

Columbia City Council Pre-Council Minutes

Monday, September 15, 2014 6:00 p.m.

City Hall – Conference Room 1A/1B

701 East Broadway

Council members present: Mayor McDavid, Ginny Chadwick (arrived at 6:13), Mike Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas, Laura Nauser and Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

Mayor McDavid called the meeting to order at approximately 6:02 p.m.

Natural Legacy Plan:

City Manager Mike Matthes introduced Mike Griggs, Parks and Recreation Director. Mr. Griggs briefly reviewed the history of the plan and noted that the contract for this plan was approved in 2012 and has many partnering agencies including Columbia, Boone County, Missouri Department of Conservation, Department of Natural Resources and Greenbelt Land Trust, who has agreed to be the coordinating agency for this plan.

The plan includes seven elements focused on conservation of water, wildlife and forest resources in the region; to connect people to nature by tying together a green infrastructure plan. They also looked at the health benefits of the development of green infrastructure; how to maintain a sustainable food system through local farmers; and they looked at the identification and preservation of notable historical, cultural and scenic resources. Some of the deliverables include a conceptual map of the green infrastructure and identifying significant opportunities for land acquisition and easements. It also outlined all of the clear measurable and implementable goals. Mr. Griggs introduced Gene Gardner who spent many years with the Missouri Department of Conservation before retiring and beginning work with the Greenbelt Land Trust.

Mr. Gardner provided some handouts and thanked the Council for their participation and support in this process. He noted that the Greenbelt organization began in 1993 as the Greenbelt Coalition. This was a movement that supported greenways and trails within and surrounding Columbia. He noted that the City of Columbia adopted the greenways plan of the Greenbelt Coalition. In 1997, they accepted their first donation of private land which made possible a large section of the public Hinkson Creek Trail, a City trail that is on Greenbelt property. In 2004, they officially became a land trust with non-profit status. They currently protect more than 20 acres in private ownership through conservation easements and we own more than 70 acres of land designated as Columbia nature preserves.

The Greenbelt Land Trust of Mid-Missouri (Greenbelt) is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with representation from landowners, business-men and -women, and resource professionals who are widely supported by the conservation

community in Missouri. Mike Hood, retired City of Columbia Parks & Recreation Director, is a Board member and Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe is one of their Advisors.

He added that the Greenbelt accomplishes their mission through fee simple land acquisition and stewardship, and by accepting permanent conservation easements on private land and, more broadly, through engaging communities through collaborative efforts. Nationally, 1,700 similar nonprofit land trusts have protected more than 37 million acres of land through donations or purchase of fee simple acquisitions, or through donations or purchase of conservation easements. He called attention to their most recent collaborative effort- one that represents their continued and successful partnership with the City of Columbia; the green infrastructure plan they call "Our Natural Legacy: A Plan for Columbia and Boone County." He provided a bound copy for Council and noted that the products delivered through development of the Natural Legacy collaboration are two-fold: 1) the visionary document and 2) more technical products that include geospatial, cultural, and economic analyses that are intended to help prioritize lands for future acquisition or protection through development of conservation easements with private landowners. These technical products have been delivered to Mike Griggs via electronic media.

The Our Natural Legacy Plan is composed of several visionary components, some have materialized during the collaborative process over the last two years, and some will take more work or leadership to accomplish. He provided an example, Connecting People to nature is one component -this is happening through helping to establish the Rockbridge Memorial State Park Nature School and construction of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters and Visitor's Center. Another component, one that the City of Columbia and Greenbelt is continuing to work together to achieve, is the Trails Network in and around Columbia. Greenbelt is working to help complete the 30-mile trail loop around Columbia and other priority trails and parks projects identified in the Metro Greenbelt Trails Plan, the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, and other strategic plans.

The overarching vision of Our Natural Legacy is to connect residents and visitors to nature so as to enhance the individual, economic, and natural health of Columbia and Boone County. Therefore, the focus of Greenbelt now is to transition from development of Our Natural Legacy, which has been a successful collaboration that incubated a number of good initiatives, to implementation of the natural legacy components that directly tie-into our land trust mission. He listed the components which included: helping private landowners protect their lands as fish and wildlife habitat and productive farmlands through conservation easements; working closely with the City of Columbia and Boone County to develop trails and other outdoor open spaces that our communities can enjoy; engaging communities through volunteer and outreach opportunities that assist in restoring natural areas and native species; guiding policy and planning through careful development and implementation of strategic plans; fostering a culture of conservation and developing collaborations by networking land trust members, landowners, professionals in public

agencies and local municipalities, and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

Handouts for this topic can be viewed at the following links:

Greenbelt Land Trust of Mid-Missouri Letter:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=15395>

Greenbelt Land Trust of Mid-Missouri Brochure:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=15396>

Natural Legacy Plan:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=15397>

Our Natural Legacy Attachment A:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=15398>

County Developer Charges – Stan Shawver and Thad Yonke:

Mike Matthes welcomed Stan Shawver and Thad Yonke from Boone County to provide an overview on the process and costs relating to developments in the County.

Stan Shawver, Boone County Director of Resource Management, explained that they are structured so that all development related activities are housed in the same location as a benefit to property owners and potential developers. Engineering, Planning, Stormwater, Building Inspection, Construction Inspection and the County Surveyor are housed in the same department. He provided a Boone County Development Fee Schedule handout and noted that building permits are not included on the list, which is the greatest bulk of their income. The basic fee is very similar to the City of Columbia and is based on per square foot of construction, type of construction and use of structure. He added that before you can get a building permit, the land must be developed. Boone County uses a point rating system when considering development. Land use planning in Boone County is a recent program compared to the City of Columbia and focuses more on rural land use pattern. The majority of the unincorporated land in Boone County is zoned for agricultural or open land uses and allow for some residential uses. He provided an overview of the history of the land use planning program which ultimately resulted in the creation of the point rating system currently in place. This is a numerical rating system approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, based on urban development factors and assign values to unincorporated areas of land. This system places numerical values on eight factors: proximity to a municipality, sewer, roads, school capacity, fire protection, water system, flood plain sensitivity and soil capability. Mr. Shawver explained that the maximum points allowed on this rating system are 93. He discussed the many changes that have occurred in Boone County, since this system was implemented. At one time, it was discussed that this point system could act as a Pass/Fail for a subdivision proposal however the County does not have legal authority to tell a property owner how to subdivide their land, as long as they

comply with regulations. Consequently, this tool has been used in an advisory capacity. A site with a low rating will require greater developer investment. He explained the Boone County definition of an Urban Service Area to be all sections of and in unincorporated Boone County which has been assigned a numerical rating of 50 points by the currently approved point rating system. The Urban Service Area is used by the County Commission in the County animal control and nuisance ordinances. The Urban Service Area is not a static boundary, it is just when land is annexed, water lines are operating, new fire stations are built, or roads are improved. Council person Thomas asked how the Boone County Urban Service Area around Columbia, matches up with Columbia. Mr. Shawver replied that the County goes out farther than Columbia and regulations differ as well. They intend to preserve open space and farmland and push development in to be closer to where services are available or easy to extend. Boone County Regional Sewer District operates several wastewater collection systems which are at or near capacity. In order to provide additional capacity, the Sewer District must either pay for bond money or work with developers to expand or install wastewater treatment facilities. The County requires that if a new wastewater treatment facility is built, that it must be turned over to a public agency. There are many single serve units in the County such as a lagoon or septic tank. Once an individual system is installed, there is no mechanism in place to ensure proper maintenance. There are standards based on the number of bedrooms in a residence and square footage. There are also Health Department regulations and inspections for commercial buildings. Beyond that, there are regulations from the Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Shawver noted that their original Comprehensive Plan was put in place in 1973 and was current to what was being done nationally and in Columbia. The plan eventually became outdated. The County Commission did update the Master Plan in the 1990's. It was revised and rewritten and adopted in October 1996. They recommended that future rezoning's be looked at very carefully and to develop a sufficiency of resources test for land use change. He introduced Thad Yonke, Senior Planner for Boone County to further discuss the sufficiency of resources test. Mr. Yonke provided a brief overview of his position with the County. He noted that it is important to keep in mind is that counties that don't have authority to do land use regulations, by statute actually do have the ability to have some kind of regulation. He provided an example in Cole County. The sufficiency of resources test comes from the Master Plan update from 1996. This is used whenever there is a current land use or possible land use that is going to change to a new type of land use. It begins with a review of what services are currently present; and what services would likely be needed with this change. The next step is to determine what it would take to get the services followed by an assessment of impacts that would occur should that change take place. The County breaks these into different areas including stormwater, transportation and public safety. Failure to pass this test results in denial. A successful result

allows for further analysis and discussion on whether this is an appropriate use for the land. He explained that this process works well for them, but would not recommend other entities to use the exact same model without tweaking the structure for specific regulations and requirements. He noted that this has been a great tool in development, but when it comes to determining who pays for what and how; there are standard methods of collecting revenue in place by statute. He noted that the County doesn't handle much infrastructure and for the most part, the only infrastructures they are tasked with are roadway maintenance. Because they are not in control of those utilities, they have to come up with ways to ensure that infrastructure will happen, by insisting it be put in prior to development. There are other methods, but he feels they don't work well. Mayor McDavid confirmed that the County does not have jurisdiction over smaller communities like Hallsville and Ashland and they all manage their own planning. Mr. Yonke said that was correct and added that they also do not have jurisdiction over utility companies such as Ameren and Boone Electric. Mayor McDavid commented that he understands that County Commissioner Karen Miller would like to collaborate with the City. He didn't have a good sense of how many commercial and residential developments occur in the County over time to see if there is a trend line showing if more homes are being built in Columbia or out of Columbia. Mr. Yonke stated that he does track that information and can provide. Mr. Thomas asked approximately how many permits the sufficiency of resources test is used for. Mr. Yonke replied that all rezoning requests use it, but there have not been many requests for that over the past few years.

Boone County Development Fees handout can be viewed at the following link:
<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=15399>

Other items Council wishes to discuss:

None.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:53.