

AGENDA ITEM # 3

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMUNICATION FORM

FROM: John Eastman, AICP, Planning Services Manager (Ext 275)

THROUGH: Tom Leeson, AICP, Director of Planning and Community Development (Ext. 244)

DATE: November 12, 2009

ITEM: Large Format Retail Standards Worksession

NEXT STEP: Text Amendment Review by Planning Commission and City Council

ORDINANCE
 RESOLUTION
 MOTION
 DIRECTION
 INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME: Large Format Retail Standards Worksession

ISSUE: There are two categories of issues for Planning Commission discussion:

1. Clean-up - Revisions to CDC to eliminate conflicts and simplify and clarify existing standards:
 - a. CDC text amendments to simplify and clarify large format retail standards contained in Section 26-150 Commercial over 12,000 square feet.
 - b. Clarification that PUD Public benefit requirements do not apply to Commercial over 12,000 but less than 40,000 square feet located in TND transects T4-NC and T5.
 - c. Amend Section 26-153 TND Building Type Standards to be consistent with Section 26-150

2. Major Updates - Revisions to CDC that would require a multi-story urban form for any large format retail and allow for that use to occur anywhere in the City (currently single-tenant buildings over 20,000sf are only allowed west of 13th Street) Discussion and direction is requested on the following:

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- a. Expectations regarding public process.
- b. Would structured parking be a requirement for any large format retail over a certain size? Would structured parking be considered a public benefit?
- c. What, if any, limitations on location might be appropriate?
- d. Other issues?

APPLICANT: City of Steamboat Springs, Department of Planning Services, c/o Planning Services Manager John Eastman, Centennial Hall, 124 10th Street, PO Box 775088, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477 970-871-8275

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2004 Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan (SSACP) update adopted:** includes specific direction regarding big box development standards.
- 2004 Community Development Code (CDC) amendment:** prohibiting single tenant commercial over 20,000 sf south and east of 13th Street and requiring Planned Unit Development (PUD) review for all new single tenant commercial over 12,000 sf and multi-tenant commercial over 20,000 sf.
- 2006 Community Development Code (CDC) amendment:** Detailed development standards for large format retail adopted.
- 2008 Steamboat Springs Economic Development Plan prepared by Economic Planning Consultants (“EPS Study”):** Surveys indicate ambivalence about whether large format retail should be allowed at all and that to be acceptable any large format retail would have to address community impacts and adhere to strict design standards. West Steamboat is identified as the preferred location for large format retail. The study estimates that development of a large format general merchandise store and home improvement store, Target and Lowes for example, would result in a net increase \$1.1 million in annual sales taxes even after accounting for decreased sales at other area businesses.
- 2008 Community Development Code (CDC) reorganization:** Existing big box development standards were moved from the PUD section of the CDC and placed in the newly created Section 26-150. No substantive changes were made to the standards.
- 2009 West Steamboat Large Format Retail work sessions:** Planning Commission and City Council discussed whether land should be reserved for large format retail as part of west steamboat annexation. Planning Commission and City Council agreed that land for large format retail would not be required as part of annexation. In addition Planning Commission discussed the issue on a city wide basis and approved the following motion with a 7 – 0 vote: “to remove

the requirement that Large Format Retail has to be west of Steamboat and to open that back up to allow all of Steamboat as potential sites for Large Format Retail if they comply by the guidelines already enforced, includes a parking structure, has an urban feel with tighter setbacks and sidewalks with a pedestrian friendly environment, and a huge mix of use” Part 2 of the worksession has been scheduled to address the motion.

- 2009 TND Large Format Retail Overlay standards adopted:** The TND amendments to Community Development Code included an addition to Section 26-150: Commercial over 12,000 square feet standards. The new section provides standards for development within a large format retail overlay zone. The standards provide an exemption from maximum lot size but otherwise require large format retail to “reinforce urban character” and meet TND standards for maximum block size and block face length.

Clean-up Summary:

1. **Urban Design Standards:** In February 2008 the City of Steamboat Springs Urban Design Standards and Entry Corridor Concepts were adopted. The Urban Design Standards apply to all commercial development. The new standards created redundancies in areas including site layout, building orientation, and parking lot landscaping. The proposed edits eliminate those sections where the Urban Design Standards are equal to or more stringent than the standards in Section 26-150.
2. **Existing CDC Standards:** In certain cases like lighting and sign standards there were redundancies or inconsistencies that have been cleaned up.
3. **PUD applicability:** The recent adoption of the TND text amendments requires some minor amendments to section 26-81 to be consistent with the updated use chart which created a new classification for “Commercial Uses over 12,000 square feet and under 40,000 square feet”.
4. **Minor Revisions:** There were a few standards that were either internally inconsistent or were organized in a way that was somewhat inconsistent with the applicable headings. For example the standard requiring “*exceptional connections to transit facilities or bicycle and pedestrian trails*” was moved from Cultural Resources Protection to a more appropriate section and edited to make the transit connectivity a requirement since bike and pedestrian facilities were already required in a different section. Another revision was to limit the requirement for an impact assessment analysis and mitigation plan to projects over 40,000 square feet.
5. **TND Building Type Standards:** The adopted standards allow for a one story building which is inconsistent with the existing large format retail standards that require two stories. Proposed amendments to require two stories along street frontages are included as Attachment G. In addition the Building Type standards include a proposed amendment to require primarily rooftop, underground or structured parking. Surface parking is inconsistent with the adopted standards for the TND large format retail overlay district which require that: “*the Large Format Retail Overlay must reinforce the urban character of the surrounding neighborhoods and shall therefore*

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continue a connected system of walkable street frontages by preserving a consistent urban frontage along adjacent streets. Acceptable frontages include shopfront, gallery and loading dock.” This would apply in the TND district only.

Grocery Store exemption:

Under the CDC a grocery store is not subject to the same PUD requirements and design standards of other large format retail uses, although they are subject to the Urban Design Standards for all commercial uses adopted in 2008.

The CDC defines a grocery store as follows: *“Shall mean a retail establishment which primarily sells raw, processed and packaged food, but also may sell other convenience and household goods, and which occupies a space of at least five thousand (5,000) square feet but not more than fifty-five thousand (55,000) square feet.”*

There has been some discussion among staff about whether the size limit is too restrictive. According to the Assessors records City Market is 54,496 square feet. Which means that any new grocery store a couple thousand square feet larger than City Market or a significant expansion of that store would not meet the definition of a grocery store and would be subject to the more stringent large format retail standards. This may not be an issue since the median size of a new supermarket has declined from 48,750 square feet in 2006 to 46,755 square feet in 2008 (statistics from Food Marketing Institute website). No changes to the definition of a grocery store are currently proposed but Planning Commission feedback is requested.

II. DIRECTION REQUESTED

There are two categories of issues where Planning Commission direction is requested:

Clean-up - Revisions to CDC to eliminate conflicts and simplify and clarify existing standards:

1. Are the proposed changes to Sections 26-81 (Attachment F), 26-150 (Attachment D), and 26-153 (Attachment G) of the CDC generally acceptable?
2. Are there additional edits that would help clarify the existing standards?
3. Is allowable size of exempt grocery stores appropriate?

Major Updates - Revisions to CDC that would require a multi-story urban form for any large format retail and allow for that use to occur anywhere in the City (currently single-tenant buildings over 20,000sf are only allowed west of 13th Street) Discussion and direction is requested on the following:

1. Expectations regarding public process.
2. Would structured parking be a requirement for any large format retail over a certain size? Would structured parking be considered a public benefit?
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4. Other issues?

Feedback on these questions will help Planning staff frame the discussion for consideration by City Council.

III. ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – 02/12/2009 Planning Commission minutes

Attachment B – 03/03/2009 City Council minutes

Attachment C – Excerpt from the CDC Use Chart – Section 26-92

Attachment D – Redline of Section 26-150: Commercial over 12,000 sf Standards

Attachment E – Clean copy of Section 26-150: Commercial over 12,000 sf Standards

Attachment F – Redline of Section 26-81 Planned Unit Development

Attachment G – Redline of Section 26-153 TND building types