

**Minutes of the**

**Development Review Commission**

**Study Session**

**September 25, 2017**

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**Study Session of the Development Review Commission, of the City of Tempe, was held at the Tempe Public Library,**

**3500 South Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona**

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| **Commission Members Present:** |  | | |
| Chair Linda Spears |  | | |
| Vice Chair David Lyon |  | | |
| Commissioner Michael DiDomenico |  | | |
| Commissioner Thomas Brown |  | | |
| Commissioner Philip Amorosi |  | | |
| Commissioner Andrew Johnson |  | | |
| Commissioner Scott Sumners  Alternate Commissioner Nicholas Labadie | |  | | |
| Alternate Commissioner Barbara Lloyd |  | | |
| Commission Members Absent:  Alternate Commissioner Angela Thornton  **City Staff Present:**  Kenneth Jones, Deputy City Manager  Steven Methvin, Deputy City Manager  Chad Weaver, Community Development Director  Rosa Inchausti, Office of Strategic Management and Diversity Director  Ryan Levesque, Comm. Dev. Deputy Director – Planning  Wydale Holmes, Office of Strategic Management and Diversity Strategic Management Analyst  Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner  Steve Abrahamson, Principal Planner  Ambika Adhikari, Principal Planner  Karen Stovall, Senior Planner  Diana Kaminski, Senior Planner  Lee Jimenez, Senior Planner  Obenia Kingsby, Planner II  Cynthia Jarrad, Administrative Assistant  Sarah Adame, Executive Assistant | | |  | | |
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| Summary Notes Prepared by the Office of Strategic Management and Diversity. The Study Session was led by Ms. Rosa Inchausti and Ms. Wydale Holmes. Ms. Rosa Inchausti opened the meeting at 5:00 pm. |  | | |

The Development Review Commission agreed upon the following initial action items for follow-up:

**Initial Action Items**

1. Submit “Five Questions” to Council
2. Staff summary back to DRC regarding Council vote/comments
3. Council report – update approval criteria checklist
4. Create a “once a month” hearing model and evaluate impacts on:
   1. Public Input
   2. Property Owners and deadlines
   3. Coordination with Council Schedules
5. Expectations of Application (staff support)
6. Create an action plan for remaining items
7. Check-in in 3 months with DRC

The Commission requested (of staff), the following follow-up items with City Council, which would enable them to better understand the City Council’s vision. They were as follows:

**Focus Areas for the “Five Questions” to City Council**

1. Long-term Sustainability
   1. Long-term strategy for transportation and parking
2. Environmental Sustainability
3. Philosophy regarding
   1. Rent versus Owned
   2. Student Housing
   3. Accessory Dwelling Units
4. Height & Density
   1. General
   2. Mill Avenue – hard limit on density and Height
5. Definition of High Quality
6. Commitment to Open Space (and type) in Downtown Area
7. Other directions for DRC

Some of the issues that would help DRC/Staff understand Council’s Vision that were discussed at this meeting are as follows:

1. Types of projects they are looking for at the Lake
2. Density and Height Vision Plan, Spacing, Setbacks and Parking (still referencing 2005 – need updates), design materials
3. What’s important to them?
4. What are they looking for?
5. Provide Council stakeholder information (public Comment at DRC); heat map
6. Summary report included in staff report
7. DRC representative brief Council at Work Study Session with facts, emotions, landmines from public hearing

The Commission discussed opportunities for improving Reports to DRC that included the following:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stop** | **Start** | **Continue** |
| 1. Boilerplate reports | 1. Include highlights, simplifications, specifics to case 2. Utilize Council monitors to access documents electronically during meeting 3. Provide higher resolution e-files (Liquid Files)    * New application with Clerk’s office 4. Provide professional analysis from Planner’s review at work session    * Include challenges, problems 5. Simplify the reports to the DRC 6. Highlight project specific stipulations 7. Detailed overlay area map – bring up front in report 8. Make what they are asking for more prominent 9. Convey questions to staff before meeting 10. Share what the applicant doesn’t provide from the ask; or can’t provide | 1. Timing of distribution of reports to DRC 2. Including electronic files with links 3. Providing detailed overlay area map to provide context |

The Commission also suggested some considerations for DRC meetings and times:

* Pre-hearing meetings
* 2-3 cases
* Early afternoon, Pre-session
* Most places 1x/month?
* Monthly deadlines
* Times when schedule is loaded
* Abbreviated presentations
* Layered calendar is complex
  + “once a month” hearing model

In order to improve communication, the Commission also recommended leveraging Study Sessions to stay informed. This includes:

* Report on Council votes; what they disagreed with
* 30 minutes are adequate without presentations
* Make them meaningful – general ideas, big things
* Provide feedback to staff from work session
* Receive presentations in advance before the study session (establish procedures)
* Clarify staff recommendations
* Hearing format:
  + Staff – framing the project, issues
  + Presentation from applicant (Quick review)
  + Public Comment
  + DRC Discussion

The Commission also suggested some actions from staff (below) that would be helpful to improve collaboration between staff and Commission:

1. Preliminary communication – questions before going to DRC
2. Consistency, standard of what makes a good building
3. Less subjectivity regarding projects
4. Connect Council vision with pre-application meeting (Provide DRC comments from Pre-Application meeting?)
5. Expressions/Qualitative
6. Update Code
7. Continue the process of involving Community Development and Economic development in Council/Applicant meetings

**Announcements:** None.

**There being no further business, the Study Session was adjourned at 7:40pm.**

Prepared by: Cynthia Jarrad



Reviewed by: Suparna Dasgupta

Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner