

Manti City Council Meeting

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019
6:00 PM

MANTI CITY BUILDING
50 SOUTH MAIN STREET

MEETING CALLED BY	Mayor Korry L. Soper
TYPE OF MEETING	Public Hearing & Regular Council Meeting
ATTENDEES	Mayor: Korry Soper Councilmembers: Gary Chidester, Jason Maylett, Jason Vernon and Mary L. Wintch Administrator: Kent Barton
ABSENT	Darren Dyreng
WELCOME	Mayor Soper
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Led by Mayor Soper

Agenda Items

ITEM 1	Public Hearing Regarding the Zoning Changes
<p>Mayor Soper welcomed all present for the public hearing and council meeting. He then read the following statement:</p> <p>Good evening ladies and gentlemen. We welcome you to this <i>public hearing</i> concerning proposed zoning changes. Before opening the floor for you comments. I'd like to give some back ground on the issue.</p> <p>Utah State law requires that all cities have a current general plan, which is to be updated every 10 years. In 2016 we did a comprehensive update of Manti City's plan. In addition to the City Council and Planning Commission, we invited main street merchants; educators and citizens to participate in formulating the plan. We also distributed a survey throughout the city to get citizen feedback on several issues. 77% of the surveys distributed, were completed and returned to the city. Dr. Michael Clay from BYU and a group of his advanced planning students helped us with the plan, which includes housing, land use, economic development, transportation, schools, public facilities and infrastructure, annexation, historic preservation and the environment. The general plan is to become a guiding document to help the current and future councils as they plan for the growth and development, and needs of the community. A survey of housing inventory and residential zone requirements found that our city was deficient in housing options for moderate and lower</p>	

income families. That situation has only worsened as we have witnessed the real estate market spike dramatically over the past 3 years since the plan was completed. Part of our proposal addresses that need through the additional of two residential zones. These zones would allow multifamily housing options currently unavailable in our city such as townhomes, condominiums retirement cottages and smaller yards. Our proposal has placed these zones in mostly undeveloped property in the city so as to minimally impact established neighborhoods.

Our proposal also establishes multiple commercial zones. Highway frontages to the north and south of the city, which have been annexed in recent years, have been designated for commercial development. The “North Gateway Commercial Zone” includes restrictions to protect the beautiful gateway and entrance that our city is famous for, but which will eventually be built around as we see that development is imminent and quite frankly welcomed by this Council as we believe our city needs to embrace growth. Additionally, our proposal adds protections to our downtown or historic commercial zone. Our current commercial zoning is two words: “No Restrictions”. We feel this puts our both downtown area and the property owners at risk. Our proposal includes design standards and setbacks that will build on the strengths of our historic commercial district. Study after study has shown that commercial areas, which are protected by reasonable zoning restrictions, are more successful, more inviting and increase the property value increases. Downtown areas where character is protected are more likely to attract people and shoppers. We want our local merchants to be successful. As part of our general plan update, the BYU group also developed an economic development strategy for the city. That study rated the absence of zoning standards in downtown as a weakness that the city should correct.

Now, we want to hear your comments and concerns about our proposal. We realize that some adjustments or changes additions or deletions could make this a better proposal. Again, our desire is to position our community to grow, to attract visitors and to have a successful and thriving downtown.

If you desire to make a comment, please state your name and we ask that you keep your comments to 2 minutes to insure that all who desire, have an opportunity to speak.

Benton Petersen of Manti advocated keeping a street grid system in the residential zones as opposed to cul-de-sacs. He then went on to say that the proposed zoning changes would kill our downtown just as similar zoning has killed Salt Lake City’s downtown. He said if you pass this you will come to be known as the “Butchers of Business” in Manti City.

Karl Kelson questioned how the zones were determined, saying that the sports park should be zoned R1 rather than commercial. He also wondered if current multifamily in the proposed R1 zone will be “grandfathered”.

Todd Miller of Manti stated that the business owners of Manti had been left out of the process. He said he has spent his whole life developing businesses along Mani Street and said the proposal leaves him feeling “stabbed in the back”. He said business owners were told at the planning commission hearing they would be included, but they had not been. He said he feels the proposal deters from our businesses.

Tamara Nielsen of Manti said adding zones for multi family housing concerns her. She said higher density zones would increase traffic and bring in a bad element and increase theft.

John Jensen of Manti said “Not one of you have been in our stores to ask our opinions”. He said his family has been in business for 95 years on Main Street and that he doesn’t agree with any of the proposal. He said historical designations would affect “everything I can do” and closed by saying “you have let us down”.

Jeff Killian of Manti said he was the chair of the Planning Commission and said that business leaders were invited to be part of the process. He said a survey was also delivered to most residences in the city and has a near 80% response rate. He said this has been a 2-year effort with one of the objectives being to further develop and bring greater success to down town.

Travis Miller of Manti said he owns Miller’s Bakery, which has been doing business for 60 years on Main Street. He said he has always tried to use profits to make improvements to his business. He said the proposal would bring a complicated process, which would not encourage re-investment. He said: “Your proposal makes us feel like idiots” and he agreed with others who had said they felt betrayed.

The Mayor then asked for several photos taken from nearby cities and towns where no design standards existed to be displayed. The photos included metal buildings and storage containers along with a photo of a parking lot in the center of Manti, which replaced the old Manti Grocery building. After showing the photos he said, this is what you get with no restrictions, and asked: “Is this what you want?”

Tyler Merrill of Manti said he owns the grocery store and parking lot from the photo and he has tried the best he can to improve the store. He said he had donated a 30 square foot section of the parking lot near the corner for beautification by the city but feels the city hasn’t done much to beautify the area.

Carol Miller of Manti asked if we are here to belittle business owners. She said her husband never stops working and making a living here is not easy. She said they do it by sweat and for a love of Manti. She said the proposal would devalue their property if they ever desire to sell. She said all business owners want to keep the city beautiful.

Dave Hall a Main Street business owner said there appears to be a great disconnect here. He said to be strong we must be united and that it appears we all have the common interest of our town being successful. He said we should embrace change. He said he feels the vision of the proposal can bring improvement, but we need to work together.

Linda Mount of Manti said she moved to Manti from Springville because of similar zoning changes made there. She said the zoning changes had ruined the city. She said citizens there (in Springville) also opposed the changes but that the elected leaders “blew us off”. She said: “high density housing has destroyed Utah County, and now you want to impose it on us

John Mount of Manti said affordable housing is not what you think. It will be more expensive than traditional housing. He said the proposal is all about more revenue for the city and caving in to developers

Charlene Fjerstad of Manti said she was concerned about the proposed Industrial Zone between 500 and 600 West streets. She said it would alienate residents living to the west of the industrial zone.

Kelly Thompson a resident of the county east of the city, said: “we are not a duplex/townhouse community”. She went on to say: “you need to listen to your business owners – don’t ridicule the whole town – I love Manti – we do not need what you have proposed.”

Kay Jensen of Manti said she doesn’t think the proposed plan reflects what Manti is. She said: “I agree we need a plan, but we don’t have to accept this”.

Michele Serra of Manti pushed the microphone away from her mouth and said you won’t need a mike to hear what I have to say. She said she live with and assists her sister who owns a business on Main Street. She said the city is putting all of its money on the north end of town and doesn’t do a single thing to help business. Then in a raised voice she angrily said: “you are insults to the community and should be ashamed of yourselves”. She added: “We expect you to support us – we make less than your secretaries”.

Larry Lund of Manti said he would like to commend the city on its efforts to help with projects such as the chip sealing of the alley between 100 North and Union Street. He said parking on Main is a concern and a challenge. He went on to say that he doesn’t believe Manti wants to be a Park City, Heber City or Logan. He then suggested if the Council is concerned about how Main Street looks they should turn around as the leave the city building tonight and see how feel their own property looks.

Dirk Correnti of Manti said he was grateful for the attempt. He suggested what you really need to do is develop downtown, and not the north end of the city. He said he has heard a rumor that the city was courting another hotel and restaurant for the north end.

[Note: Administrator Kent Barton stated that there was no truth to that rumor.]

Linda Nielsen of Manti said she also likes to see attempts at improvements, adding that she would like to see us become a destination shopping town. She said she feels the administration of the city has turned their back on business. She said she agrees a plan should be developed but that the proposed plan is wrong. She continued saying: “Your proposal will have a negative impact, I oppose your proposal, this draft needs significant revision”.

Linda Collins of Manti said that Manti is a difficult place to do business. She said, under your proposal, I would be unable to live at my store. She expressed major disappointment with the city saying as a blind person, her pleas for accommodation from city staff for large print minutes and agendas have been repeatedly ignored. She said: “public input means nothing here because 95% of the time your minds are already made up. She went on to say: “Most of you have not been in my store – I don’t think you appreciate me – I’m insulted by you – You don’t give a darn about us”. She said she doesn’t want anything to do with the proposed plan and hopes the Council to be God-fearing people who will support them. In a final plea she said: “Please consider our opinion, we are smart people”.

Jennifer Christiansen of Manti said she doesn’t think she could improve on what had been said. She agreed there should be some restrictions but said she was appalled by what I’ve seen here tonight.

Alan Nielsen of Manti said he realizes the city leaders have a thankless job, but the leaders need to work with the merchants. He said he’s very concerned about high-density residential zones. He said we don’t need checkboard zones here and there. He strongly urged against adding an R-3 zone.

Gerald Christiansen of Manti asked how many members of the Council work in Manti. He then said all but one of you work outside the city. He then said: “I appreciate many of you coming into my shop, but don’t come in and tell me what to do”. He said: “were not talking about some garden tomatoes here – you’re affecting my livelihood”.

Dave Cox of Manti said: “Scrap this project entirely and start over”. He suggested making the people in this room the committee, and doing something positive with what has been said tonight. Finally, he said the Council needs to be more transparent and bring things into the open.

Jonathan Allen a resident of the county east of the city said High density housing is not necessarily affordable housing.

Shellie Illes of Manti said she came from St. George, where its all about growing the city. She said we moved here for a small town and we don’t want it to grow any more. She closed by saying: “Don’t change our town”.

Michael Barclay of Manti said he knows what it feels like to be unwanted by the city. He said: “Please treat your businesses fairly”. He also said zoning should treat everyone fairly and wondered why his new neighbor was able to build a large outbuilding on his lot, while he (Barclay) had been denied.

Jim Weeks of Manti asked if the Mayor would answer the question: “How does this go forward”? He also asked if each member of the Council would respond.

Mayor Soper said: I think we need to take a step back, we want to listen to your concerns. He also said he felt he owed an apology to Tyler Merrill say: “I’m sorry”. He explained that it was not his intention to belittle Merrill’s store, just to show as an example where a parking lot had replace a historic building. The Mayor then invited the members of the council to respond.

Gary Chidester said the only motive behind the proposal was to attract visitors to Manti. To help bring success to the community and to the merchants. He expressed his love for the community, and that he is honored to serve the community. He then noted that it’s difficult to sit in these chairs and take what we take. He noted that the last time he ran for council he ran unopposed, and said in the current election there are only four candidates running for three seats. Making the point that a lot like to criticize elected leaders but not many are willing to serve

Jason Maylett said he feels that there is much that needs to be discussed. He said: “I think we’ve learned tonight that we need a lot more input”. He then said: “Let’s start over if we have to but we have to do something – growth is coming whether we want it or not and we need to be ready for it”.

Jason Vernon said he expected some frustration tonight. He said: “this is how government does business”. But, then he noted that at most council meetings, no one comes. He then said that we need a balance in our zoning noting that we can’t expect that the state and our community will not continue to see growth. I said he ran for Council because he loves the community, and noted that the comments made tonight had not fallen on deaf ears.

Mary Wintch thanked all who attended the hearing and also noted that often we don’t see anyone here. She said she our desire is to help and grow our businesses. She said she is willing to go back to the drawing board and committed to working together to find consensus.

Lenard Stull remarked that it appeared the members of the council were listening.

CONCLUSIONS

Seeing there were no more citizens desiring to make comment, the Mayor thanked all in attendance for their participation.

He then said there would be a brief recess before starting the Council Meeting and invited any interested to remain for the discussion of other business on the agenda.

ITEM 2	Continuing Business
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There was no continuing business brought up for discussion.

ITEM 3	Councilmember Reports
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Gary Chidester reported on the Fly-in event held recently at the airport. He also talked about the recent Utah League of Cities and Towns convention and said he sat in on several good sessions. He noted that he thought it would be a good idea to research funding options for bike trials and walking paths.

Jason Maylett reported on the ULCT convention. He remarked that growth is coming and we have to be ready for it.

Jason Vernon also observed that many of the discussions at the ULCT meeting were dealing with and planning for growth. He did note that he wish there were more options in breakout session for rural community issues.

Mary Wintch spoke of the ULCT meeting as well and said that she particularly enjoyed a discussion concerning 'The Economies of Open Space'.

ITEM 4	Public Comment
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There was no public comment brought up for discussion.

ITEM 5	Mayor Soper
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The Mayor observed that growth is imminent and that we have to provide options for people coming to town. He then asked when the Council would like to take up the zoning discussion again noting that he feels time is of the essence. After discussion it was determined to meet for the next Council Meeting On Thursday October 3rd and to invite merchants to that meeting, and then to asked them to select several members to represent them for continued discussions concerning the commercial zoning proposal.

ITEM 6	Consideration of Minutes From Previous Meeting
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The Mayor directed Councilmembers to draft minutes from the previous Council Meeting, including public hearings, held on September 4th, 2019. After review, seeing that no changes or errors were noted, the Mayor called for a motion to accept the minutes and presented.

ACTION TAKEN

Mary Wintch made the motion, Gary Chidester seconded. Councilmembers voting “aye”: Gary Chidester, Jason Maylett, Jason Vernon and Mary Wintch. Councilmembers voting “nay”: none.

ITEM 7 City Administrator’s Report

Administrator Kent Barton reported on the following:

- Six County Hazard Mitigation Plan Progress
- Ensign Engineering to come to next Council Meeting to discuss development of a General Water Plan.
- USSSA Tournament to be held at the Sports Park this Saturday.

ACTION TAKEN

Seeing there were no remaining agenda items for discussion, the Mayor called for a motion to adjourn. Gary Chidester made the motion, Jason Vernon seconded. Councilmembers voting “aye”: Gary Chidester, Jason Maylett, Jason Vernon and Mary Wintch. Councilmembers voting “nay”: none.

ADJOURNED 9:00 PM

NEXT MEETING DATE Regular Council Meeting – October 2nd, 2019 at 6:30 PM

Korry L. Soper, Mayor

Kent Barton, Recorder/Administrator