

2010 Planning and Zoning Commission

End of the Year Report

The end of the year report is a look back at 2010 and the work of the Planning and Zoning Commission. While the report captures the number of meetings, types of cases, and training sessions the Planning and Zoning Commission attended, the true intention of the report is to move beyond each case and review the effect they have had on the city as a whole. This report will analyze the following:

- Cases reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission
- Review of the 2010 work plan including current and long range planning initiatives and training attended
- Development trends that are unfolding in San Marcos
- Goals the Planning and Zoning Commission set at the February 2010 P&Z retreat.

A Quick Glimpse Back At 2010

- **Number of Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings:** 19 meetings
- **Cases:**
 - Subdivision Plat Cases: 23
 - Conditional Use Cases: 32
 - General Conditional Use Permits: 18
 - TABC Conditional Use Permits: 14
 - Plat Variance cases: 7
 - Land Use Amendments: 13
 - Zoning Cases: 16
 - PDD cases: 2
 - Street Name Changes: 2
 - Qualified Watershed Protection Plan: 2
- **Annexations:** 947.43 acres
- **Commissioners:** Commissioner Shy and Commissioner Prather stepped down from the Planning and Zoning Commission and were replaced by Commissioner Kelsey and Commission Ehlers.
- **Training Sessions Attended:**
 - Yearly Planning and Zoning Commission Retreat (February 2010)
 - State APA Conference (October 2010)
 - SmartCode Training (Summer of 2010)

Zoning

As identified in the “Quick Glimpse” section of the report, the Planning and Zoning Commission has made recommendations on 13 land use map amendments, 16 zoning cases and 2 Planned Development Districts resulting in the following:

- 49.149 acres of new commercial property
- 64 acres of multi-family property
- 1293.38 acres of mixed use property (*1278 acres of the property rezoned to mixed use is a result of the Paso Robles development*)
- 5.87 acres of single family property
- 832 new multi-family units
- 26 new single family units
- 3,450 new residential units (*This number reflects the Paso Robles development and could be a combination of multi-family, single family or two family units*)

While the location of the multi-family requests have not been concentrated in a specific sector of town, sector 2 saw the largest increase in multi-family units with the rezoning of the Buie Tract (from single family residential and unzoned to MF-12, creating 453 multi-family units). Since 2008, 2774 multi-family units have been entitled through the rezoning process. With the increase in multi-family development, staff has seen a shift from construction of 1, 2, or 3 bedroom apartments, being rented out as one unit, to the construction of 3, 4, and sometimes 5 bedroom apartments with each bedroom rented out separately. As

this trend has progressed three significant trends have emerged:

- There is a significant lack of multi-family development that is geared toward young professionals and couples.
- Multi-family development is continuing to locate in areas where multi-family is already established resulting in dozens of acres of exclusively multi-family development and areas where the option of walking to daily necessities is nonexistent.
- Bedrooms are being leased out separately rather than by the apartment unit and as a result, the definition of a unit needs to be reviewed.

As identified in the “Quick Glimpse” section of the report the Paso Robles Development entitled 3,450 new residential units through the use of PDD with a base zoning of Mixed Use. The development of the subdivision was allowed a combination of multi-family, single family, two family units or could be exclusively one of the three uses. In the case of both Paso Robles and in the case of the Blanco Vista Subdivision Concept Plan amendment, the Commission discussed the importance providing the community with a high degree of predictability of how land within the community will be developed.

Due to the lack of new residential subdivisions both the number of single family residential rezonings and residential subdivision plats have not been substantial. Staff has seen increased interest in infill development. While there are a few developers in the community that have built on these smaller infill lots, the majority of these cases do not proceed due to need for variances to the zoning

requirements such as to lot size, setbacks, lot depth, etc.

Conditional Use Permits

As in previous years, the conditional use permits have made up nearly a one-third of the cases the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed. Of the 32 conditional use permit cases the Commission reviewed, 14 were TABC conditional use permits and 18 were general conditional use permits.

Building Report

The following is a breakdown in the building permit valuation, new commercial square footage permitted and new multi-family units permitted. The most significant change from 2009 is the number of new multi-family units permitted.

- Total Value of Building Permits Issued: \$175,759,417 (compared to a 2009 figure of \$100,359,676)
- Infill Building Permits Issued: 11
- New Commercial Square Footage: 237,753 (compared to a 2009 square footage of 474,092)
- New multi-family units permitted: 1,141 (compared to 458 units in 2009)
- Building permits for single family residences: 153 (compared to 158 in 2009)

Work Program Accomplishments

At the beginning of each year the Planning and Zoning Commission establishes goals and a work program that includes current and long range projects for the year. The following is a summary of the work program accomplishments and review of the 2010 goals:

- A 5 year annexation plan is underway and is anticipated to be ready for the Planning and Zoning Commission review by May.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted the ITE Context Sensitive Design Solutions Manual and updated the Thoroughfare Plan to include the extension of Leah Avenue.
- A 4 day form-based code charette was held in April along with dozens of public meetings throughout the year. A draft version of a form-based code has been put together and a successful outreach program was completed in December.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission continued to refine the Land Development Code with revisions to the land use matrix, maximum building height, landscape requirements, off-street parking standards, noise ordinance and sidewalk requirements.
- Adoption of an Adult Oriented Businesses (AOB) Ordinance.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission celebrated Community Planning Month by hosting an open house, a proclamation by the Mayor, a form base code webinar, and the *1st Annual My Favorite Place in San Marcos Art Contest*.
- Continued participation in regional planning efforts such as:
 - Envision Central Texas- Greenprint for Growth initiative

- Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Congress for New Urbanism- Central Texas Chapter
- American Planning Association- Central Texas Chapter

One of the reasons for taking a look back at 2010 is to keep the goals established at the Planning and Zoning Commission retreat active. The following is a list of the goals established last February and a look back at how they were accomplished or how we can continue to work towards them:

- Pull people into downtown from the outlet mall
 - *Two trolleys have been purchased by the City with the intention of getting people from the outlet mall, and embassy suites to downtown San Marcos.*
- Create a variety of housing types
 - *Accomplishing this goal can seem challenging when the majority of the requests for housing are multi-family requests. However, there are two ways of accomplishing this goal. The first way is to review the ordinances in place and analyze what is standing in the way of getting the housing products that is absent from San Marcos. The second strategy is utilizing requests for PDDs to get a superior housing product than what we have in place. The requirements of the PDD should be very detailed and specific to assure a predicable product.*
- Reduce “brain drain”
 - *Reducing brain drain is not only the creation of jobs but also the creation of housing for young professionals. The San Marcos housing options currently in place are significantly limited with respect to type of residential unit, location, and availability of non-student multi-family.*
- Discourage segregation of students from the rest of the community
 - *This continues to be a challenging goal. Throughout the year we have discussed the notion of complete neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that have a mixture of land uses that not only include access to your daily needs within walking distance but also contain housing for the different stages of one’s life. Creating a mixture of housing does not require multi-family to be next single family and does not require the creation of a 200’ buffer to segregate the uses. It does however require*

appropriate transitions between uses rather than segregation of uses.

- Encourage infill
 - *The proposed SmartCode is a step towards fulfilling this goal. Additionally, the City continues to offer infill incentives for infill housing sold at or below \$106,000.00*
 - Encourage dense development downtown
 - *The adoption of the SmartCode is a significant step towards creating a dense downtown. Also analyzing the standards in place for areas adjacent to the SmartCode areas to allow infill development is another way for encourage a dense development of downtown.*
 - Appoint a student liaison to the Planning and Zoning Commission
 - *Staff will start soliciting resumes for the Planning and Zoning Commission's review.*
 - Protecting and enhancing gateways
 - *Protecting and enhancing gateways can be done through a variety of ways. One way of enhancing the major gateways into our community is through enhanced development standards that include signage, location of utilities, landscaping.*
-
