Pearl. These will be surveyed in spring 2014.