

April 17, 2012

7:00 p.m.

Planning Division
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Margaret Wimborne and Commissioners Natalie Black, Doug Branson, Jake Cordova, Donna Cosgrove, Brent Dixon, Kurt Karst, and George Swaney.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners David Hodder, George Morrison, Leslie Polson, and Dee Whittier.

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Director Renée Magee, Recording Secretary Debra Petty and approximately nine interested citizens.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Wimborne called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and reviewed the hearing procedures for the public.

MINUTES: April 3, 2012 Commissioner Cordova moved to approve the minutes of April 3, 2012, with correction to the reasoning behind the dissenting vote by Cosgrove for St. Clair Estates Division No. 13. The reason was the lack of a limitation on hours of operation of the parking lot lights as a compromise for not locating the building in accordance with the annexation agreement. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dixon. Aye: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0.

CHANGES/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA: Cordova moved to recess the conditional use permit for the reconstruction of Dora Erickson Elementary School to May 1, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers, 680 Park Avenue. Motion seconded by Commissioner Dixon. Motion passed. Aye: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Conditional Use Permit for Construction of a Parking Lot: Lot 1, Block 1, Christ the King Addition. Magee reviewed the staff report, a part of the record. The parcel is located on the southeast corner of 17th Street and Woodruff Avenue and zoned R-1. Staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit with the condition the northern most access to the parking lot is closed. This modification eliminates a conflict with the left hand turn lane on Woodruff Avenue. The applicant is complying with the city engineer's request to eliminate one of the current accesses to the site.

The size or seating capacity of the church will remain the same. The lot presently has 131 parking spaces and the addition will create another 129 spaces. The lot complies with the ordinance provisions. Included in the plan is 20 percent interior landscaping. There is an utility easement for fiber optic, gas and electric utilities adjacent to the residences on the east. The applicant agreed to eliminate one row of parking and plant a row of trees to the west of the easement to meet the criteria for a buffer between the parking lot and residential uses.

The lighting plan indicates 0.0 foot candles on the adjacent residential property. Metal halide lights were initially part of the lighting plan, but the applicant has agreed to use high-pressure sodium to reduce glare. The storm water retention area for the site is located south of the proposed parking lot. Dixon was informed by staff the drainage swale is large enough to

adequately handle the necessary volume of water for the site. Dixon believes the best use of the additional landscaping is at the northern most entrance when it is closed off instead of buffering the back of a garage. Magee said the two-story residential use needs buffering from the lighting.

The hearing was open to public comment.

Kurt Karst, Alderson, Karst and Mitro, 379 A Street, Idaho Falls, ID. Karst informed Dixon the storm ponds are approximately 30 inches in depth and will retain 3,800 cubic feet of water. Moving the landscape buffer to the north entrance is possible but creates additional expense for landscape irrigation.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Black stated she is a member of the Blessed John Paul II parish which encompasses Christ the King Catholic Church. She has no conflict of interest. Dixon's wife is a member of the congregation and he has no conflict.

The hearing was opened to public comment.

Kurt Karst, Alderson, Karst, and Mitro, 379 A Street, Idaho Falls, ID. In response to a question from Dixon, Karst replied high-pressure sodium lighting reduces the glare perceived with metal halide.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Cordova moved to approve the conditional use permit for construction of a parking lot, Lot 1, Block 1, Christ the King Addition, with the condition the northern most access on the existing parking lot be closed, a landscape buffer be included on the east abutting residential, and the lighting be high-pressure sodium. Motion seconded by Commissioner Swaney. Motion passed. Aye: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0.

Wimborne and Black are both employed by School District 91 and recused themselves from the hearing for the conditional use permit for Clair E. Gale. Wimborne asked Cosgrove to chair the remainder of the meeting.

Conditional Use Permit for Conversion of a Junior High School to a Magnet High School: Clair E. Gale Jr. High School. Magee presented the staff report, a part of the record. The site is zoned R-1. The comprehensive plan states junior high schools and high schools should be located close to arterial streets and on collectors. Clair E. Gale is located on a system of collector streets.

The conditional use permit is for the junior high school to phase into a magnet high school and for construction of a parking lot on the west side of Clair E. Gale. A projected high school enrollment of 600 students will increase over the next 3 years. The proposed parking lot will

replace current parking located against the Royal Avenue sidewalk. The number of current spaces and the new lot will meet the number of spaces required under the zoning ordinance. The city forester recommends using maple trees instead of the Hackberry trees shown on the landscape plan. Magee said the proposed lighting plan was not submitted prior to distribution of staff reports to the commission. After review of the lighting plan, staff finds the plan compliant with standards used to evaluate lighting plans. Proposed lighting is high pressure sodium with foot candles less than 0.5 on neighboring residential properties.

Magee confirmed for Dixon the required parking includes staff parking.. Dixon asked if the existing security lights mounted on the west wall and shining toward the street could be shielded as they are quite distracting. Magee deferred the question to the applicant. In response to Dixon, Magee confirmed, if the magnet school reverted to a standard high school, it is not a change of use and will not require a public hearing.

The hearing was opened to public comment.

Dustin Hislop, Design West Architects, 255 S. 300 W., Logan, Utah. Hislop confirmed for Cosgrove a miscommunication took place concerning the lighting plan. A proposed plan was submitted for the entire site and replaces lights on the existing parking area. The school district does not plan to replace the existing lights. Dixon asked if the landscape islands being relocated in the southeast parking lot will have improved landscape material. Hislop said it will remain the same.

Margaret Wimborne, School District No. 91, 690 John Adams Parkway, Idaho Falls, ID. Wimborne, employee of District 91, clarified a magnet school is different from an alternative school. The instruction model for a magnet school permits educational opportunities not ordinarily seen in a traditional high school. The athletic fields to the west of the school will not be used by students attending the magnet school. Students participating in athletic programs will play for Skyline or Idaho Falls high schools. Wimborne confirmed for Dixon there are no full scale module workshops planned outside the building on school grounds. She told Cordova a new name is planned for the school which will include reference to Clare E. Gale.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Cosgrove asked about the reference to the proposed parking setting in the front setback. Magee said a portion of the proposed parking will be within the front setback. However, it is an improvement to the existing parking abutting Royal Avenue which does not have a landscape strip separating the sidewalk from the parking area. At the northern end of the proposed parking lot, a minimum of seven feet of landscaping will separate the lot from the sidewalk. This landscaping strip increases substantially in size to the south.

The hearing was opened for public comment.

Dustin Hislop, Design West Architects, 255 S. 300 W., Logan, UT. Hislop told Dixon there were no plans to address the lighting on the west side of the building but his firm will look into the matter. He said it is not desirable to have lights shining at motorists entering the parking lot.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Dixon said the athletic fields should remain as they are should the school ever revert from a magnet school to a standard school. He appreciates the applicant's willingness to change the lighting on the west of the building. Cosgrove said the applicant only agreed to take a look at the lighting.

The hearing was opened for public comment.

Christian Nelson, Design West Architects, 255 S. 300 W., Logan, UT. Nelson said the lighting is something the district must address. Cosgrove said it is not part of the proposal. Dixon said it depends on how you look at the proposal. He said the area being modified includes the front of the building, part of the southwest quadrant of the site. Karst said he believes it is a reasonable request.

Mike McGuire, School District No. 91, 625 7th Street, Idaho Falls, ID. McGuire said he represents the acting director of operations for the district. He said the lights were an attempt to light the parking lot. He believes the district will not have a problem addressing the lighting when making the rest of the changes on the site.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Swaney asked if a comprehensive lighting plan for the entire site could be a condition for approval. Cosgrove said it could. She said the proposed lighting plan presumes a change of lights in the northwest and southeast parking lots, a result of a miscommunication.

The hearing was opened for public comment.

Christian Nelson, Design West Architects, 255 S. 300 W., Logan, UT. Nelson said a lighting plan was submitted for the entire sight when all that was desired was a lighting plan for the new lot. The district is trying to keep costs down and did not plan any changes to the northwest lot. The two lights in the southeast parking lot are only being moved to another location. Dixon suggested basing approval of the conditional use permit on the submittal of an updated lighting plan review and approval by staff. It is not necessary to present the plan to the commission for approval.

The hearing was closed to public comment.

Commissioner Dixon moved to approve the conditional use permit for conversion of a junior high school to a magnet high school at Clair E. Gale Junior High with the condition an updated lighting plan be submitted to staff for review and approval. Motion seconded by Commissioner Cordova. Motion passed. Aye: 6, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0. Cosgrove suggested revisiting the ordinance pertaining to parking. She believes required parking for a high school use is not reflective of current conditions.

Miscellaneous: Magee showed the Commission photos of the property line at Clair E. Gale Junior High school before buffering was required by the zoning ordinance and after it was required. Although a minimal buffer, the buffer shelters the residential yards and prevents vehicles from damaging the fences.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Debra Petty, Recording Secretary