



Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Summary Minutes

Tuesday, December 10, 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, Shepherd, Susman, Herndon

Members Absent: None

Bill Requests

BR13-0906-0915 Designates 10 parcels as park land under Section 2.4.5. of the Charter.
Scott Gilmore, Deputy Manager, Parks and Recreation

The presentation materials are attached to this meeting summary.

Mr. Gilmore said this is the second group of park designations, and there will be one more next spring. The Department's goal is to have 10 acres of park land for every 1000 residents. Currently, that goal is met, even without including the 14,000-acre Mountain Parks system.

The proposed bills, listed below, will designate over 275 acres of park land:

- BR13-0906: Dartmouth Gulch Park
- BR13-0907: 51st & Zuni unnamed park
- BR13-0908: Bear Creek Park

- BR13-0909: Camp Rollandet Natural Area
- BR13-0910: Stapleton Central Park
- BR13-0911: East-West Greenway Park
- BR13-0912: Gates Crescent Park
- BR13-0913: Southwest Auto Park
- BR13-0914: Parkfield Park
- BR13-0915: Fishback Park

The goal is to designate 96% of the park land in Denver. To move toward that goal, Parks & Recreation has been working with the InterNeighborhood Cooperation (INC) Parks Designation Committee on these designations.

Brad Cameron spoke in favor of these designations. He said the group working with Parks & Recreation is pleased with the process.

Councilwoman Susman asked if the Great Lawn at Lowry has been designated; it is not clear on the exhibit provided. Mr. Gilmore said he will check on that and let her know.

Councilwoman Lehmann asked about utilities under some of the parks and how that impact designation. Mr. Gilmore said Parks works with the utilities (Denver Water, Xcel, etc.) because they must have access to their facilities. The utilities must agree to allow the park to be designated.

Councilwoman Shepherd asked about bullet point in the handout about preservation of key visual corridors or scenic vistas. Mr. Gilmore replied that several parks have outstanding views, and this could be a reason for park designation. Councilwoman Lehmann noted that views from parks are often preserved by adopted view plane ordinances, which is different from park designation. She suggested the Committee have further discussion of this point.

A motion offered by Councilmember Shepherd, duly seconded by Councilmember Lopez, to file all of the proposed bills designating park land carried by the following vote:

AYES: Susman, Brown, Lehmann, Lopez, Montero, Robb, Shepherd(7)
NAYS: (None)
ABSENT: (None)
ABSTAIN: (None)

Presentation

Ruby Hill Park Rail Yard

*John Martinez and Skyler Ruggles, Parks & Recreation;
Bob Holmes, Winter Park*

This is the first park of this type in the world. Winter Park started this project in 2006 in order to bring the ski experience into the city. This is the 8th year of the operation. The operation has been improved over the years with lighting and snow-making capacity. Christy Sports now provides free equipment Fridays through Sundays for kids between eight and 17 years, with parental signature, and for adults.

The yard is open between four and eight weeks each year, depending on the snow. The amenity is open until 9:00 PM. Volunteers number close to 30, and Winter Park provides a season pass to them for volunteering their time. Many inquiries have been received from around the world.

The Rail Yard has blossomed into a unique and wonderful community amenity, as well as a great cooperative venture.

Councilwoman Robb asked for a short summary of the Railyard for Councilmembers' newsletters.

Bill Request

BR13-0956 Changes the zoning classification from M-RH-3/OS-B (Master Planned context, Row House, 3 stories max./Open Space context, recreation) to M-RX-5 (Mater Planned context, Residential Mixed Use, 5 stories max.) for property located at approximately 7800 E. 53rd Pl. and 8130 and 8900 E. 56th Ave. in Council District 11.

Theresa Lucero, Community Planning & Development

This vacant 122-acre site is in Stapleton North and owned by Forest City. The proposal is to change the zoning to increase the allowed height from 3 to 5 stories. The development will be primarily residential rental units. It will include 80 affordable for-sale units under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO).

On Nov. 20, the Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the request. No public comments have been received to date.

Councilwoman Lehmann asked if there are any schools planned for this area. Councilman Herndon said not within the boundaries of this specific request, but there will be a high school just to the east, opening fall of 2015, and an elementary/middle school on the south, opening this fall.

Councilman Herndon suggested that the Committee receive an update on the overall redevelopment of the Stapleton site. That will be scheduled.

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

AYES: Susman, Brown, Lehmann, Lopez, Montero, Robb, Shepherd(7)
NAYS: (None)
ABSENT: (None)
ABSTAIN: (None)

Presentation

BR13-0949 Introduction only of proposed Zoning Code Text amendment No. 16 based on recommendations from the city's inspection, permitting and planning staff, and public feedback.

*Rocky Piro, Manager, Community Planning & Development;
Michelle Pyle, Tina Axelrad, and Michael O'Flaherty,
Community Planning & Development*

Rocky Piro, Manager of Community Planning & Development, introduced the topic, addressing the importance of plan documents, which are products of the community's work and its visions, and how those plans inform proposed updates of the zoning. The 2013 package of zoning code text amendments include some minor tweaks, some corrections, as well as some substantive changes.

Michelle Pyle, Tina Axelrad, Michelle Pyle and Mike O-Flherty presented the package of amendments. They had introduced this package to the Planning Board last week. The public review draft was posted on Nov. 18, and staff is holding "open houses" for people to come in with questions. Public comment will be taken through Jan. 6, after which the final language will be produced and the formal amendment process will begin in late January.

Many of the changes are clarifications and include re-organization and minor text changes, such as re-wording, additions and deletions. The proposal would also add several illustrations and graphics as well. Some proposed changes are more substantive. Eventually, terms used in the text will be hyper-linked to further information to make the code more user-friendly.

The text amendments are on the DenverGov website on the Community Planning & Development page. Some of the issues addressed include:

- Build-to options
- Detached garage standards
- Window-well encroachments

- Side interior lot setbacks
- Heights, setbacks and forms in some of the Master Planned Context (primarily Stapleton)
- Placing all bike parking standards together and increasing some requirements
- Clarifying fence regulations and adding graphics
- Allowing more shared parking arrangements with City approval
- Eliminating references to valet parking, which is regulated by Public Works
- Increasing maximum surface parking within Transit Oriented Development areas
- Adding a senior housing parking reduction
- Adding new allowance for projecting "blade" signs in mixed use commercial districts.

Councilwoman Susman asked about design review for projecting signs. Staff said there are limitations on height and volume, but design has not been regulated outside of specific design review area such as Cherry Creek North and Lower Downtown. Projecting signs are allowed in Downtown and the Golden Triangle. The plan is to undertake a comprehensive update of the entire sign code in the near future.

Councilwoman Robb asked if this package will include a resolution for issue of 5-story "micro-housing" being allowed on 6000 square lots without any parking requirement. Mr. Piro said not for this package, but staff is working on that issue.

At the Committee's meeting on Dec. 17, this review will be continued.