

STATE OF TEXAS

§

February 25, 2009

COUNTY OF GRAYSON

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BE IT REMEMBERED THAT A Joint Meeting of the Sherman City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission was begun and held in the City Council Chambers on February 25, 2009.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Bill Magers; Deputy Mayor Cary Wacker.
Council Members Adami, Howeth, Softly, Steele.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Smith.

PLANNING & ZONING MEMBERS PRESENT: Jason Sofey, Chairman; David Plyler; Darren Tankersley;
Brad Morgan; Jim Jacobs, Robin Atherton, Lawrence Davis, M.
Steve Jones, Don Hicks.

PLANNING & ZONING MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

CITY STAFF PRESENT: George Olson, City Manager; Robbie Hefton, Assistant City Manager/CFO; Scott Shadden, Director of Developmental Services; Mark Gibson, Director of Utilities and Engineering; Jeff Miller, Director of Public Works; Tom Watt, Police Chief; Rita Gaither, Development Coordinator; Kevin Winkler, Parks and Recreation Administrator; Lisa Whitfield, Engineering Operations Coordinator; Jacqueline Banfield, Library Services Administrator; Brad Williams, Computer Support Technician; Patsy Reeves, Administrative Secretary; Pam Cloer, Assistant to the City Manager; Linda Ashby, City Clerk.

PURPOSE: Call to Order, Quorum Determined, Meeting Declared Open, Recognition of Guests and Visitors

Discussion of Overall Draft Comprehensive Plan

(a) Presentation of Plan Highlights (Gary Mitchell and Jon Grosshans, Kendig Keast Collaborative)

(b) Discussion of Plan Content

Discussion of Plan Implementation Priorities

(a) Review of Key Actions in Draft Plan (Gary Mitchell)

(b) Action Prioritization Exercise with City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission Members (facilitated by Gary Mitchell and Jon Grosshans)

(c) Discussion of Action Prioritization Results

Discussion of Next Steps in Comprehensive Plan Process

(a) Planning and Zoning Commission Discussion of and Public Hearing on Final Proposed Plan

(b) City Council Consideration of and Public Hearing on Final Proposed Plan following Recommendation from Planning and Zoning Commission

Adjournment

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CALL TO ORDER, QUORUM DETERMINED, MEETING DECLARED OPEN, RECOGNITION OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

Mayor Magers called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m., declared a quorum present, and opened the City Council Meeting. Jason Sofey, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, declared a quorum present, and opened the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting.

Mayor Magers thanked everyone for the citizen involvement that has been included on the proposed Comprehensive Master Plan. He felt it was vital to have a Comprehensive Plan to move forward. The Plan seems to show that citizens want Sherman to stay the way it is and not become a “concrete jungle.” Sherman should grow with quality of life in mind.

Mayor Magers reiterated that the proposed Comprehensive Master Plan is a draft document and subject to change.

DISCUSSION OF OVERALL DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PRESENTATION OF PLAN HIGHLIGHTS (GARY MITCHELL AND JON GROSSHANS, KENDIG KEAST COLLABORATIVE)

Gary Mitchell, Vice President, Kendig Keast Collaborative, served as Project Manager for Sherman's Plan. He introduced Jon Grosshans, Associate-in-Charge, Kendig Keast Collaborative, and Jayson Melcher, Project Manager, Haliff & Associates.

Mr. Mitchell presented highlights of the proposed Master Plan. He recognized the comprehensiveness of Sherman's proposed Plan which includes areas such as housing, parks, transportation, and the environment. The Plan is meant to be a policy document and backup what the City does.

The process started in April 2008 when Kendig Keast interviewed a number of stakeholders, a cross-section of citizens and representatives from various agencies. There were also two Community Forums open to the public to gain additional citizen input. Kendig Keast then held meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee to refine the document.

DISCUSSION OF PLAN CONTENT

Mr. Mitchell addressed the introductory chapter of the Plan outlining how the Plan could be used by the City. He outlined the assumptions that were used for the study which was based on the 2000 population in Sherman of 35,082. By 2030, Sherman is projected to grow by 44% to a population of 50,600. The median age in Grayson County is 37.2 years, which is a little older than the average for Texas and for the United States. The median age in Texas is 32.3 years and in the United States it is 35.3 years.

Chapter 2 concerns urban design and land use and indicates that Sherman has a lot of vacant or agricultural/rural areas. A lot of land in the City's Extra Territorial Jurisdiction is open today and available for development. Mayor Magers verified that the Plan covers both the City and the ETJ.

Mr. Mitchell said all the goals in the Plan are based on what was heard from the community. Enhanced character was the most important goal; not just building subdivisions, but building quality neighborhoods that blend in. Citizens were interested in redevelopment of the downtown area and in the design and aesthetics among the major corridors and gateways.

Jim Jacobs, Planning and Zoning Vice Chairman, asked about the process for determining the classifications of the development of the areas that were included in the Future Land Use Map. Mr. Mitchell said they first reviewed what was already on the ground, and then looked at the atmosphere in the different areas. Throughout the process there was a lot of discussion on growth to the west and northwest. One consideration was for road capacity and would the road be able to handle a more

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dense development. Some of the older neighborhoods were developed with more density, and then it goes to a suburban atmosphere with larger lots, then to the edges of town where there are more “estates” with perhaps acre lots. This area may include more citizens on well and septic rather than City utilities.

Mayor Magers wanted to be sure that the industries in Blalock Industrial Park have a say in the Plan and “buy into” it. He felt it would be critical that they support the Plan and the future changes.

Mr. Mitchell added that Sherman Town Center is in the general commercial category, a typical larger shopping center with an emphasis on parking and moving the cars on and off the site. The north Highway 75 corridor, which really hasn’t developed yet, is in the suburban commercial category. The area near Blalock has a more open, campus look. All tie into the goal concerning aesthetics and the appearance of the community.

Chapter 3 concerns growth management and capacity and focuses on how land is used as the City grows. Mr. Mitchell said in 1975 there was 19.3 developed acres for every 100 people, while in 2007 there was 45.9 developed acres for every 100 people. The trend across the nation is to “sprawl” or spread out. The housing industry is trying to accommodate people that want country living, but that effects issues such as drainage and road capacity, because you have to consider where people live and where they need to go, such as work or shopping.

This chapter concerns development in the ETJ and lays out what cities in Texas can do to try and have influence over where development happens. It’s not just for regulatory purposes but cities must consider the impact that development will have on the City services and utilities.

Mr. Mitchell said they also reviewed the water, wastewater, and drainage situation in Sherman, and one of the main challenges with drainage is not having public easements or ways to do clearing of debris or maintenance over time.

Jayson Melcher, Project Manager, Haliff & Associates, said the City is in good shape concerning water and wastewater. The City leaders and staff have done a good job of staying on top of the utilities. There is an abundance of water through both the well capacity and Lake Texoma water rights. He added that Sherman should have sufficient water system capacity for the next 30 years. Additional wastewater treatment capacity should not be needed for over 10 years. The assumptions are based on the current population counts.

He added that there maybe room for improvement in the pipe area. The 16 lift stations require ongoing operation and maintenance and Mr. Melcher recommended that the City limit the number of lift stations that are added with new development.

Mr. Melcher said that Sherman’s water and wastewater facilities won’t limit any growth and Sherman is really in good shape. Mayor Magers verified that these numbers are based on the existing water rights that the City has today, not the additional 15,000 acre feet that the City should soon have access too. Sherman has another opportunity to purchase the additional capacity in the next 12 to 18 months, and that will increase the capacity for even more years to come.

Mr. Mitchell presented Map 3.2 which shows Sherman’s stream system and the specific areas that have been flood-prone. Council Member Steele verified that one of the flood control lakes on the map, located behind Friendship Cemetery, has not been constructed. He added that the large lake behind Carriage Estates is there. Mr. Mitchell said the consultants and the staff have discussed removing the proposed lake from the map since it was never constructed and funding is not available.

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The chapter's goals include growth that is consistent with the City's infrastructure and public service capacities. It covers drainage, water and wastewater, and public safety facilities to meet future service demands. It concerns things that the City would "take on" if they annexed additional property.

Council Member Softly entered the Council Meeting at 12:39 p.m.

Council Member Adami asked about police repeaters. Mr. Grosshans explained that repeaters will become an issue as additional area is annexed.

Chapter 4 covers transportation including major street thoroughfares, basic road maintenance and improvement needs, and the eventual U.S. 75 reconstruction. Currently over 20% of Grayson County residents commute to another county for work, primarily to Collin and Dallas Counties. In 1970, only 8% of the residents commuted to another county.

Goals for the chapter deal with safety issues and a well maintained roadway system. Citizens also want expanded opportunities for walking and bicycling and enhanced and expanded public transportation options. With this transportation system expansion, they want to keep the character of the community.

Mr. Mitchell addressed the lack of continuity on the road system. He hoped to see a more consistent pattern of east-west and north-south arterial roadways to carry traffic across town. The west and northwest area of Sherman especially needs good arterial roadways between the freeways.

Council Member Steele asked if Lamberth Road as a major east-west road was enough or if additional east-west thoroughfares were needed. Mr. Mitchell addressed other smaller thoroughfares but said there should be good spacing and good flow to Highway 289. He added that there may be areas that are hard to connect, but the concept is there and if it can be done as development occurs, it will be a great asset.

Mayor Magers verified that for the current Plan period, the bulk of Sherman's development will be between Highway 82 and Highway 56 to the west. He felt this should be the focus area for road construction for the near term. Mr. Mitchell said the thoroughfare plan is not meant to layout roads the City will build, but to preserve right-of-way from developments where these roads would continue to the west. The City could include some of the projects in the Capital Improvement Program. Jim Jacobs verified that the proposed thoroughfare plan was built off the prior thoroughfare plan.

Chapter 5 deals with conservation and environmental resources, and Mr. Mitchell said much of the land around Sherman is rural. All the goals deal with land issues, air quality, water quality, and reduced energy use. The previous Plan did not include information on environment resources.

Chapter 6 concerns parks, recreations and open space. There is currently 373 acres of park land in the community, but he felt Sherman was deficient in small, neighborhood parks, and there was a lot of pressure on available fields. The National benchmark for acreage versus population indicates Sherman should have 312 acres of park land, which means there is a 61 acre surplus.

Mr. Mitchell said the question is where are the parks located. There sometimes is also a problem with heavy utilization of the existing parks. Judging from the layout of parks on the map, the community is well served with the location of the larger parks.

However, some parts of the City do not have the smaller neighborhood parks. Using a dedication approach with developments is one way to get land for the smaller neighborhood parks, which would then become the responsibility of the homeowner's associations. Mayor Magers added that land dedicated to the City for parks many times is almost worthless and then the City is responsible for

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maintenance. Mr. Sofey said the City can encourage developers to leave green space for the home owner's association. The plan is to encourage them to leave green space but not to burden the City with the maintenance.

Mr. Mitchell added that in Texas, a City can require that land is dedicated to the City for parks, or the developer can pay a fee in lieu of the land dedication. The money goes into a fund to pay for park improvements. A City can also set it up to where it is more advantageous to pay the fee rather than dedicate the land.

Council Member Steele asked if the trend was toward active or passive parks. Mr. Mitchell said there is a high demand for ball fields, however there is also a demand for nature parks, walking trails, and bird watching. The trend is really to get the most out of the larger park properties.

Mr. Jacobs asked if they did any assessment concerning quality versus quantity when they did the inventory of existing park lands. Mr. Mitchell said they did not compare quality versus quantity because they just brought in the Parks Master Plan that had already been completed.

Mr. Mitchell said everyone wants trails and the City should look at making trail connections between various trails. He said community recreational opportunities are also enhanced when you consider a partnership between the City and the School District. They have many facilities such as playgrounds and athletic fields that add to the recreational opportunities of the City. Mr. Mitchell said everyone also wants aquatic parks and spray parks.

Chapter 7 considers housing and neighborhoods. Considering the proposed population growth of 11,000 persons by 2030, the City will need 4,545 additional housing units to handle this growth. That's approximately 200 additional units annually through 2030. The chapter also discusses the need for single family homes versus rental units. Mayor Magers confirmed that Sherman has a higher number of rentals than in many other cities.

Sherman is also a community of older housing units. As of 2000, 88.4% of housing units in Sherman were built before 1990. Thirty six percent were built during the 1970s and 1980s. A goal is the preservation of existing housing and neighborhoods, such as in the older neighborhoods where there is a focus on maintenance and upkeep.

The Plan addresses life cycle housing, from the time an 18 year old needs their own home, to a young family with no children, to a larger family, to empty nesters, to seniors. The different stages require a variety of housing.

Chapter 8 deals with community facilities and cultural services and covers a variety of items, such as the Senior Citizen's Center and the Library. The Plan also recognizes Sherman's strengths in the arts and cultural programs available. There are many opportunities in Downtown to make connections such as from the Courthouse Square to Kidd-Key Auditorium and City Hall, to the Library, to the Brockett Street Project, and over to Austin College.

Because Sherman is a City of older citizens, there should be a focus on senior services and meeting those needs. There has been a discussion of maintenance issues at the Library and the way Libraries are changing to meeting places and technology places. The potential of Downtown also ties in with both the land use and economic development areas, and opens up to being an arts and entertainment district.

Chapter 9 concerns economic development and has an emphasis of existing businesses and retention, and going forward to look at the types of industries to target. Goals also include a focus on

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the workforce and making the connection to other chapters, the amenities and the quality of life offered.

DISCUSSION OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES **REVIEW OF KEY ACTIONS IN DRAFT PLAT (GARY MITCHELL)**

The final chapter concerns implementation of the Plan. Mr. Mitchell said the Plan should become a staff tool, a reference document, and a policy document. Mayor Magers asked how you would measure the success or failure of the implementation of the Plan. Mr. Mitchell said, as a consultant, they would measure the success by whether or not, a year from now, the document is being referenced in Council Meetings and whether the staff refers to it during the budget process.

He added that through the goals the citizens wanted to see a higher quality of development. You can tell if the Plan is successful if you can see a tangible difference between what is being done after the Plan is implemented versus before the Plan. Mayor Magers verified that if the Council and staff follow the blueprint, they will have been successful. It must be a practical guidance document to help the City Council and staff make decisions.

Brad Morgan, Planning and Zoning Commission Member, asked if there was a “bullet sheet” of goals and objectives for the implementation of the Plan where action items could be tracked. Mr. Mitchell said that would be the exercise that is done today which would lead to an Executive Summary for the Plan.

Mayor Magers said Mike Wynne served as the Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee but could not attend today’s meeting. He read a letter from Mr. Wynne thanking the Council for the opportunity to serve as the Chairman and thanking the other members that served on the Committee.

Mr. Mitchell said one of the key elements in using the Plan is to review it annually and provide a progress report. There should be a formal Plan amendment process at least every two years and an in-depth review and update at least every five years. Sherman has a good track record because it’s been about ten years. Mr. Mitchell also advised the City not to lose the community involvement. Deputy Mayor Wacker said it has been a process that works and represents a community consensus where people indicate what is important to them as Sherman moves forward.

ACTION PRIORITIZATION EXERCISE WITH CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS (FACILITATED BY GARY MITCHELL AND JON GROSSHANS)

Mr. Mitchell presented Action Agenda items which they felt were major initiatives or the key actions in the Plan.

Mayor Magers asked to take a break before the exercise begun. Members took a break from 1:17 p.m. to 1:24 p.m. Council Member Softly left the meeting during the break.

Mr. Mitchell explained the prioritization exercise. Thirty two bullet points were presented on boards where Members could attach stickers. Mr. Mitchell asked Council Members, Planning and Zoning Commission Members, and staff to attach seven green dots to the Action Agenda items that indicate their highest priority. Each participant also has one blue dot to indicate their main priority. Each green dot has a value of five points and each blue dot has a value of ten points.

Mr. Mitchell outlined all thirty two bullet point items for consideration and ranking. Participants worked from 1:34 p.m. to 1:50 p.m. placing their dots on the Action Agenda Items.

DISCUSSION OF ACTION PRIORITIZATION RESULTS

The top Action Agenda items and the point value they received are as follows:

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- Updated and enhanced development regulations (115)
- City Geographic Info System enhancements (70)
- Storm drainage studies and planning for targeted capital improvements and financing (65)
- Revitalization of older neighborhoods (60)
- "Parks to Standard" maintenance and enhancement initiative for existing parks (50)
- Strategic annexation planning (50)
- Downtown development / revitalization (45)
- Trail, Bikeway and Greenway Master Plan and initial trail network development (40)

Mr. Mitchell said these are people's priorities, but the staff still needs input as to budget, timing, and capabilities. Some things rise to the top because they are a State or Federal mandate. Other things might rise to the top because of a grant opportunity. Some things could be completed easily, others need to be broken down and completed in stages, and some could even be on-going. Mr. Mitchell said they will highlight these priorities from the Plan, categorize them, and include them in the document as categories of action.

Mr. Sofey said some of the areas are concerns but not rated as high as they might be. For example, many road repairs are being completed now so those projects may not seem as needed as they have in the past. However, the bullet points are there for a reason, even though they have been taken care of recently. Mr. Mitchell said Sherman took the step to dedicate funding to roads and got the job done.

Mr. Sofey addressed the updated and enhanced development regulations, which topped the list. He said the Planning and Zoning Commission is concentrating on the updated development regulations instead of the enhanced regulations because they don't always want stricter guidelines. If the standards are updated it should bring them to where they are more reasonable. Deputy Mayor Wacker reiterated that the Council will need to incorporate reasonable development standards for the specific area under consideration. Some standards may be lowered in some areas while standards in other areas are raised.

Steve Jones, Planning and Zoning Commission Member, left the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

Council Member Steele said the study indicated that Sherman was in very good shape with water, sewer, and parks, but he asked what Mr. Mitchell felt the City was lacking on. Mr. Mitchell said probably the amount of older housing in Sherman is a challenge because so many of the older homes are in need of upkeep. Another challenge that must be improved going forward is the major roads that do not continue through the City. Another challenge is the transition of economic development from basic industry and manufacturing to other industries in the future. Sherman must maintain what they have, but these types of industries are probably not the future. Economic development also concerns quality of life and amenities that will be needed for the future.

Council Member Steele asked what stands out as strengths that Sherman has. Mr. Mitchell said Sherman has location, climate, cost, Lake Texoma, Austin College, the small town aspect, and being your own community set apart from the metroplex, but close enough to benefit from.

Mr. Grosshans said one challenge he saw was making sure that the roads are designed for different users and not just having good curb-to-curb design. Another challenge might be green building practices.

Mr. Mitchell said another challenge might be the arts and cultural aspect. Everyone in the early discussions talked about the available arts and cultural activities and what a neat feature it is for this size community to have so much.

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Mayor Magers said the industrial climate is changing and the United States is outsourcing jobs, but he felt Sherman's key difference from many communities was the water supply. That water supply will have value to certain industrial bases that need to have water and this is a huge advantage for Sherman. Sherman must be able to capitalize on the water and draw higher paying industry to the community. That is a huge advantage with which Sherman needs to keep pushing forward.

Mr. Mitchell said Texas in general, and Sherman's location also has a cost advantage. The challenge may be can you pay the labor enough to get them to move here. That in turn leads to newer, affordable housing. Don Hicks, Planning and Zoning Commission Member, asked if Mr. Mitchell meant there needs to be more new, affordable homes that need to be built. Mr. Mitchell said it is important to recognize that the wooden homes over time have a life span. If people don't have resources to maintain them, it can affect entire neighborhoods.

Mr. Morgan ask if this went along with Sherman's plan to tear down, older, dilapidated, unoccupied homes or if he meant offering a grant to help citizens maintain the older homes. Mr. Mitchell said it includes a package of things to help homeowners come into compliance.

DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS IN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION DISCUSSION OF AND PUBLIC HEARING ON FINAL PROPOSED PLAN

CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF AND PUBLIC HEARING ON FINAL PROPOSED PLAN FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION FROM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Staff members will set the next steps for adoption of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council or the Planning and Zoning Commission, motion was duly made and approved to adjourn the Joint Meeting at 2:08 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST

CITY CLERK