

**Webster Groves Plan Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
September 13, 2021

<b>Members Present</b>	Jeff Smith	PLANNER
	Steve Hunkins	Danny Jendusa
	Charles Sindel	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
	Maddy Heikkila	Mara Perry
	Christopher Michael	CITY ATTORNEY
	Toni Hunt	Neil Bruntrager
	Zoom members:	COUNCIL LIAISON
	Annie Tierney	Pam Bliss
	Michael Buechter	

Members not present:  
Scott Mueller

**REGULAR SESSION**

1. Sindel opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Sindel asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 9, 2021 meeting. Buechter requested to have the following sentence removed; “Those overlapping agencies have the ability to override some of the City ordinances that were put in place to meet those same agencies development requirements”. Also, to place in the minutes a note to reference the power points slides for further details. Buechter made a motion to approve the changes. Smith seconded the motion. Hunkins recused himself as he was not present at the August 9, 2021 meeting. All in favor the motion passed 7-0.

Buechter made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. C. Michael seconded. All in favor the motion passed 7-0.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were none.

**4. PUBLIC HEARING**

**[21-PC-04 Douglass Hill](#)** An application by SG Collaborative, LLC for a Change of Zoning from “A4” Seventy-Five Hundred Square Foot Residence District; “B1” Multiple Family District; “E” Industrial District and “PC” Planned Commercial District to “PC” Planned Commercial District on an approximately 15.1 acre tract of land located at the following addresses: 55 Lincoln Ave, 62 Lincoln Ave, 49 N. Gore Ave, 51 N. Gore Ave, 61 N. Gore Ave, 65 N. Gore Ave, 69 N. Gore Ave, 79 N. Gore Ave, 40 N. Rock Hill Rd, 200 Sherman Place, 201 Sherman Place, 203 Sherman Place, 205, Sherman Place, 207 Sherman Place, 200 W. Kirkham Ave, 204 W. Kirkham Ave, 234 W. Kirkham Ave, 240 W. Kirkham Ave, 242 W. Kirkham Ave, 320 W. Kirkham Ave, 340 W. Kirkham Ave, 107 W. Pacific Ave, 109 W. Pacific Ave, 111 W. Pacific Ave, 115 W. Pacific Ave, 125

W. Pacific Ave, 147 W. Pacific Ave, 207 W. Pacific Ave, 209 W. Pacific Ave, 211 W. Pacific Ave, 227 W. Pacific Ave, 315 W. Pacific Ave, 325 W. Pacific Ave, 341 W. Pacific Ave.

Perry said staff will go through a few key items for review and take any more comments or questions. The next step in the process would be for the Plan Commission members to close the public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Some changes include:

Pedestrian pick up window was added as an accessory use in staff's draft ordinance recommendations and a clarification was added that food trucks and mobile street vendors will be required to follow the existing city code.

Another change is the set back from the Union Pacific R.R. has been set at forty-five feet based on the location of the access road within that ROW.

Staff has identified the maximum height allowed in relation to the average finished grade of the new central street. The new street will be connecting to the existing elevations of both North Gore Avenue and North Rock Hill Road. With the exception of the proposed townhouses which will have a separate height regulation, all structures will front on the new central street.

Staff has updated the intensity of use chart with the correct calculations for lot coverage, floor area ratio and minimum land area.

Further clarifications were provided for the traffic study. Staff agrees with the conclusions regarding the installation of traffic lights on Rock Hill Road to address the current level of service and the anticipated increases to traffic. Regulations have been added to the draft zoning ordinance regarding the timing of the improvements and the specifications to be met.

Sindel asked whether the city's existing fire trucks were sufficient to service the proposed height of the buildings. Perry said due to the height of the buildings, a new truck would be required and the estimated cost is about \$1.5 million.

C. Michael asked about the process after tonight's hearing. Perry said it will go to City Council and if approved, then come back to Plan Commission within one year for the final development plan review, which will include the CLOMR. The developer shall submit the final development plan within twelve months of approval. Failure to comply could result in a repeal of the change of zoning.

Bruntrager explained if the zoning is approved, the next step will be a development agreement which will be a legal document outlining everyone's obligations.

Heikkila said her main concerns are the scale and height of the project, as these also seem to be the public's same concerns. Is it possible the project be reduced in height to match what is already existing? Perry said that is up to this Commission to discuss. Bruntrager stated the developer has commented that reducing the project would not be economically feasible and provided a memo from Development Strategies addressing that claim.

Buechter said the height is his main concern also. Smith asked about the allowed uses such as oil changes, Perry said oil change facilities have been added as accessory uses only for tenants of the buildings.

Smith asked what would happen if the requested update to the traffic study finds higher traffic impacts after the re-zoning would be approved. Perry said it would be up to council to verify and possibly request a reduction in the project.

Hunt spoke of the Comprehensive Plan which states apartments and townhomes should be encouraged when they are adjacent to the commercial areas particularly when they are owner-occupied and adequate in size 1,000 square feet or more and the projects amenities permit a lifestyle similar to that of other parts of the city. It also stated when development occurs within the flood plain, the best use for land is for clustered single family and town homes which will leave as much of the valuable open space as possible.

Heikkila asked about requiring composting or solar panels. Perry said those can be put in by amending the conditions. Also asked about the use of TIF. Perry and Bruntrager said the review of the TIF is not under the purview of the Plan Commission, that the Plan Commission has not been presented with information about the TIF request, and should limit their decision to zoning.

Larry Chapman, SG Collaborative, said these types of developments are a challenge, you will always hear lots of negative comments. This started with the city putting out an RFP so that something could be done with this particular area, the question is what. We were selected as the developer and have addressed many issues including its too dense, too tall, flooding, traffic and trains. We believe there are many more good things about the project than bad. Affordable housing, lifestyle amenities and history telling.

Sindel asked about the density, and Chapman said making it smaller makes no economical sense. We could eliminate the main street and put up living units but that is not what everyone wants to see. Sindel also asked about a timeline for the development.

Hunt asked if the Development Foundation Plan as well as the Comprehensive Plan was looked at while putting this plan together because the Development Foundation Plan identified lower density in this area than what is being proposed? Chapman said yes. The density presented in the Development Foundation Plan is not economically feasible, and if you hold out for that you will get what you have today. Between the cost of the land, dirt removal to level out the hill which is about sixty (60) feet of hill, and improvements, the costs do not allow for lower density.

Hunkins had questions about the number of occupants per living units in the apartments and Phil Hulse, Green Street said these will mostly have one occupant, and some two. This may have slightly more two-bedroom verses in the Grove where they see typically more one-bedroom units.

Heikkila asked about scaling down the land purchase therefore scaling down the project.

Joel Oliver, stated we responded to an RFP from the city and this entire foot print was included so remember our plan is based on what was requested.

Charles Bell, resident, said he was the originator of the 1977 Old Webster Redevelopment Plan which was aborted before approval. They learned many things during their research for the project. What SG Collaborative is proposing will remove housing and businesses just to replace them. Shady Greek will be destroyed.

Karen Perry (zoom)spoke for Jessica Perry, 60 N. Gore has been owned by the McMillan family for many years and has reinvested substantially in the property. They have purchased four properties for the use of parking lots for their customers, all of the lots are in the redevelopment area. We are generally in favor of development but not at the cost of closing neighboring businesses. If they refuse to sell will they be subject to eminent domain? Will the project be completed and how long will it take?

Dave Buck, says he has been critical of SG Collaborative in the past but his views have changed. He believes that communities move forward at the speed of trust. We have to trust the Plan Commission, City Council and the developers and go forward for progress. Douglas Hill scares us because its different. Let's have positive change and move forward.

Perry read a few emails that were received and stated all comments will be included in the packet.

## 5. **ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR SESSION**

Sindel asked for a motion to close the regular session. Smith made a motion. C. Michael seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed 8-0.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

## 6. **VOTES:**

[21-PC-04 Douglass Hill](#) An application by SG Collaborative, LLC for a Change of Zoning from "A4" Seventy-Five Hundred Square Foot Residence District; "B1" Multiple Family District; "E" Industrial District and "PC" Planned Commercial District to "PC" Planned Commercial District on an approximately 15.1 acre tract of land located at the following addresses: 55 Lincoln Ave, 62 Lincoln Ave, 49 N. Gore Ave, 51 N. Gore Ave, 61 N. Gore Ave, 65 N. Gore Ave, 69 N. Gore Ave, 79 N. Gore Ave, 40 N. Rock Hill Rd, 200 Sherman Place, 201 Sherman Place, 203 Sherman Place, 205, Sherman Place, 207 Sherman Place, 200 W. Kirkham Ave, 204 W Kirkham Ave, 234 W. Kirkham Ave, 240 W. Kirkham Ave, 242 W. Kirkham Ave, 320 W. Kirkham Ave, 340 W. Kirkham Ave, 107 W. Pacific Ave, 109 W. Pacific Ave, 111 W. Pacific Ave, 115 W. Pacific Ave, 125 W. Pacific Ave, 147 W. Pacific Ave, 207 W. Pacific Ave, 209 W. Pacific Ave, 211 W. Pacific Ave, 227 W. Pacific Ave, 315 W. Pacific Ave, 325 W. Pacific Ave, 341 W. Pacific Ave.

Hunt asked Bruntrager to explain again how the Plan Commission members should use all the information and comments they have heard throughout this process. Bruntrager said this is a request for a change of zoning and they must decide to whether it is in the best interest for the City of Webster Groves and if the zoning for the development is appropriate.

Sindel said he is wrestling with if this is an appropriate use for this area.

Heikkila asked Bliss if this plan is consistent with the RFP that went out by the city, and Bliss said it was not appropriate for her to comment.

Smith said as an engineer he believes the flooding will not be an issue and can actually be improved upon. He would like to have seen more traffic study as it pertains to the train blockage. His main concern is the scale of the project.

Sindel agreed about the scale of the project, also taking five to six years to finish the project. Also, traffic and the trains are a big concern.

Hunt has concerns about the traffic, parking and the general design of the street. The tree removal and setbacks. This does not match the Comprehensive Plan.

Hunkins wants to see development but not at this scale. Traffic will affect the whole area.

C. Michael says there is just not enough information about the flooding and the environment. Wants to see development but needs more information.

Heikkila says they will come up for a plan for the flooding, she has concerns about the environment, the scale and traffic.

Buechter, says all the same about traffic and the train queue. The building height and flooding downstream is also a concern.

Tierney wants to see development. Traffic is always an issue. The ARB and engineers will work out the issue. Does not like eminent domain for the businesses in the area.

Hunt said none of us are anti-development, we want some type of development. The question is whether we can put recommendations to this for the community and yet not hurt the community in the long run.

Buechter said there are a few changes he would like to add to staff's recommendations: Requested clarification whether a CLOMR is required in the ordinance. Perry stated the CLOMR will be necessary to close out building permits. Buechter proposed adding an item #12(D.), under Tree Preservation and Landscaping, topsoil should be saved and stockpiled for reuse in the project, if practical.

Sindel asked for a motion to approve. Buechter made a motion. Tierney seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 to 3. Smith-no, C. Michael-no, Heikkila-yes, Hunkins-yes, Tierney-yes, Hunt-yes, Buechter-yes, Sindel-no.

Buechter suggested amending item 15, requiring the updated traffic study to be signed and sealed by an engineer registered in the state of Missouri and should require a finding of no adverse impact from the development or requiring any adverse impact to be mitigated. Smith stated he did not think it would be possible for a study to show there would be no adverse impact here. Perry stated the traffic impact study will be required to be signed and sealed during the final development plan review process.

Heikkila suggested adding composting to # 20.

20. Opportunities for recycling and composting shall be provided in the development.

Sindel asked for a motion to approve. Heikkila made a motion. Hunt seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed 8-0.

Heikkila suggest solar panel use, Perry said they are allowed and can be encouraged.

Bruntrager suggested adding #10e., that the use of solar panels is encouraged.

Perry suggested solar panels could be added to #5d: "Chimneys, cooling towers, elevator bulkheads, fire towers, solar panels or necessary mechanical appurtenances may be erected to a height of fifteen (15) feet above the applicable allowed maximum height. The Architectural Review Board shall determine whether appropriate screening is required for any of the items listed in this subsection f.

Sindel asked for a motion to approve. Heikkila made a motion. Smith seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed 8-0.

Sindel asked for a motion to approve 21-PC-04 with staff's recommendations and the changes approved. Hunt made a motion. Smith seconded the motion. Sindel-no, C. Michael-no, Heikkila-yes, Hunt-no, Buechter-no, Hunkins-yes, Smith-yes, Tierney-yes. The vote was tied 4-4 which means 21-PC-04 moves to City Council with no negative or positive recommendation.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:** Perry said there was none at this time.

8. **NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** October 11, 2021.

9. **ADJOURNMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE**

Sindel asked for a motion to adjourn. C. Michael made a motion. Hunt seconded the motion. All in favor motion passed 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.