

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF ROWLETT, TEXAS, HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL CENTER  
4000 MAIN STREET, AT 7:00 P.M., AUGUST 30, 2011**

PRESENT: Chairman Rick Sheffield, Vice-Chairman Greg Landry, Commissioners Greg Peebles, Chris Cigainero, Joe Charles, Charles Alexander, Karl Crawley

ALSO PRESENT: Alternate Robert Kittrell (non-voting member), City Attorney David Berman

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Lynda Humble, Director of Public Works and Development Jim Proce, Planning Manager Erin Jones, Planner I Michele Berry, Development Services Technician Ashley McCoy

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

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Chairman Rick Sheffield called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**B. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION**

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**1. Remove item from the table, conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council on the Realize Rowlett 2020 Vision Plan, which will serve as an amendment to the City's current Comprehensive Plan.**

Vice-Chairman Greg Landry made a motion to remove Item B.1 from the table and Commissioner Chris Cigainero seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 7-0 vote. Erin Jones, Planning Manager came forward to present the item. She thanked the Steering Committee for their time and assistance throughout the process. Mrs. Jones reviewed the process timeline from the issuance of the Request for Qualifications in August 2010 through the current meeting including:

- March 1, 2011 – Council approved agreement to contract the services of HOK.
- March 14, 2011 - The consultant team toured the City with staff to get a basic understanding of key opportunity areas and potential challenges throughout the City. The team then shared their findings and asked for feedback during the project kickoff meeting with the Steering Committee later the same afternoon.
- March 31, 2011- Staff began bi-monthly conference calls with the consultant team using a web-based system. This system saves time and money while allowing staff to effectively communicate with the entire consultant team at one time.
- April 6, 2011- The consultant team met with key members of City staff, including representatives from the Water/Wastewater, Streets, Engineering and Planning Divisions of the Public Works Department, as well as representatives from the Parks and Recreation and Accounting Departments to discuss the "State of the City". This intensive five hour work session allowed the consultant team to leverage off existing studies and staff's knowledge to begin the framework to identify key opportunity areas.
- April 21, 2011 – The consultant team lead the Steering Committee through a similar "State of the City" exercise. The input from staff's "State of the City" exercise was not revealed to the Committee until their

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was completed. The two were compared and contrasted adding to the framework of potential key opportunity areas.

• April 25, 2011- The City hosted a Community Wide Kickoff Meeting. Approximately 80 stakeholders attended the kickoff event. At this meeting participants were asked to provide input on a variety of topics as well as provided an overview of the entire Realize Rowlett 2020 process. The topics discussed at the kickoff meeting included:

- Transportation: How should Rowlett take advantage of the President George Bush Turnpike and DART light rail line investments?
- Lake Ray Hubbard: How can the lake attract and shape sustainable development?
- Downtown: What should its character be in the year 2020?
- Life-long Community: What will make Rowlett attractive to people at all stages of their lives?
- Job Centers: What jobs and companies will give Rowlett a strong 21st century economy?
- People Places: Where do you love to go in Rowlett? What kinds of places are needed?
- Identity: What will make Rowlett distinctive now and in the future?

For people who were unable to attend the kickoff event but still wanted to weigh in on Rowlett's future, an online survey was set up to give the public a chance to view the preliminary key opportunity areas as determined by the Steering Committee and City staff through the "State of the City" exercise. The data collected at the kickoff meeting, paired with the "State of the City" data lead to the draft version of key opportunity areas discussed in more detail at the Community Charrette.

• May 21, 2011 – The City hosted a Community Wide Charrette. A Charrette is an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for development. Approximately 10 stakeholders participated in the event. These stakeholders included citizens, property owners, developers, students, and anyone with a general interest in the outcome of the Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan. At the Charrette, people chose from five key opportunity areas and then spent approximately five hours creating alternative scenarios. General statistics based on the scenarios were presented to the participants at the end of the event. This input was analyzed with respect to financial feasibility, and was used to create draft preferred scenarios for the City.

• May 31, 2011 - June 13, 2011 - Four Community meetings were held. These meetings were primarily intended for people who were unable to participate in the Charrette or participants who wanted to offer further comments. These meetings gave the community another opportunity to provide input to the process. This input was analyzed with respect to financial feasibility, and was used to create draft preferred scenarios for the City.

• June 8, 2011- A Joint City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting was held. The primary purpose of the Work Session was for the consultant team lead by HOK to provide the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission with an update and request general consensus regarding the Realize Rowlett 2020 visioning process to that date. In summary the consultants provided a detailed overview of the process, presented community feedback, facilitated a discussion to establish guiding principles, and briefed the Council and Commission on the next steps in the process. This meeting was a pivotal point in the process because it ensured that the Council and Commission had general consensus as to the direction in which the plan was heading. Guiding Principles were established at this meeting to not only guide the plan, but to also guide all future policy decisions pertaining to development in the City of Rowlett.

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- July 18, 2011- A second Community Wide Open House was held. In the timeframe between the Planning Charrette in May and the second Community Open House, the consultants' worked to refine the concepts created at the Charrette. These refined concepts and the plan's guiding principles were presented and discussed on July 18, 2011 at a Community Open House. At this meeting participants were introduced to the draft framework plans for each of the 13 Strategic Opportunity Areas. These 13 areas are subareas of the original five areas defined through the "State of the City" analysis. There were stations setup for each Strategic Area and participants had an opportunity to give feedback on these concepts. Approximately 50 stakeholders were in attendance. Based on keypad polling results, in general there was support for the framework plans and scenarios presented at the meeting. This input was necessary to determine if we should continue moving in that direction or drastically revise the draft vision. With the feedback provided at the meeting the consultants continued to delve deeper into the economic analysis and formulate a prioritized list of opportunity areas.
- July 21, 2011- The consultants lead the Steering Committee through a four hour, detailed overview of the specific area analyses. This included a detailed discussion about infrastructure, economic realities, shifting existing paradigms, and overall priorities. The Steering Committee's comments were incorporated in the profile sheets that were presented at the Joint meeting on August 9, 2011 and included in the final draft document. It was important to the Steering Committee that the individual areas have a "story" that clearly expresses the vision for the area while evoking the same excitement for the area that is felt today. Staff and the Steering Committee understand that the Realize Rowlett 2020 Vision Document will likely outlast the current Council, Commission, and possibly key staff members; it is imperative that the document clearly convey the vision of the community for future leaders to carry out.
- August 9, 2011- A joint City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was held. The consultants lead the Council/Commission through a two and a half hour, detailed overview of the specific area analyses. This included a discussion about infrastructure, economic realities, shifting existing paradigms, return on investment, and overall priorities. The Commission and Council were encouraged to ask questions and debate any remaining concerns, as this meeting was the last scheduled meeting prior to the formal public hearings. At the end of the meeting the Council and Commission provided a general consensus in agreement to the plan elements as presented.
- August 23, 2011- The first formal public hearing was scheduled for the August 23, 2011 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting. Staff requested that this item be tabled to a Special Meeting on August 30, 2011. The Realize Rowlett 2020 initiative has maintained an aggressive timeline since it began in March 2011. While some vision plans take upwards of twelve months or more to complete, the Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan has been substantially completed within five months. While much of the content did not change from what was presented at the Joint Council/Planning and Zoning Commission meeting held on August 9, 2011, it was more time consuming than expected to compile the final draft of the plan.

Mrs. Jones stated that the proposed Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan is truly the Community's plan. It is a product of engaged stakeholders and a great deal of work on the part of the Steering Committee, City Staff, and the HOK team. Any changes should be weighed heavily to ensure that the Community's vision is upheld. Mrs. Jones noted that cities in the State of Texas are not mandated to have comprehensive plans or zoning regulations. However, if a city chooses to adopt zoning regulations, per Chapter 211.004 of the Texas Local Government Code, they must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan. The City of Rowlett has adopted zoning regulations; thus those regulations should be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. The last Comprehensive Plan update occurred in 2001. The changes that have occurred in the City of Rowlett since

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2001 necessitate an update to the Comprehensive Plan in order to proactively address future opportunities. It is important to note that a Comprehensive Plan does not establish zoning regulations. It is high level overview that establishes a vision and provides implementation strategies that are used to create zoning regulations in the future. Unlike previous plan amendments, the Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan is intended to replace all previous comprehensive plans. Due to the drastic change in guiding principles and overarching philosophies it is not practical to think that any portion of the previous plan and the proposed plan can be “read in harmony”. Areas outside the 13 strategic opportunity areas will also experience development and redevelopment over time. For these areas, existing zoning as amended will continue to direct design and investment decisions. The Guiding Principles established through the Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan should be considered in decisions about rezoning, subdivision and site design throughout the City as a whole. Implementation of this plan will provide new tools (such as zoning and building code revisions) that will apply Citywide and make it easier to achieve the vision described within the plan.

Mark Bowers, HOK, came forward to present the final draft of the Realize Rowlett 2020 Plan. He stated that the focus has been directed toward the areas of the community where development or change is important to create and maintain a desirable outcome. He also stated that the implementation will rely on a unified vision by City leadership and the community, support with policies and regulations and private investment within the key areas. He noted that Rowlett’s future growth will rely on the City’s role in the market, both real and perceived, and essential regulatory rules and processes be restructured.

Karen Walz, Strategic Community Solutions, spoke regarding implementation and the priority recommendations including establishing design guidelines for each of the prospective areas and their respective product types, investigating creation of entity that can acquire position and dispose of properties to interested parties, adopt a building code consistent with the City’s vision, prepare a zoning code in support of the vision, prepare and implement a zoning overlay for the interim while the building and zoning codes are prepared, develop transportation plans for the waterways serving the community, continue discussions with property owners and development interests within the strategic areas and prepare a subarea plan for Old Town to inform future public and private investment prior to the completion of the DART Rail Station.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area C-1/Lakeside Living:

- Destination, master planned community for singles and couples
- Community within an community
- Base of little to no maintenance living
- Non-vehicular pathways, with golf carts or walking as primary mode of transportation
- Commercial located along water’s edge accessible by boat
- Implementation - build citywide neighborhood outreach programs, meet with HOA leaders and membership, educate residents about proposed concept

Commissioner Cigainero inquired about a PD zoning currently in effect within the area and Mrs. Jones responded that it would be critical to discuss the vision with the property owner/developer of the land and the potential return of investment to ensure the success of the vision for the area.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area C-2/Family Life:

- Continue the existing pattern of development in the area- primarily large lot single-family homes
- Higher density compatible; limits on capacity of infrastructure
- Target a move-up market for residents desiring an executive lifestyle, significant acreage, and accessibility to regional amenities and activity centers
- Implementation – continue to meet with developers to understand their intentions

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Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area D-1/Healthy Living:

- Neighborhood for people whose focus is on health and wellness
- Investment will reflect healthy lifestyle- walkability, access to recreational amenities, organic food choices
- Implementation – work with Lakepointe Hospital to define a hospital district

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area B-2/Woodside Living:

- Neighborhood with a mix of uses at a range of densities and limited commercial
- Residential product types supported by public spaces
- Transition in density from the highest at its core to the lowest at its edge
- Implementation – capture and benefit from the amenity value of Muddy Creek

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area E-5/Active Living:

- Neighborhood for active people and families with outdoor and water sport activities
- Range of housing choices at accessible rates and emphasis on access to water
- Waterfront space will be set aside for limited commercial/entertainment venues
- All will appear unified in character and quality
- Implementation – prepare urban design framework and complete school capacity analysis

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area E-1/Signature Gateway:

- Tallest buildings anywhere in the City (10+ floors)
- Class A corporate headquarter, residential and lodging tower supported by ground floor commercial, restaurant and entertainment venues
- Amphitheater located on water's edge
- Implementation – build citywide outreach plan, wait for the right opportunity/master developer

Vice-Chairman Landry inquired about the impact of the high density on the residential neighborhood to the north and Mr. Bowers responded that the overlay could provide guidance to the transition along the area but the key subarea would be the point at the far south and the higher level of development would occur there. Chairman Sheffield noted that this area was one of the more difficult areas for the Steering Committee to make recommendations on based on the outcomes for similar areas in surrounding cities (i.e. The Harbor and Bass Pro). However, if done right we will not be emulating other city's projects, but rather setting the standard.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area E-2/Lakeside Center:

- Community-serving facilities near and adjacent to the lake
- Multiple uses – residential and commercial anchored by civic uses and public spaces
- Day and nighttime commercial uses
- Linked with "Old Town" through development programs and designs standards, trolley/shuttle system and public spaces
- Implementation – meet with the church to offer a participation in master planning effort for the area

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area E-4/ Old Town:

- Reflect the City's history in new mixed use, walkable development spaces
- Community's downtown with commercial destinations

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- Linked with “Lakeside Center” through development programs and designs standards, trolley/shuttle system and public spaces
- Implementation – subarea plan essential, meet with developers and citizens to engage support

Commissioner Cigainero requested to return to the E-2 vision plan and asked about access into the area and Mr. Bowers noted the exit and entrance ramps to PGBT near the area and proposed a secondary entrance from Main St. adjacent to the Community Center. Commissioner Cigainero stated that he believed for the area to encompass the entire vision, significant access would be required.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area E-3/Regional Trade:

- Region-serving commercial uses, in-line commercial and professional space users, and moderate scale Class B office buildings
- Likely to attract junior retail boxes ranging in size from 25K to 100K square feet
- Implementation – access rights for future driveway connections, regulatory tools for retailers relocating to the area

Commissioner Peebles inquired which types of retailers could potentially relocate and stated that he held doubts that the big box operators would relocate to the area along PGBT due to the fact that they were aware of the toll way’s future location when they established their current locations. Mr. Bowers responded that the subarea was not intended to attract the big box retailers but instead to provide a location for additional retailers not currently established in the City. He noted that the potential for relocation was something the City should be aware of and prepare for. Commissioner Crawley expressed concerns about the limited access and the narrow depth of the area may not be suitable for big box retailers. Mr. Bowers showed a diagram of access points from PGBT noting the exit ramp along the area and the previous exit ramp just before the Lakeview Parkway intersection allowing travel along the service road and the possibility for connecting driveway access points. Commissioner Crawley voiced concerns about the nearby schools and the close proximity of retail to those schools. He also stated that he could envision small box retail on the site but not big box and Mr. Bowers noted that big box retail was only one of the potential uses with office and smaller retail support. Vice-Chairman Landry stated that after reviewing the area the potential for internal access could be addressed and could see the area as a marketplace type environment to support the needs of the surrounding residential areas. Bill Cunningham, Ricker Cunningham, noted that the size of the area could accommodate the smaller format box retailers and the access challenges may need to be addressed as a potential trade off to gain the retail sales tax revenue. Commissioner Cigainero asked where the gas line across the property was located and if there were any issues to building on top of the line and Mr. Bowers stated that parking would be suitable over the gas line. Chairman Sheffield inquired of the definition of ‘region serving commercial uses’ and if that equated to big-box retail and Mr. Bowers replied that it would include junior anchor retail, Class B office uses and limited service hotels.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area D-2/Business Beltway and D-3/Southshore:

- Business park and employment address
- Uses support the needs of visitors and employees of the hospital – medical office buildings, dining establishments, variety of housing options
- Enhancement of natural environment and multiple modes of transportation
- Implementation – urban design framework, sign code

Commissioner Crawley inquired if the presence of the overhead power line posed an issue and Mr. Bowers noted the continuance of development despite the power line and smaller footprint buildings could fill the

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vacant parcels and typically the parking would be adjacent to the line and not the buildings themselves.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area A/Northshore:

- Major employment hub
- High standards of building development with clusters of restaurants and lodging along PGBT
- Public amenities including bike paths and walking trails will anchor mix of private uses
- Implementation – urban design framework, quantify remaining life of TIF, work with property owners to understand vision

Commissioner Crawley inquired about the priority to review the existing nonconforming uses and Ms. Walz responded that reviewing those uses and allowing some interim nonconforming uses may provide direction until the vision can be fully implemented. Commissioner Crawley clarified if the nonconforming uses should be discontinued and Mr. Bowers stated that allowing interim nonconforming uses would allow property owners to make improvements to their properties that they would not be allowed to make with the strict vision. This is primarily for current homeowners. Chairman Sheffield asked for clarification on the implication of large format retailers being drawn to the area and the proposed restriction to big box retailers in the area and Mr. Cunningham stated that big box would be attracted to the area but may not be consistent with the vision and noted the possibility of regulations against the use.

Mr. Bowers gave a description of the vision for area B-1/Center for Commerce & Industry:

- Office and technology spaces supported by commercial and lodging operators
- Education and training institutions support technology tenants
- Development in a consistent manner with Northshore will be critical to present as a single business park environment
- Implementation – understanding the role of TIF on infrastructure, revenue sharing agreement possibilities

Commissioner Cigainero inquired if the multi-family proposed would be high-end and Mr. Bowers replied that all proposed multifamily would be more urban formatted with possible mixed use. Mr. Cunningham noted that high value and design could be attained through quality construction and serve a diverse population. Ms. Walz noted that the diversity of housing would allow for a City that people can live in at all stages of life. Chairman Sheffield offered the suggestion of high density through ownership, not just rental.

Chairman Sheffield opened the public hearing and recognized Richard Hoag, 15506 Wright Brothers, Addison, Texas to speak about his request that the Commission recommend more flexibility of density within the C-2 area to allow single-family residential as long as it is developed as a sustainable area. Jennifer Glick, 3010 Weems Way, Rowlett, Texas came forward to express concerns with the additional traffic associated with the future development of the areas and particularly the traffic issues around Rowlett High School. She also believed there to be a need for areas to meet the needs for aging citizens and development allowing for those citizens to live and shop within walking distance. Jeff Sheldon, 7242 Liberty Grove, Rowlett, Texas came forward to discuss the need for the proposed plan and state that he felt some of the areas would serve the community well as described however others may require more attention. Chairman Sheffield closed the public hearing and stated that he was encouraged with the large amount of public input throughout the entire process and felt the plan encompassed the community view.

Chairman Sheffield noted the changes to Scrivener's errors on page 29, 'Public Investment District' should read 'Public Improvement District' and page 96, the recommendation for single-family detached should be removed to match the description. Chairman Sheffield noted that the Comprehensive Plan did not constitute

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zoning and the public would have more opportunities to be heard as the process progresses and the details refined. Commissioner Cigainero inquired if there had been any interest in re-annexing the area once de-annexed from the City and Mrs. Jones responded that there were no plans at this time to re-annex the property. Commissioner Cigainero noted that he liked the plan and particularly looked forward to Lakeside Living/C-1 and that he felt the citizens and City were aware of the traffic problems but could be worked out after the construction of PGBT and DART are completed. Commissioner Crawley stated that after the construction is finished, other traffic issues can be addressed and he looked forward to the day when he can move from his house to a location where he can live and shop within walking distance and the plan gives the opportunity for that in the future. He noted that the plan was just a framework to plan the future and the opportunity to give a tax break to the citizens with the future retail and he approved of the plan to use as a guideline. Commissioner Peebles made a motion to recommend approval of adoption of the Realize Rowlett 2020 to City Council and Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

**C. ADJOURNMENT**

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Chairman Rick Sheffield adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.



Chairman



Secretary