

Minutes

DVD No. 388

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Special Call Meeting in the Oak Room at City Hall, 4800 Town Center Drive, at 6:00 P.M., on Tuesday, March 28, 2017. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

Councilmembers Present: Chuck Sipple, Jim Rawlings, Andrew Osman, James Azeltine, Debra Filla, Dr. Steven Kaster and Lisa Harrison

Councilmembers Absent: Julie Cain

Staff present: Scott Lambers, City Administrator
Richard Coleman, Comm. Dev. Director
Michelle Kirks, Planner I
Mark Tepesch, Info. Serv. Specialist III
David Ley, City Engineer
Joe Johnson, Public Works Director
Debra Harper, City Clerk
Patty Bennett, City Attorney
Mark Klein, Planning Official
Staci Henry, Planner I
Andrew Hall, Assistant City Attorney
Debbie Brenner, Planning Admin.
Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk

Planning Commission: Mark Elkins, Chair
Mike Levitan
Liz Hoyt
David Coleman
Stacey Belzer
James Pateidl, Vice-Chair
Kip Strauss
William Ramsey
Matt Block

Others Present: Jim MacRae, Principal/Executive Director of DW Shanghai Co. Ltd., Design Workshop
Kevin Jeffries, Chief Executive Officer and President, and Director of Economic Development, Leawood Chamber of Commerce
Amy Grant, Polsinelli PC
Bob Regnier
Bob Cattanach

**Joint Governing Body – Planning Commission Work Session -
Presentation and Discussion of 135th Street Corridor Study**

Mayor Dunn called the meeting to order at 6:09 P.M. and stated the meeting was being videotaped and speakers must use the microphone to ensure audio capture. Introductions with affiliation were made.

Mayor Dunn welcomed all present, with special acknowledgement to various community and committee members who had participated in the project: Ms. Beth Dawson, Mid-America Regional Council [MARC]; Councilmembers Sipple and Cain; Planning Commissioners Strauss and Ramsey; Mr. Jeff Alpert and Ms. Melanie Mann, Park Place Partners/Developers; Mr. Kevin Jeffries, President and Chief Executive Officer, Leawood Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Johnson, Public Works Director; Mr. Klein, Planning Official; and Mr. R. Coleman, Community Development Director. The City has received a MARC sustainable places grant for two consecutive years in regard to the project.

Mr. R. Coleman provided a history of the project. The Community Plan started several years ago when Mr. Jim Heid of Urban Green presented to the Planning Commission and Governing Body. A grant submission to MARC was made and received for the Community Plan. The Community Plan was finished 18 months ago. Another MARC grant submission was made and received. A Colorado firm was again selected to develop the Implementation Plan, an outgrowth of the Community Plan. Mr. Jim MacRae of Design Workshop would present an overview of the Implementation Plan, followed by questions and answers.

Mr. MacRae, Principal with Design Workshop, stated the Implementation Plan was a joint effort of the City, MARC and Steering Committee; the committee was his point of contact. Design Workshop had three sub-consultants for the project including Nelson/Nygaard Consulting, well-known for transportation expertise, that looked at parking and transit components; Vireo, a local consultant that handled community outreach; and Mr. Mark White, that handled code, legalities and generated the draft development agreement.

The plan covers the area from Nall to State Line Road, bounded by 133th Street on the north and 137th Street on the south. The plan consists of multiple elements, which will be discussed in greater detail. The plan is similar in character to the Cherry Creek North in Denver. The district is a 16-block shopping district with the Fillmore Plaza at the core. The Implementation Plan document is intended to assist in the development of a project with character and quality, where community and outlying areas can come together in a mixed-use setting and enjoy all the offerings mixed-use provides.

Vision, Goals and Key Features (Begin Page vii)

1. Developed in late 2015, as part of one of the first meetings.
2. The plan will provide strategies and tools for mixed-use development that articulates high quality experiences in the City.
3. To navigate the process to reach the desired end-result, goals were formed through multiple iterations and discussions.
4. Goals include:
 - A. Build consensus through community engagement.
 - B. Vet and coordinate the plan with internal and external parties.
 - C. Create a model for mixed-use development in the City and Johnson County.
 - D. Create multimodal transportation element that anticipates eventual introduction of transit service along the area.
 - E. Enhance connectivity between neighborhoods and in-fill development.
 - F. Position the project effectively from economic development and fiscal impact perspectives.

- G. Effectively plan for natural environment parks, plazas, civic gathering spaces and open space connections.
- H. Integrate public art and aesthetic improvements into implementation strategies.
- I. Conform to any existing or pending local, state and federal regulations.
- J. Provide implementation strategies to ensure the success of the plan.

Key Features

Planning for Sustainable Mixed Use Development

The plan is a resource for the creation of meaningful, vibrant, and social public space. Economic, social and environmental sustainability are all important and need to be balanced in light of the plan, strategies and tools.

Developing a Multimodal Transportation Framework

Multimodal transportation is one of the most important key features in creating vibrant mixed-use. It is the balance of use and the opportunity to not depend on a car, because car use tends to be the antithesis to creating a walkable, pleasant, healthy environment. The Self-Propelled Leawood Plan is an important guiding document. Recommendations should fit and complement that plan as well as other plans in the area.

Preserving Open Space and Habitat

When considering mixed-used density on the land, it is important to think about open spaces where people can get away. A great place could allow a person to have one foot in the City and one foot in nature at the same time. This concept encapsulates the opportunity of mixed-use development and the idea of parks, and public and open spaces.

Creating Finance and Governance Strategies

These are the fundamentals to enable the City to work with land owners and developers through consensus and agreement.

Project Process and Community Engagement

There have been multiple layers in this regard. Three community meetings were held with 40 to 70 attendees. Key points such as goals, physical framework ideas, governance and financing were discussed. Input from these meetings has been incorporated into the current plan. Going beyond workshops and focus groups that require physical presence, a webpage and “My Sidewalk” social site were set-up to engage the community through survey and comments. An environmental justice survey was conducted as a condition of MARC grant receipt. The survey was conducted in outlying areas that are either lower income or have a social diversity. The survey results were also incorporated into the plan. Clearly, numerous people support the attributes and benefits of mixed-use. Many emphasized the physical qualities and characteristics, and that the area deserves to be special because it is the last portion of the City to be developed. Respondents desired variety rather than uniformity in this large area of land. Buffering, appropriate scaling and screening were important to residential areas adjacent to the study area.

In addition, transit options, both interior and exterior linkages, should be considered including greater regional bus service and circulator systems that do not require a car. Creating corridors and linkages relates to connections from neighborhoods into the mixed-use area. Pedestrian crossing would be across 135th Street and public art is an expression of the community in public spaces.

After community engagement, planning of physical qualities began. The Implementation Plan provides various feature maps of the study area. The grey areas of the maps are relatively undeveloped parcels. As noted previously, buffering was considered important. Green buffering could be used to enhance the appearance of 133rd Street and 137th Street and along existing residential neighborhoods. Natural vegetation and drainage ways might create opportunities for amenities within the corridor. Within mixed-use, “Node Development” is often used. Nodes have a destination quality and potential node/destination opportunities were analyzed including pocket park, wetland park, a plaza or a unique retail offering. These nodes then became the anchors of the development. A secondary road system would help get people from major existing streets to the anchor areas. Multimodal transportation would help disperse people and perhaps minimize the impact of cars. Access to a larger regional transportation system is important.

Transportation Strategies and Design Tools

Transportation strategies and tools began with Self-Propelled Leewood Plan, to ensure north-south connectivity and identify key intersections along 135th Street such as Mission or Roe in order to access different destinations within the corridor.

A conceptual “urban grid” was used as a starting point to assist in equal traffic distribution. The grid also became the framework for development of buildings that front the street with parking behind. A grid of internal streets, linking to 133rd Street, 135th Street and 137th Street will create multiple points of access and movement. A hierarchy of three different street types was developed, as follows:

1. Neighborhood Street [two options]. Low traffic, low-speed, narrow, two-lane with sidewalk. The “neighborhood feel” and character is slightly different due to the relationship of the street to adjacent development, but the street would serve mostly residential areas rather than high-density commercial. The street would have a nicely appointed streetscape. The sidewalk would allow for safe pedestrian travel. The narrow road width and interrupted blocks would keep cars from traveling too fast. Graphic presentations have been used to create technical diagrams to coordinate Public Works in regard to engineering and safety.
2. Active Pedestrian Street. Generally a wider road with two-lanes in each direction to carry cars with dedicated bicycle lanes rather than “Share to the Road.” This type of street would also carry pedestrians. To make more about pedestrians than cars, a middle street median provides scale, human comfort and slows car speed. All of these are aspects of creating walkable, healthy environments. Sidewalks would be wide with trees, landscaping, lighting and benches. These streets can be boarded by residential or commercial development.
3. Destination Street. A “shopper’s street” that supports retail activities and is more festive in activity, quality and character. The street would be two-lanes with on-street parking. There would be wider pedestrian zones for areas along restaurants and cafes to spill out into the public realm, which is a desirable attribute in creating vibrant places for people to visit.

Mixed Use Strategies and Design Tools

Land Use

The 135th Street Community Plan recommends use of transect zones to guide development along the area. The transect zone is a framework identifying a large range of potential zones with measurable metrics, each with its own characteristics such as density, building heights and setbacks. The metrics can be used to guide design and planning principles for development. The transect zone shapes the look and feel of the area without limiting the property owner, developer or community choices for the future of the area. A zone needs to complement what it adjoins. The Community Plan provides for three transect zones [T4, T5 and T6] generally parallel to 133rd Street, 135th Street and 137th Street. Scale and density can increase starting from the edges of 133rd Street and 137th Street, with taller and larger buildings toward the center of 135th Street.

Prototypical Block

The prototypical block has signalized intersections with mid-block roads to create a simple diagram of quadrants and what might happen in each quadrant. Buildings would line 135th Street, with opportunities for gateways into larger development parcels. The gateways might have restaurants or cafes at their corners, creating a welcoming atmosphere. Commercial was ranked highest use for ground-level retail or activities, with residential in stepping-back buildings creating roof gardens, terraces and decks to further animate the streetscape. There may be the opportunity to place more office and retail in the mid-block area, increasing in density and height from 24 feet to 115 feet nearing 135th Street. It is ideal that buildings can front 135th Street.

Transect Zones

Within the different transect zones, elements can be adjusted for different development opportunities. Various examples of potential development within the three transect zones are presented on Pages 52 to 60. The examples depict adjoining zones to ensure visual qualities wrap to from one zone to the next. An example of a T4 transect zone might consist of single family attached “row” homes fronting 133rd Street, which might help activate the pedestrian realm along the street and to create a landscaped foreground. Another option would be two to four story office space or commercial buildings that have a residential quality, architecture and scale. A T5 transect zone would have buildings that front a Neighborhood Street, Active Pedestrian Street or Destination Street. The zone has a higher density and building heights of 44 feet to 72 feet, with buildings 48 feet to 115 feet in height near 135th Street. Parking needs must be accommodated, and structures should look like a piece of architecture rather than a parking garage and parking visible to streets should be minimized when possible. A T6 transect zone would consist of retail and office space fronting 135th Street with gateways into larger parcels with restaurants and cafes on the corners or perhaps ground-level retail with residential above.

Parking Strategies

A diagram for parking that Nelson/Nygaard frequently uses shows that using individual land and typical use ratios results in a large amount of parking. For mixed-use, shared parking and parking once is promoted. This can drastically reduce the parking footprint and high costs associated with parking, and other transportation modes such as mass transit, bicycling or walking, are important for creating vibrant mixed-use environments. Nelson/Nygaard recommends placing as much parking behind buildings on each of the larger, more important streets as possible to minimize concentrated areas of pure parking. Every parking lot would have buildings to help frame and buffer visibility. Parking lots would be accessed via mid-block entrances. Large lots are defined as over 300 cars, which takes three acres. Parking structures should have architectural finesse to fit the area. Provide

on-street parking wherever possible on internal streets because it can help offload park lot parking to the street. Street parking also provides some protection between sidewalk pedestrians and street traffic. Parking can be shared through the formation of an agency and quasi-governmental entity by the City and multiple owners whose sole purpose is to determine how to deal with parking for the owners. Shared parking is important. Modified codes may be necessary to support strategies and tools. Parking financing would be needed.

Environmental Strategies and Tools

With some ingenuity, something of nature such as trees or drainage ways can be turned into a node or destination for people to enjoy, and for the benefit of private development and community as a whole.

Financing Strategies and Tools

Financing strategies and tools range are typically Special Benefit Districts and Community Improvement Districts, which probably could not be used for this project. The Hotel Occupancy Tax and Transportation Development District was used to help Park Place with their parking structures. Other options are general revenue bonds, business improvement districts, density bonuses and development agreements. A draft development agreement is included in the Implementation Plan.

Mr. MacRae concluded his presentation by stating he had tried to condense 100 pages of content into a 35-minute presentation. He would be happy to answer questions.

On behalf of everyone, Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. MacRae for his excellent presentation. She stated she had read every word of the plan and was particularly impressed with the public forums and social media opportunity for those who could not attend a forum. Proactive input that fed into the document was truly important.

Questions and Answers

Councilmember Azeltine asked for additional details of Cherry Creek North and if current mixed-use in Leawood had been reviewed. Mr. MacRae stated the 16-block Cherry Creek North development was located in an older area about 4-1/2 to 5 miles from downtown Denver. There are quite a few similarities to Leawood in terms of community and demographics. Over time, the area has become a place for local businesses, retailers and art to find a home. The area has a combination of street parking including some diagonal space, parking structures and parking behind buildings. All parking fees are paid at pay stations or through the convenience of a smartphone. A reputation for quality has been built over several decades. Design Workshop was involved in repurposing the district, including all the streetscapes and public spaces, and creation of guidelines to enable new development. Some older homes are being razed and new in-fill development is occurring because the Baby Boomer and Millennial Generations want to be in a more urbanized environment where they can live on active streets and have public spaces. Cherry Creek North has a reputation of an old neighborhood that was renovated into something well-to-do and well-known. This is partly because the City of Denver and business owners felt they needed to maintain their foothold in the retail environment. Retail is one of the more complex parts of urban development.

Mixed-use at Park Place was reviewed and used as a representation as to what the 135th plan could be. Park Place is a complicated project that took a lot of time. The developers were kind enough to share lessons learned in the process. In his experience, a private-public partnership for a development is needed.

Councilmember Azeltine stated his perception is that office space in Park Place has been quite successful, restaurants have had mixed success, and retail success has been disappointing. Ideally, the mixed-use has all three uses working in synergy with one another. He pointed out that Park Place contains a small plaza/ice-skating ring. He questioned if parking might be a reason for persistent retail problems and he inquired if Design Workshop could offer suggestions as to how to assist retail in all three of the City's mixed-used developments. Mr. MacRae stated retail is probably the most tenuous use and challenging. From experience working on many of these types of projects, ones that have some sort of economic engine or anchoring, whether it be corporate employment, civic cultural facility or major retailer, tend to fare better. Foot traffic needs to be drawn from a larger area. Cherry Creek North sells with an anchor of art, but most mixed-use projects rely on anchor(s) to really drive retail. There are many synergies that exist in retail, but in mixed-use it is about selling a set of experiences. Cherry Creek North had public space designed for numerous types of community activities, not just for the benefit of the retailers, but for the benefit of the community. It becomes the heart or center of the area. There is no one answer, but multiple answers.

Councilmember Azeltine asked for clarification of the term "quasi-governmental entity" and questioned if this was different from a Business Improvement District [BID]. Mr. MacRae stated parking districts have been formed legislatively that have a private-public entity that helps build, operate and maintain parking structures. It is similar to a BID, but with a different focus, since it is solely for parking. The Del Mar District in Denver utilized a Parking Incremental Tax [PIT]. Your restaurant bill includes an incremental tax being used by the district to pay-back parking structure bonds. This might be similar to Leawood's Transportation Development District [TDD].

Councilmember Azeltine asked how a BID differs from a Community Improvement District. Mr. MacRae deferred to Mr. R. Coleman. Mr. R. Coleman stated Business Improvement Districts are business organizations or associations that are generally self-formed and that voluntarily contribute money to the district for various purposes. An example would be the Downtown Overland Park Business District that provides for advertising, marketing and events. Each business contributes to the Business District based on use and square footage. Multiple and small property owners are disparate without relationships, and a BID can bring them together. Mr. MacRae stated that Cherry Creek North is a BID, so each shopkeeper contributes and in turn receives not just marketing, but operations and maintenance support. The BID handles all grounds maintenance, landscaping and external marketing. This can be very advantageous for small business owners.

Councilmember Azeltine asked if BID have been incorporated into development agreements. Mr. MacRae stated he had not seen this done. Mr. R. Coleman stated this would be possible.

Mayor Dunn stated she had stayed at the Marriott hotel near Cherry Creek North and she had been very impressed. At the time, Leawood was just beginning Park Place and she noted many similarities between the two areas. She stated the Implementation Plan's suggestions reminded her of the beautiful Country Club Plaza in Kansas City. She reminded the City's mixed-use percentage in the 135th Street Community Plan for retail is only 10% of the total, and the City recently approved the option of 50% of a hotel being applicable towards mixed-use residential and 50% applicable toward retail. This option had been well-received by the Planning Commission.

Mayor Dunn expressed surprised to see mention of a transient guest tax on apartments in the plan. The City has a hotel currently utilizing this tax and another hotel approved to use. This might be another mechanism to fund parking.

Councilmember Rawlings asked what could be done to prime the pump and attract anchor(s), to make the Leawood Development Ordinance [LDO] more conducive to mixed-use, and to eliminate any hurdles for developers. The City has a hotel as a spark, but how best to relate other projects, excluding big-box stores. Mr. MacRae stated the first issue discussed at the kick-off meeting was employment. Employers who are thinking about the future and how to attract and retain talent for their business that is not located in a proverbial business park. Design Workshop is currently involved in several projects to take urbanize existing business parks, in respond in part to the slow and steady movement of companies who look to provide an environment for their workforce that is more than urban, a little less dense and that does not require a long commute. The booming healthcare industry is a significant driver and economic engine, whether related to a full-fledge hospitals or 50-bed neighborhood surgery centers. Recreation, and social media and related platforms are growing. In Denver, an interesting phenomenon is the idea of communal office space for bands of small businesses. Denver's four projects catered to start-up companies; not all of them will succeed. These are the kinds of newer things seen around the nation. As mentioned before, parking is a challenge in mixed-use, going from surface parking to structured parking. The cost is extraordinary. In the end, it comes down to economic questions. Is the market there? Are the rents there? Can you sell a condominium for the asking price? Unfortunately, there is no one answer.

Mayor Dunn confirmed to Councilmember Harrison the use percentages for mixed-used are 10% retail, 20% residential and 20% office. The remaining 50% of the mixed-use district can consist of other uses.

Councilmember Harrison stated she had received several telephone calls from residents in the area inquiring which streets would cut through adjoining neighborhoods and continue into the development. In the plan, the grid of streets seems to continue into the development. High Drive appears to continue from Wilshire Place into the development. Also, residents with homes that back-up to 133rd Street and 137th Street have expressed concern about traffic the development would generate and whether the City would need to widen these streets. She asked if it was possible to discuss offsetting some of the streets, so the streets do not continue straight across 133rd Street or 137th Street. In this way, 25 mile per hour residential streets do not become quicker routes to 135th Street and Mission. Mr. MacRae stated the grid lines were conceptual, based on intersection access and separation distances based on typical transit. Creating thoroughfares through quiet neighborhoods is not desired. All of these streets, with the exception of those that actually do move north and south, would essentially stop at either 133rd Street or 137th Street. There may be occasions where streets may line-up. Road layout will be somewhat dependent on the development

and densities. As developers come forward with opportunities, evaluating traffic and connectivity will be important to ensure there is no detriment to neighborhoods. Mr. R. Coleman confirmed the width of 133rd Street and 137th Street would remain the same.

Councilmember Sipple asked for the size of apartment units, and the mix of loft, one bedroom and two bedroom units in Cherry Creek North. He pointed out the plan recommends loft apartments that are 600 sq. ft., which is quite a bit smaller than apartments in the City. Mr. MacRae stated the development has a variety of unit sizes and is trending towards larger rather than smaller units. In downtown Denver, units are smaller due to cost, as the income of the young workforce cannot support higher-level apartments. Developers are actually building micro-units, 400 sq. ft. to 500 sq. ft. studio apartments, for affordability and to have more units per project. This is a niche market for the younger generation, development based on pay-based market. The large amount of land to be developed along 135th Street will probably take years to develop, and markets and demographics are going to change.

Commissioner Pateidl noted on-line shopping and the potential impact to retail had not been addressed in the plan. He expects the demand for on-line shopping to continue to grow, but the City has a 10% retail requirement for mixed-use in the LDO. He asked if the City should consider some different things because of changing demographics and cultural aspects. Mr. MacRae stated this was a very important comment and question. Retail developers have had to re-invent themselves in the past and they are having to do so again in regard to mixed-use, venturing into office and housing. A retailer's selling point is an experience that cannot be purchased on-line. For example, an Apple store has both product and service. Retail would become more experience and service-based for a quality product. Big mall retail may not survive.

Councilmember Filla recalled an article she had read that described a golf course serving as green space for a residential development. She has also read about a trend toward farming and farmer's markets. In her travels of the east coast, there are small farms within dense development. She inquired if there was a way to incorporate this into the plan. Agricultural ground has been consumed at a great pace as humans cannot stop from building, even on the unbuildable, and we need that green, growing feeling to connect to our environment. Mr. MacRae stated this had been done in a few projects for a master-planned community catering to families, children, and learning from the outdoors and not in a classroom or by telephone. Daybreak, a 2,000 acre Utah project, was wildly successful, but it does require structure to support community gardens; an entity that can operate, maintain, and obtain funding either through the people that use or through outside sources. The project stresses the important of multi-generational families. There was an obvious historic backdrop of farming and agriculture tied to the concept. This is a slowly emerging, yet important part of healthy living and lifestyle.

Commissioner D. Coleman provided comments on three discussion points. He stated his teenage daughter shops in small-fronted stores like LuLuLemon in Park Place. She goes for the experience and then comes home to shop on-line; the likely future of retail, which may be good for retailers. In regard to green space, the Planning Commission and Governing Body have a duty to preserve as much as possible. If not preserved, 50 years from now, it would come at a premium if available. The City needs to have a good plan to preserve space and lease for farming or other agricultural uses, and a policy to consider this when developing mixed-use. Lastly, he has seen a plethora of housing units spring up around Johnson County. Downtown Kansas City has an urban feel with many office buildings converted to apartments or condominiums. The younger generation wants to

be in the middle of the downtown area where the action is and a vibe created, not at 135th Street and Nall. Downtown is changing and creating interest. He cautioned the City in planning mixed-use that would go against the Greater Kansas City area that is moving and evolving. Mr. MacRae agreed the City would be competing. Employment seems to be the driver of suburban in-fill projects when a company does not want to be downtown or in a business park, but rather in a small town center in a more suburban context. Most businesses realize the importance of keeping their workforce around. Many cities are reinventing in a surge of their inner core, and this is also seen on the periphery of smaller areas.

Mayor Dunn agreed with Commissioner Coleman in regard to office use, pointing out that corporate office space in Park Place had been filled faster than any other uses. Park Place has no open office space, but what comes available is quickly acquired by AMC. The plan is truly a 25-year vision or even beyond, rather than done in the next five years. Overland Park had a vision for Metcalf many years ago. The plan is a conceptual guide. It is important to remember the City's LDO and policies will evolve as necessary, as they do now. The City's Master Plan is reviewed each year.

Commissioner Strauss noted the plan's longevity and how retail and other things would change. Transportation will change and be very different 25 years from now. A year ago, Mr. Bill Ford, Jr., was in Kansas City and had said if Ford just continued to build cars, the company would be out of business in 10 years. Mr. Ford spoke about autonomous vehicles, connected vehicles and autonomous transit vehicles. Commissioner Strauss stated transportation changes are already being seen such as Uber and Lyft, and change will accelerate in the next five years. The City has be adaptable; not as much parking may be needed. He expressed appreciation that the plan included transit considerations and would like some discussion of flexibility for autonomous vehicles.

Councilmember Osman expressed appreciation for the entire package. It was enlightening to read the plan from a developer's point of view. The Ward he represents contains the original City built 60 years ago when the vision was home, after home, after home, with no foresight for green space. Development anchor is a grocery store in small strip shopping center in the heart of the area. A recent approval for a development in the area shows that every half-acre of green space is precious. Kansas City has always been on the forefront of real estate development; J.C. Nichols, the Country Club Plaza, and two Kroh Brother projects. In the last 40 years, the Eisenberg Company was at the forefront of strip shopping centers, which were disseminated across the country. There are now quasi-national and boutique real estate companies in Kansas City. Major companies such as Colliers, CBRE, Grubb & Ellis, as well as local companies such as Area and Johnson Company are here. He asked if Design Workshop had consulted with any of these companies or with retailers for their opinion in regard to feasibility. Mr. MacRae stated a few developers participated in the public forums, through invite or by happenstance. Although Design Workshop does conduct developer forums, there were not done for this plan, but this is a good idea. Park Place developers did provide great insight in the beginning, and this was used as a model.

Councilmember Osman asked if there had been a reason for not conducting a developer interact meeting, noting that Ingram's Magazine and other magazines have forums for bankers, real estate and healthcare on a monthly basis. Mr. MacRae stated the community meeting agenda was established and it was hoped that a good cross-section of the community would attend or participate through "My Sidewalk." Design Workshop did speak with a few developers with interest now, or were thought might have future interest. A full, robust developer forum was not conducted, but feedback from key advisors was received.

Councilmember Osman noted the approximate 2,000 acres along 135th Street was potentially available to develop over 25 years. Large groups may own 20, 40, 100 or 200 acres of ground. He inquired if this was a factor in creating through streets. He pointed out development of such-sized parcels reduces the number of capable developers and the number of finance companies that can actually finance the whole project. He inquired if this was taken into consideration. Mr. MacRae stated a balance was attempted. Some of the driving fundamentals of the plan are related to transportation requirements such as how far apart to place walks to move cars and traffic. The urban grid or modified urban grid would be a benefit to everyone, regardless of property. Details would need to be addressed in the years to come, such as the potential for a road to split a property line to benefit both owners, transportation and equitability within a cohesive system. Project underwriting is becoming more complex for larger-scale development. Across the nation, there is a tendency for things to get smaller, not bigger. Big malls are now small retail villages. Master-planned communities are now small neighborhoods. This retraction and rescaling is partially due to underwriting and resistance to not take on too much risk. Mixed-use is a risk-reward proposition for developers. Design Workshop has consistently seen the better business model is to do smaller sets of increments that aggregate to a larger whole.

Councilmember Osman asked if density studies are considered as they relate to the total square footage of retail, office or residential in a certain area in proximity to Leawood's district and potential impact on what can be built. He pointed out that 135th Street has Corbin Park and Sam's Club, and on Antioch there is a HyVee and movie theatre. Mr. MacRae stated a market study was done as part of the first plan. The study provided a backdrop for potential development based on demographics, earnings, projections of earnings and other metrics, and gave some sense of scale. Part of the plan is flexibility, which is really important to create a range for development, knowing markets are going to change and have ups and downs, over a long period of time. The plan also needs to be resilient, with a framework of transportation and open spaces that do not change much. For example, perhaps a creek is important to preserve as a green corridor. Roads are going to be set, although autonomous vehicles may change the rules. They provide the urban grid for walkability and associated density. The plan is only as good as the ideas expressed in it. Economics obviously drives all of this to happen.

Councilmember Azeltine requested details of different types of creative recreational amenities in projects Design Workshop has facilitated, other than parks. Mr. MacRae provided the details of a Denver project called River North. Design Workshop worked with the owner of a small piece of industrial property in an area that is changing from industrial warehousing to incubator places to live and work. There was no paradigm or driver for the project other than the owner was trying to take advantage of a trend in the area. The owner wanted to repurpose a parking lot to become community space. A plan for "tactical urbanism" was developed; temporary uses of the parking lot. Design Workshop partnered the owner with a brewery which was emerging nearby. A brew hall idea with summer concerts was adopted. Beer was sold on the parking lot with a minimal expenditure for improvements. A place to start marketing and celebrating mixed-use on this land was created, bringing people together, and also to learn about and engender support of the owner's future plans. Design Workshop is seeing many instances of this; simple, cost-effective, temporary recreation activities that could have a retail component or social aspect, driven by the community or group with a common interest.

Councilmember Osman asked if there were other examples besides people on a parking lot, perhaps a greener, recreational use like a theatre or something similar. Mr. MacRae stated there are adventure parks in urban environments that take old industrial equipment and repurpose for playgrounds and activities, for recreation-oriented children or young adults. Greening can happen in a variety of ways. Trees can be planted in a tree farm. A temporary nursery can be set-up, with trees brought in and irrigated, creating a small garden. Later on, the trees can be used in streetscaping for a nearby future development. Obviously, there may be cost involved, including maintenance.

Councilmember Azeltine stated he serves as liaison to the Economic Development Council and he wanted to discuss feasibility. Property owners would be required to develop their parcel using the mixed-use concept. The City's move to mixed-use was in full-swing 13 years ago, and not much development has happened in the 135th Street corridor. He asked if there were other different terms of mechanics and visions, being conscious of the market and striking some balance. He noted that the plan's edges are less intense, with density increasing moving toward the center, and questioned if villas could be placed along the perimeter, then planning the dense area in the future. Mr. MacRae stated market change must be anticipated and that he was not a developer. There are certain amenities such as a green corridor that villas and residential may wish close-by. Quite a bit of time and consideration was in this context this evening, but the City must keep in mind the distance from one end to the other. Each end may differ for a variety of reasons including topography, drainage and wooded area. Diversity is a good thing, given a parameter of quality in development to aspire to, with certain tenants held to as the development grows over time.

Mayor Dunn noted when the Community Plan had been reviewed, there was discussion of nodes along 135th Street. The City recognizes there will be nodes and differences in density, which will make the area more interesting. The nation went through a period of economic recession, and pausing at 135th Street was probably for the best, as 119th Street was far improved as a result. The City did not really start and truly stop, but rather had some challenges on 135th Street that are now improving.

Councilmember Kaster stated appreciation for master-planning, but was concerned the City would lose development opportunities because of rigid use requirements. A large company may not want to locate their headquarters in the City because they do not want 10% retail in their building. Mayor Dunn confirmed to Councilmember Kaster that an individual company in mixed-use is not required to have 10% retail in their building.

Councilmember Filla stated that Cerner has built huge complexes for its workforce. The company does not want employee time spent on traveling to dental appointments or daycare facilities. These services have been placed in the complexes, reducing time away from work. Employees can visit their child at break time. She questioned if similar large complexes were developed in Leawood, how retail that is brought in is counted, and if Cerner's use percentages were available.

Planning Commissioner Chairman Elkins agreed with Councilmember Filla, stating Cerner's development plan for the old Three Trails area included restaurants, retail and even a pet daycare. The development contains a large amount of space, planned for 12 years and beyond. Cerner will not necessarily own all of them, but will make them available to other owners to develop retail space. He stated he would look into Cerner's use percentages.

Councilmember Rawlings stated he had recently viewed row houses in North Kansas City developed by Midwest Property Developers. The row houses were absolutely beautiful with front porches. There was not much space between the houses and nothing unique in the development was seen, but there may have been features in the back. All of the houses were sold. He asked if row houses were trending and if they might work in Leawood. Mr. MacRae stated row houses are frequently a part of mixed-use, but they are usually not the majority of the housing. Cost parameters can be a challenge for some of these merchant builders. Apartments with an institution behind or a small house offers a greater profit margin. Design Workshop has seen the idea of socialization from front porches of houses on narrow tree-lined streets; returning to the proverbial old neighborhood in which many of us grew up. Pocket public space parks, located about every quarter-mile or 5-minute walk time, have been an amazing design element; people want to walk. The Daybreak community was designed to ensure a majority of children could actually walk to school on trails purposely separated from busy roads. There is a desire for attached housing, but Design Workshop is also seeing small lot housing that has similar standardized visual impact. Parking is located behind and front doors face the street. Anything that can be done to activate streets is of benefit.

Councilmember Osman stated Kansas City is a mid-west city in “fly-over country.” Many east and west coast trends take five to seven years to arrive. He agreed with Commissioner Strauss’ forward-thinking. He asked how the City should prepare in the long-term, while not reacting to current trends that may morph into something else 10 to 15 years in the future. Mr. MacRae stated that was a good question without an answer. Things are changing rapidly. From his work at various places, he has noted some consistencies. Choices seem to be about lifestyle. People are doing things differently than the prior generation. They want to live and work in a different environment. They want a different social agenda and schedule. They want smaller schools that are closer to their homes, so children can walk to school. Technology is a big unknown and changing rapidly. Think how radically autonomous cars will change land use and transportation systems. Where will all the cars be stored? It will happen, but how long it will take the general market to embrace is unknown. He suggested to keep talking and invite people with more expertise into the conversation.

Councilmember Osman asked staff if the plan presented tonight would go forward for consideration, adoption and implementation, if planning would continue to evolve, and for next steps. Mr. R. Coleman stated planning would be an ongoing evolution. The Implementation Plan is a continuation of the Community Plan. Staff will work with the Planning Commission and Governing Body to review portions of the plans that may impact the LDO. He stated the meeting would need to adjourn, since a Planning Commission meeting would soon start.

Mayor Dunn thanked Mr. MacRae for his presentation and work, Mr. R. Coleman for his guidance and leadership, the committee who had worked on the project for many years, and all stakeholders and community members who participated. The City will move forward, looking in finer detail and scheduling future work sessions to discuss. The plan is an evolving, living document. She was delighted to hear comments about including natural spaces. The City does not want to miss the opportunity to preserve natural spaces.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned at 7:54 P.M.

Debra Harper, CMC, City Clerk

Cindy Jacobus, Assistant City Clerk