

The University Area Commission met at 7:00 at the Northwood and High Building in Rm. 100. Commissioners present: Krupp, Beeman, Hegley, Volkmann, Young, Runta, Sheehan, Williams, Keeny, Excused: Wesaw, Sharvin, Absent: Uhas-Sauer, Cespedes.

The committee met with members of the City Planning Department. Representing the department were Kevin Wheeler, Mark Dravillas, Dan Ferdelman, and Christopher Lohr.

Wheeler presented the departments plan for Phase I implementation of the codifying plan recommendations into code. Noting that there are approximately 6,000 parcels in the district the city planning staff has decided to pursue code changes in the commercial corridors before enacting residential code recommendations. Residential code changes based on plan recommendations will constitute a second phase.

The proposed timeline begins in April/May and proposed code change legislation would go before City Council in September/October. There will not be a working group to formulate changes. District property owners, residents, stakeholders will be able to attend an open house and a project website will be made to provide information and solicit input. Formal consideration of the changes will be acted upon by the UAC, UARB and the Development Commission before going to City Council.

Commissioners and concerned citizens had an opportunity to ask questions and give comments to the planning staff during the meeting.

Questions included: Would the commercial corridors not under the purview of the UARB such as 5th Avenue be added to their purview. Answer: Undecided yet.

Question: What is the guidance for the University Area Review Board? Answer: The new plan is the guidance for the UARB. However, developers can always pursue variances to the code.

Question: Would the UARB be reconstituted to in order to have greater resident participation and representation? Answer: I don't know. No plan for that yet.

Question: Can the city get rid of mechanical parking systems as a parking option? Answer: The city supports mechanical parking systems. They are a valid parking solution.

Numerous comments included the notion that the city should be talking about the residential phase of plan implementation sooner rather than later and in tandem with the Phase I process.

The commission was urged by the planning staff to submit suggestions for parking ratios, both commercial and residential, heights and Floor Area Ratios (F.A.R.). It was noted by the chair that the commission itself would have to come to some agreement about parking ratios, F.A.R., and heights.

The planners mentioned altering the F.A.R. bonus to preserve historic buildings. There was a thought that the current bonus was not effective in preserving buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 P.M.