

Zoning Code Rewrite Project

Report on the Recommendations of the Focus Groups and the Citizen Advisory Group



Compiled by Roger E. Eastman, AICP (Zoning Code Administrator)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION:

In response to a Request for Proposals issued in July 2008 and a comprehensive review and interview process of nine firms, the City Council in January 2009 awarded a contract to Opticos Design Inc. and their supporting team of consultants to rewrite and update the City's Land Development Code (LDC) or zoning ordinance.

As of early August 2009, the project is well underway, and Task 1 (Background Review and Initial Public Participation) and Task 2 (Documentation and Analysis) are complete. Work is now under way in preparation for a design charrette for those areas identified in Task 2 where form-based codes should be applied, as well as the structure of the contents of the new zoning code for the City of Flagstaff.

This report describes the composition and purpose of the 11 Focus Groups that were formed to provide a venue for interested citizens to participate actively in the rewrite of the zoning code, as well as the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) which is composed of the chairpersons of the Focus Groups. The recommendations of each Focus Group have been compiled so that they can be forwarded to the consultants and City staff. Areas of overlap between the Focus Groups that were also discussed by the CAG are also described. Finally, those ideas and recommendations that came from the Focus Groups that are not necessarily implemented through the zoning code are documented, and these will be forwarded to other groups or individuals for implementation. A summary of the CAG's recommendations is also included.

2.0 EXPLANATION OF THE FOCUS GROUPS:

Eleven Focus Groups were established as an effective way of involving the general public and citizen experts in the Zoning Code Rewrite. Focus Groups were formed for specific areas of interest such as housing, resource preservation, lighting issues, etc. for which there is not already an official City Commission, Committee or Board. A list of the eleven Focus Groups is provided below with the name of the staff technical specialist primarily associated with that group.

Focus Group Name:

Building and Fire Code
Design Guidelines
Downtown
Economic Development
Housing
Landscaping
Outdoor Lighting
Neighborhood Planning
Process and Procedures
Signage
Trees/Resources

Staff Technical Specialist:

Edwin Larsen/Paul Cortez
Karl Eberhard
Karl Eberhard
Becky Daggett
Erika Mazza
Elaine Averitt
Chuck Ley/Roger E. Eastman
Kim Sharp
Vince Knaggs/Neil Gullickson
Chuck Ley/Roger E. Eastman
Vince Knaggs/Mark Sawyers

Members of the Focus Groups were not appointed by the City Council. They are instead informal citizen groups formed to focus on a specific area of interest and to provide direction, comment and ideas to the consultant and staff during the Zoning Code Rewrite. The Focus Groups were primarily "outcome focused" with a strong emphasis on general

issues rather than getting into the details of technical code review. Their primary role was therefore, to identify and frame issues, and to rationalize why an amendment is needed.

Citizens responded to numerous public requests from staff to enroll in one or more of the Focus Groups. Membership of the Focus Groups was intended to be as diverse as possible and that each group include citizens with a range of related interests as well as City staff representing a diverse range of expertise. Members of the Focus Groups did not need to be City residents.

Members of the each Focus Group selected a chairperson and a vice chairperson. The primary role of the chairperson was to run the Focus Group meetings and find consensus on the issues under discussion, and to serve on the Citizen Advisory Group (CAG). Members of existing City Boards and Commissions could not serve as a chairperson or vice chairperson of a Focus Group, but they were permitted to serve on the Focus Groups provided that a quorum of members was not present.

All Focus Group meetings were open to the public and to facilitate the accurate posing of agendas, most meetings were held in the Cherry Building Conference Room at 101 West Cherry Avenue. Only two Focus Groups met at other locations – the Trees/Resources Focus Group met in the Council Conference Room at City Hall and the Housing Focus Group held their last few meetings in the Downtown Library Community Room. While not technically required by the Open Meeting Law, all Focus Group meetings were posted in the City's official public noticing locations, on the City website, and elsewhere in the City so that the public could be informed of the meeting and had a chance to attend. Meeting notes were also created so that all important decisions were recorded. Meeting notes were posted on the City website and kept on file for public review.

Roger Eastman (Zoning Code Administrator and project manager for the zoning code rewrite project) and Ed Larsen (Chief Building Official) attended all Focus Groups meetings to provide technical assistance as needed, support the chairperson or vice-chairperson, take notes, and to share ideas and recommendations from one Focus Group to another.

Attached is a master calendar for all Focus Group meetings. A total of 56 Focus Group meetings were held from May 18th through August 12, 2009. This total excludes the meetings held by a sub-committee of the Landscaping Focus Group that is reviewing the landscape plant list for Flagstaff.

3.0 EXPLANATION OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP (CAG):

The Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) is made up of the elected chairpersons from each of the Focus Groups. CAG members must be either City residents or property owners within the City if they live outside the City limits. Any citizen serving on the Regional Plan 2012 Citizen Advisory Committee could not be appointed to the CAG, but could serve as a member of a Focus Group. Roger Eastman and Ed Larsen attended all CAG meetings. At their first meeting on June 24, 2009, members of the CAG elected Kara Kelty and Kent Hotsenspiller as the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the CAG.

The purpose of the CAG is as follows:

- Provide an additional opportunity for public engagement in the Zoning Code Rewrite
- Provide a forum for coordination between the Focus Groups
- Participate in review of draft sections of the new zoning code
- Participate in the micro-scale documentation and the charrette for the areas of the City where a form-based code may be applied.

All meetings of the CAG will be open to the public. Meetings of the CAG will be subject to the Open Meeting Law, and thus their meetings will be posted in the City's official public noticing locations, on the City website, and elsewhere in the City so that the public can be informed of the meeting and has a chance to attend. Action minutes will also be maintained so that all important decisions can be recorded. Minutes will be posted on the City website and kept on file for public review. The CAG will not form sub-committees.

4.0 REPORT ON THE CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS REACHED BY EACH FOCUS GROUP:

4.1 Building and Fire Code Focus Group

Chairperson: David Walker, NABA

Vice-chairperson: Ed Larsen, Chief Building Official, City of Flagstaff

4.1.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. New zoning code must include "pointers" or references to applicable sections of other codes such as the International Urban-Wildland Interface Code, 2006 edition (WUI), International Building Code (IBC) and International Fire Codes (IFC). This will make a designer, developer etc. aware of other codes that may impact their project and will help to eliminate costly "surprises" as the Fire and Building codes do not provide too many opportunities for flexibility because of their focus on safety.
 - a. An example of this is with condominium conversions as from a zoning code perspective there are few or minimal issues to deal with; but there are many building and fire code issues that can be expensive and that may have an impact on the application of the zoning code.
 - b. Similarly, the needs of the Fire Department for access often affect site design and layout, especially with retrofit redevelopment.
- B. Agreement that the possible combination of all codes used by the City of Flagstaff (i.e. Building Codes, Fire Codes, zoning code, Engineering Standards, etc.) into one document was not a good idea and they should be kept as stand-alone documents adopted by the City Council. As noted above, better cross-references between codes should be developed and implemented.
- C. As necessary, Title 4 of the City Code (in which local amendments to the IBC are adopted) may need to be amended to ensure that the desires of the zoning code can be implemented without contradicting the IBC. Conflicts between the zoning code and other adopted building and fire codes need to be identified.

- D. Also in title 4 of the City Code there may need to be a specialized chapter or section to deal with the form-based code component of the new zoning code to address policy/regulations specific to different building types.
- E. A pre-application meeting with planning and building section staff to discuss the particulars of new development proposals relative to the zoning code and building code is really important so that issues can be dealt with early. A flow-chart to describe the pre-application process is needed.
- F. July 2010 – City Council has directed staff to bring the next round of IBC amendments to them for review and adoption. This is good timing relative to the zoning code which should go the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council in August/September 2010. But the Flagstaff Fire Dept. is uncertain if their codes will change to adopt the 2009 IFC.
- G. Suggestion that we need to have a post-zoning code adoption reality check to learn from mistakes made and successes gained.

4.1.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. As noted in A. above, it is recommended that the new zoning code must include “pointers” or references to applicable sections of other codes such as the Wildland Urban Interface Code, International Building Code and International Fire Codes.
- B. As noted in B. above, emphasize the need for pre-application meetings and establish minimum requirements for pre-application reviews.
- C. Staff comments should be recorded on a single plan set that is routed from one section or staff person to another (digitally or manually, i.e. hand written comments).

4.1.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

None.

4.2 Design Guidelines Focus Group

Chairperson: Daniel Paduchowski, Architect
Vice-chairperson: Aude Stang, Designer

4.2.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. The new code section must be simple, clear, concise, effective, easy to apply and user-friendly to citizens and developers. Agreement that the new code and in particular the design guidelines need to be tested to ensure they work and that there are no unforeseen cost implications.
- B. Important to establish an efficient/quick design review process for the City.
 - a. The submittal requirements for new projects and the approval process needs to be refined to address the submittal needs specific to each stage of the review and approval process.
 - b. Find other ways to get clients/developers to talk to the City Architect in a pre-design meeting before a submittal is made (incorporate into new zoning code).
 - c. Establish a two-step or three-step process with specific submittal needs and requirements for each step of the process - pre-application; conceptual review; final review (link to Process and Procedures Focus Group).
- C. Remove the "standards" from Chapter 16 and add them into the regulatory sections of the new zoning code, subdivision regulations, engineering standards, etc. and keep the design guidelines as "guidelines".
- D. Develop a series of images in for example, a pattern book or equivalent, that can be used as a reference for what is appropriate design in Flagstaff. Most of the Focus Group members submitted images for review and discussion by the rest of the group.
- E. In response to the question, "Do we need design guidelines in Flagstaff?", the group agreed that yes we do. Revise the existing design guidelines rather than start over.
- F. Definition of Flagstaff's design tradition:
 - a. Various themes exist in Flagstaff - idea of a patchwork quilt of local design traditions based on their context but these are stitched together with a common thread of unity of themes across the City.
 - b. The overriding theme for Flagstaff is one of simple elegant structures that are based on the principles of balance, proportion and scale. There is no need to attach superficial ornamentation to the outside of buildings.
 - c. Maintain a common theme to buildings based on place.
 - d. Consensus on the notion of abstracting forms and design elements from Flagstaff's history, rather than mimicking historical architecture.
 - e. Agreement that design guidelines should not be applied in industrial zones except within a specified distance of a view corridor as defined in the Regional Plan
 - i. Consultants should determine which levels of the design guidelines (Levels 1-3) should apply in industrial zones, if at all.

- G. Strengths of the existing design guidelines:
- a. Acknowledgement that the design guidelines are easy to work with. In the discussion around the table, most members did not speak specifically to "strengths".
 - b. A contrary view -- the design guidelines keep a check on growth because they are so restrictive and new development does not want to work under them.
 - c. The existing flexible measures are a good idea – but refinement is needed (see below).
- H. Weaknesses of the existing design guidelines (and opportunities for change):
- a. Not enough consideration for solar design aspects - include more discussion about passive solar and solar orientation of buildings.
 - b. General terms are preferred in the guidelines, rather than specific numerical ranges for limitations on materials, textures, etc. For example, instead of requiring stucco to not be more than 25% of a building, rather use the phrase "dominant" material.
 - c. Stucco is an appropriate building material and the current restrictions on stucco should be removed. But add a requirement for stucco to be painted a darker color.
 - d. The restriction on stucco has resulted in the use of too much masonry block. Block is good and OK if used in an interesting and creative manner – too often it is bland and lacks interest.
 - e. Consider adding a Light Reflectance Value (LRV) standard to the design guidelines. The color section is too ambiguous – add LRVs to define a certain minimum reflectance value.
 - f. The flexible measures are a good idea; but are they the correct value? Suggest that consideration be given to refining these measures and expanding them to create more of an incentive (beyond 5%). Comment – if a particular standard is required, why are flexible measures also applied to encourage it?
 - g. Street character section should be included in the Engineering Standards. Remove the "forest road" requirement – not applicable
 - h. Review how successful the requirement for outdoor public spaces has been? Example of the bank building near Harkins Theater on Woodlands Village Blvd. – outdoor public space faces the street and is not utilized (may be poor design though?).
 - i. A process for appeals of a staff decision on the design guidelines needs to be established in the new zoning code.
 - j. Acknowledgement that it is difficult to legislate taste and good design.
 - k. Design guidelines need to be flexible enough to accommodate changes in technology and the new materials that result that could be applicable in Flagstaff.
 - l. The design guidelines lack a holistic sense – too fragmented into details.
 - m. The design guidelines narrows the ability for good design – eliminates the top 25% of good design as well as the bottom 25% of poor design.
 - n. The design guidelines should be written to allow climate and context to drive appropriate design.
 - o. The design traditions of Flagstaff whether promoted through standards or guidelines need more strength – currently the other provisions of the LDC overwhelm good design and the design guidelines as they are

subordinate and secondary. This may be accomplished by a reorganization of the zoning code.

- p. Level 3 of the design guidelines needs more work ...
- q. Expand the materials palette – allow more concrete, stucco (painted darker), non-reflective metal, etc.
- r. Allow the notion of Flagstaff “funkiness” to expand where it is appropriate in the community.
- s. Design is more than aesthetics – it also includes context, comfort, safety, etc.
- t. Design guidelines should promote flexibility in materials.

I. Procedural regulatory issues associated with the design guidelines:

- a. Role of Design Review in Flagstaff:
 - i. Existing design guidelines deal with context and site planning (levels I and II)
 - ii. Level III (building design) would work better if it had more contextual language in it.
 - iii. Agreement there needed to be more information and requirements for level I and II and maybe level III was too intense on the requirements.
 - iv. Include the design professional earlier in the review process with the City, and that even the concept plan review of a proposal should include an architect...not just the engineer or staff.
 - v. Consider creating different design guidelines for different character areas.
 - vi. An interesting question how should we address incompatibility issues in the design guidelines when the zoning code creates incompatible uses and buildings?
 - vii. Staff clarified the distinction between design standards for a context area and design guidelines (use the latter as an educational guide as it sets up the basics for contextual design in the guidelines) which is useful for unsophisticated customers.
- b. Include a requirement for a licensed architect in the planning of a project (but there are limitations in ARS).
 - i. But maybe we can still require a “design professional” in the zoning code as a requirement. Research other community’s practices.
 - ii. Think of ways to get architects involved earlier in the process – e.g. establish a higher threshold with the submittal requirements, e.g. 3-D drawing or renderings. Or think about adding those things that only an architect would do, that an engineer would not, e.g. a site analysis diagram (solar orientation, wind direction, etc.) Refer to Grand Canyon Design Guidelines for site analysis guidelines as they are exemplary.
 - iii. When a site analysis diagram is submitted at concept or pre-application meeting, concept building elevations should also be required. Concern that this may require too much up-front money from a client ...
 - iv. The AIA has materials that promote the use of architects – include into the forward of the design guidelines to encourage architects to be hired by developers.

- c. Include measurable requirements in the design standards; non-measurable ideas/concept in should be in the design guidelines.
- d. Design Review Board:
 - i. A Design Review Board would allow for a peer review by architects of architects evaluating non-measurable elements and providing direction on the design guidelines. It would assist staff and be a citizen committee rather than one or two staff making design decisions, especially on a “fuzzy” issue.
 - ii. After considerable discussion it was agreed that if the design guidelines are strengthened, made stricter (more proscriptive) and improved, there would not need to be a DRB and we should continue under the current system.
 - iii. Appeals to the Planning and Zoning Commission are possible in the event a design issue cannot be resolved (this does need to be better articulated in the zoning code).
- e. Modifications in design from concept to final site plan review:
 - i. Staff explained that Flagstaff is one of the few cities in Arizona that allows up to a 20% change in scope before the client has to go back to DRB for re-review of design changes. One drawback that staff saw was the impacts on big developments, such as shopping centers. If a 20% change for example added an additional 40,000 sq.ft. of retail, it could impact the TIA and cause items to change off-site.
 - ii. The group concluded that we should leave this practice in its current form as it appears to be working.
- f. Current cost indices should not be incorporated into the design guidelines.
- g. Engineering Standards dominate design;
 - i. Deal with this as a transect issue – different areas dealt with uniquely. For example, calibrate aisle widths, parking dimensions, street standards etc. based on location. Establish different parking layouts for each transect based on character, i.e. more relaxed standards based on context.
 - ii. But there may still be issues with min. FFD requirements and public works standards for trash pick-up and snow removal.
 - iii. Architect needs to be involved as early as possible to help direct the design and to educate the engineers on the need for more flexibility in applying standards.
- h. Resources conflict with good design:
 - i. Resources Focus Group has discussed aggregating resources into more meaningful areas and changing the approach to resource preservation to consider the location and quality of resources, rather than simply the quantity of resources.
 - ii. But be careful as it is still desirable to want trees to be placed around buildings, for example at the First Bank Site on Woodlands Blvd.
 - iii. Consider passive solar design too, and allow for removal of trees on the south side of a building.

- iv. Need to further develop flexible measures to address conflicts between design issues and resource preservation.
 - i. A site analysis diagram needs to be a minimal submittal requirement for all new projects – assess solar orientation, etc.
- J. How to yield good design in Flagstaff?:
- a. Pre-application meeting concept will certainly help.
 - b. Incentives were thought to be the best method of achieving or encouraging good design rather than specific "shall" requirements.
 - c. On the other hand, regulations do have a purpose as sometimes it helps the design professional protect themselves from their clients when they try to push for specific requirements that don't fit the intention of the design guidelines (they can use it as a steering mechanism for keeping a client on track). Balance is needed!
 - d. The conversation struggled with the definition of massing of buildings and/or forms. Important that the design professional had good specific guidance on what would be required in Flagstaff. Each of the six architects in the room had a different perspective and could see the final built results going in different directions if guidelines were not clearly laid out.
 - e. The group agreed on several issues relating to good design including:
 - i. Much stronger design guidelines,
 - ii. Require as much "green" as possible so that sustainable green building practices are a priority over quantifiable design issues like massing, unrelieved bldg planes, etc.
 - Use of the word "encourage" was too much like "recommend" and therefore wouldn't be done. Instead, incentives should be added to strengthen the requirements for "green" building and siting aspects of design.
 - This of course would mean the need for a site analysis and that should be done early in the process.
 - Use flexible measures as incentives for when a project does certain "green" measures. Such as allowing less parking or credits for landscaping, etc.
 - iii. Agreement that the "green" design issues that relate to site planning and building orientation, energy and water usage, etc. should be required (check this requirement does not cause a Prop 207 issue, since they are building code and not land use).
 - iv. "Green" elements should be incorporated into the overall zoning code, and not just the form-based code, so that all new projects would be required to 'green up' as much as possible.
 - f. It is important to coordinate a new project with the neighborhood/ area within which it is located to make it more contextual. In the older neighborhoods context based design regulations are needed to ensure that new development is contextually sensitive (will be possible under a form-based code). The issue of McMansions is real in Flagstaff.
 - g. Agreement that the design guidelines need to apply uniformly to all projects, and there should be no exceptions to deal with housing affordability.

- K. Subdivisions do go through some level I and level II review based on the design guidelines, but there should be a requirement for better site plan review for subdivisions. Consultants to advise on how this should be accomplished.
 - a. Consider adding more flexible measures as an incentive for better subdivision design.
 - b. Also establish a new requirement for a site review and analysis based on the design guidelines.

- L. Some general thoughts/concluding comments:
 - a. Parking – as well as standard spaces sizes, also provide “X” percent of both compact and jumbo spaces.
 - b. Update the design guidelines to reflect more building forms, especially as they relate to mixed-use, live-work units, and cottage industries.
 - c. Include an architectural history of Flagstaff in the design guidelines based on the structure/contents of the Grand Canyon Architectural Design Guidelines. (Brandon Rabidou (planning intern) to develop a draft).
 - d. The placement of utilities and utility infrastructure (cabinets, transformers, etc.) on a site and on a building needs to be addressed in the design guidelines. (APS-city franchise agreement may include the opportunity for the City to review and comment on utility placement in new subdivisions and street designs).
 - e. Height – exclude non-occupied spaces, chimneys, spires, dormer gables, towers, etc. to yield better design.
 - f. Crime prevention through good design – placement of entrances, landscaping, lighting, etc. Should be addressed at least as a reference in the design guidelines. Possible review by the Police Department as a voluntary review process.
 - g. Proportions of windows and doors should be addressed in the design guidelines. In general vertical dimensions are required.
 - h. The design guidelines need to reinforce the “golden mean” as a universal design standard.

4.2.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. Codify a revised pre-application meeting process either into the new code or into staff procedures.

- B. Important to establish an efficient/quick design review process for the City.
 - a. The submittal requirements for new projects and the approval process needs to be refined to address the submittal needs specific to each stage of the review and approval process.
 - b. Find other ways to get clients/developers to talk to the City Architect in a pre-design meeting before a submittal is made (incorporate into new zoning code).
 - c. Establish a two-step or three-step process with specific submittal needs and requirements for each step of the process - pre-application; conceptual review; final review.

- C. It is really important to have design professionals on a new development project coordinate their ideas and their plans. Better communication is essential to eliminate conflicts on the plan sets.

- D. In the event of a disagreement between a developer/citizen and staff on a design issue associated with the application of the design guidelines, there is recourse by appeal to the Planning and Zoning Commission. But this does need to be better articulated in the zoning code.
- E. Consider passive solar design when thinking about tree resources, and for example, allow for the removal of trees on the south side of a building but protect and preserve trees on the north and west side of a building. Consider developing flexible measures to address conflicts between design issues and resource preservation.
- F. A site analysis diagram needs to be a minimal submittal requirement for all new projects – assess solar orientation, etc.

Housing Focus Group:

- A. Design guidelines need to apply uniformly to all projects, and there should be no exceptions to deal with housing affordability.

4.2.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

Engineering Standards:

- A. Revise the engineering standards based on the Transect.

NAU:

- A. The City of Flagstaff can not apply zoning regulations to NAU and therefore we cannot apply the City's design guidelines on the NAU campus either.

4.3 Downtown Focus Group

Chairperson: Garrick Brooks, Business owner

Vice-chairperson: Kathi Clark, Realtor

4.3.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

A. Three definitions for Downtown Flagstaff:

- a. Former Business Improvement District's definition is Humphrey's to Verde and Route 66 to Cherry.
- b. The LDC Central Business District defines it as Columbus to Butler and Kendrick to Elden.
- c. The Redevelopment Plan defines Downtown similarly to the LDC, but not exactly the same ...

B. Downtown Historic District:

- a. There are three existing historic districts in the Downtown area
 - i. North End Historic National Register District (Cherry northwards)
 - ii. Railroad Addition National Register Historic District (Cherry to Phoenix)
 - iii. Townsite National Register Historic District and local HDRO – local district only in Downtown.
- b. LDRO – applies to individual parcels City wide (only one application so far in the Southside)
- c. Only local historic districts protect property in the long term
- d. The form-based code applied to the Downtown and adjacent areas could eliminate the need for the existing historic districts.
- e. Consensus that the new form-based code for Downtown must protect historic buildings whether or not they are in an historic district.
- f. Recommendation that the Historic Preservation Commission with advice from the planning consultants would make a recommendation whether the existing historic district can be replaced by a form-based code.

C. For the purpose of this Focus Group discussion it was agreed that "Downtown" will be defined by commercial and mixed-uses only, inclusive of the Southside neighborhood. Adjacent residential areas will only be considered when they may be impacted by Downtown.

D. Protecting the "historic fabric of Downtown" is vital to Flagstaff and can be accomplished through application of a form-based code to the Downtown and surrounding areas. Some characteristics that make the Downtown unique include:

- Historic architecture period (30's – 60's).
- Block size
- Promote small corner stores (hardware, grocery)
- Higher density/mixed-use in Downtown to prevent sprawl
- Promote variety – more reasons to go Downtown
- Downtown more than just a tourist destination
- Center of activity (evolution)
- Gathering places (need to consider age diversity)
- Parking issues - civil impact (City, County, NACOG, etc.)

- Height restrictions (human-scale). To be discussed in zoning.
 - Outdoor patios
 - Stepped-back upper levels
- E. Height restrictions in Downtown – recommendation that the maximum height of new buildings should be consistent to the tallest existing buildings and with street width. Agreement that stepping back upper floors for residential patios was appropriate even though this type of design can be expensive.
- F. In the short term the current tourist demand in Downtown should be supported with a broader tenant mix; but in the long term, residential and mixed use development should be promoted to enhance and invigorate the character of downtown.
- G. Rio De Flag Project Update:
- a. The primary goal is to ensure stormwater control through the City and enable the elimination of the north and south end flood zones.
 - b. In the Southside neighborhood, the project will consist in part of major underground routing of the Rio de Flag in the vicinity of Phoenix Avenue through the Southside, but the existing channel will stay in place for local drainage.
 - c. The Butler Avenue end of the project is now under construction and it's intended that the project will move to the north as funding becomes available.
 - d. The US Senate has authorized \$54 million, but no money has been allocated this year and it is very difficult to speculate on the timing. Representative Kirkpatrick is attempting to secure \$25 million in earmarks for the project, but its status is very uncertain.
 - e. It is suggested for the code rewrite that the complete "build out" of the project should be assumed.
- H. Character and relationship between Southside and Downtown:
- a. In an effort to strengthen the relationship, refer to South Downtown and North Downtown.
 - b. Incorporate corridors to link the Southside to Downtown. It is important to determine what makes people walk back and forth and what draws people. The group would like to see the "walkability" between North and South Downtown expanded. Improved linkage and connectivity will allow for easier ways to cross Route 66 and the railroad. Improved relations between South Downtown and North Downtown would also improve marketing.
 - c. The character of South Downtown is more "Bohemian" compared to North Downtown and acknowledged that it is important to keep the distinct character of each.
 - d. The new Code should bundle North Downtown and South Downtown, as well as other areas, and not describe them in separate chapters. (This should be easy to do in a form-based code for these areas).
 - e. There is a need for a gathering place in South Downtown where events could be held (similar to Heritage Square). South Downtown is perceived as having too much of a morning and a night character. There is a need for more daytime activity in South Downtown. It was suggested that there be a mixed zoning use to allow for an expanded business mix. Additional ideas include a Native American crafts market and a Farmers Market.

- f. Agreement that the character of South Downtown needed to be maintained, but that there was also a need to expand on economic opportunities.
- I. Parking in Downtown:
- a. Parking needs to be determined for the whole Downtown area and not by individual store as it is currently. Currently parking is very use specific and instead it should be addressed based on shared use.
 - b. Parking standards need to be developed for Downtown (distinct from other parking standards applied elsewhere in the City) based on actual use rather than historical standards. Use the Downtown parking generation study as a tool to prove the need for different parking counts (applies not only in Downtown, but also could be informative for the rest of the City.)
 - c. Include a simpler description for change of use in the zoning code – e.g. book store to shoe store to restaurant without an impact on parking.
 - d. The consultants must coordinate the future Form-based Code with the recommendations of the Downtown Management Plan and Parking Study.
 - e. There are two parking garages planned for North Downtown and another in South Downtown. Properties adjacent to the parking garages will be provided parking relief.
 - i. It was suggested that parking relief and fewer restrictions on allowed uses within the North Downtown and South Downtown areas should also be provided.
 - ii. The parking garages need to fit within the character of the area in which they are located (liners preferred).
 - iii. The planning consultants also need to look at the in-lieu of fee recommendation (#12) and recommendation #11 (increased height of buildings, etc.)
- J. Parking for big box stores – there is a need for flexibility in parking standards so that they can more easily accommodate adaptive reuse.
- K. Pedestrian friendly Downtown:
- a. Allow mid-block crossings at alley crossings where appropriate. Block lengths are short enough and this need not be applied everywhere. Use different materials to define mid-block crossings.
 - b. Create an alley network and allow business to front alleys, (Signage for businesses on alleys has been addressed by the Signage Focus Group).
 - i. It may be difficult to create new businesses on alleys, but we should support existing businesses on alleys.
 - ii. Make alleys user friendly and attractive. East-west alleys are a major conduit. North-south alleys may be better for pedestrian use and connectivity.
 - c. Since there is no space on the street for bicycles (design speed issue), cyclists tend to ride on the sidewalks.
 - i. Make Downtown more bicycle friendly – slower speed for traffic and provide for more bicycle racks.
 - ii. Bicycle storage is an issue now – accommodate lockers in the new garages.
 - iii. Bicycle parking is also an issue since the sidewalks are too narrow.

- iv. Refer to the draft bicycle rack standards from Martin Ince (Multi-modal Planner).

L. Zoning and Form-based Code Related Issues:

- a. Residential uses in the Downtown should be encouraged.
- b. But a hindrance is parking for residential uses under the current rules (See above – new comprehensive parking standards for Downtown need to be developed).
- c. Another issue is elevator efficiency – elevators for 4-6 stories are not efficient. Hydraulic elevators only work to 3 floors; electric elevators are needed thereafter, but they are more expensive.
- d. Acknowledgement that it is hard to encourage more residents to Downtown because of the lack of service retail. But this will come in time.
- e. Noise and odors for residents above restaurants can be a problem – good design can address these kinds of issues.
- f. In a few years when the parking garages are completed, redevelopment is likely under a form-based code in the blocks closest to the garages. Recommendation that taller buildings should be permitted close to the parking garages on the perimeter of the Downtown and that in the heart of Downtown itself new buildings should be no taller than the existing tallest buildings.
 - i. Acknowledgement then that the Downtown core may not be subject to much redevelopment – keep it as it is under a form-based code.
 - ii. Form-based code will recommend new Downtown height rules.
- g. Height is an incentive for application of the form-based code i.e. 6 or more stories.
- h. Concern for businesses expanding into adjoining residential areas.
 - i. This can be addressed through application of a form-based code
 - ii. Need to ensure that there are no typical commercial developments in adjoining residential areas; but because of existing zoning and Prop 207, it is hard to prevent office (service/professional) and other similar uses that are already entitled
 - iii. Corridors that handle lots of traffic are more appropriate as commercial districts
 - iv. It is really important to clearly communicate the challenge of the incurable existing conditions and that the form-based code in the long term will help.
 - v. With a form-based code find a way to create transitions between the Downtown core areas and surrounding T3-areas.
- i. General discussion on incentives:
 - i. Very important to create meaningful incentives for the use of a voluntary form-based code instead of the underlying zoning. The form-based code must be really great to promote development – but must maintain historic buildings and character.
 - ii. Need incentives to encourage more businesses into Downtown.
 - iii. Incentives are not mutually exclusive – e.g. they can work by promoting more height in areas near Downtown and through parking.

- iv. Need incentives to promote appropriate redevelopment in Downtown under a form-based code – the last major redevelopment was the AWD building and Heritage Square.

M. Update on the Humphreys Avenue Corridor:

- a. ADOT has new plans for a bypass highway on the west side of the City in the vicinity of A-1 mountain.
- b. Historically this has been vehemently opposed by the City and Downtown business owners
- c. Current status of these plans is unknown.
- d. The Rio de Flag project will also have an impact on the Humphrey's corridor as when it is completed it will promote redevelopment. Likewise, the eventual sale of the Catholic school property (when they move to their new facility off Enterprise – long term) and the eventual construction of the Downtown parking garages.

N. Celebrate Downtown!! Make it a real downtown!

4.3.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. Design guidelines will be addressed for the Downtown through a form-based code and with the input of the Design Guidelines Focus Group.

Historic Preservation Commission:

- A. The Downtown Focus Group recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission with advice from the planning consultants would make a recommendation whether the existing Downtown historic district can be replaced by a form-based code.

4.3.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

General:

- A. Liquor licenses – not relevant.
- B. Mass transit – NAIPTA issue.

Regional Plan:

- A. In a few years when the Downtown parking garages are completed, redevelopment is likely under a form-based code in the blocks closest to the garages. The Downtown Focus Group recommended that taller buildings should be permitted close to the parking garages on the perimeter of the Downtown and that in the heart of Downtown itself new buildings should be no taller than the existing tallest buildings. They also thereby acknowledged that the Downtown core may not be subject to much redevelopment, and that it should be kept as it is under a form-based code.

Downtown Management Plan/Downtown Manager:

- A. The Downtown Focus Group discussed the issue of concentration and variety of stores in the Downtown with the idea of establishing a master tenancing plan. They acknowledged this was best addressed by the Downtown Manager and property owners.
- B. Signage and way finding systems for Downtown (comprehensively addressed in the Downtown Management Plan).

4.4 Economic Development Focus Group

Chairperson: Brain Furuya, Attorney
Vice-chairperson: Eric Souders, Business owner

4.4.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. Very important for the new code to be consistent with the Regional Plan.
- B. This is an opportunity to create a code that meets aesthetic needs while at the same time addresses economic development in Flagstaff. As much as possible the new zoning code should encourage new business development based on policies established in the Regional Plan, and should connect economic development to Smart Growth and the character of Flagstaff.
- C. It should allow for developers to view Flagstaff as a “fair” place to do business. Currently potential businesses and developers view Flagstaff as “development resistant” and unpredictable. The current view is that there is inconsistency in interpretation and implementation of Code.
- D. Given the recession, Flagstaff should prepare now for when the economy improves so that we are ready to capture economic opportunities when they arise.
- E. Stressed the need for a community supported code that is easy to use and understand.
- F. Industrial Land – The supply of industrial land needs to be increased as there has been significant erosion of Industrial Land in Flagstaff. Currently, the Industrial Heavy vacant property available is 166.46 acres and the Industrial Light vacant property available is 79.36 acres for a total of 245.82 acres. In addition, the land which is available for potential industrial development is viewed as undesirable primarily because the parcels are too small.
- G. Consensus on a desire for zones to be created for Cottage Industries that would be separate from Home Occupations. The primary difference is that Cottage Industries are frequented by customers on a daily basis, while Home Occupations are more solitary and typically have less traffic.
 - a. A challenge is how to deal with industries that could create nuisance issues (i.e. auto repair). Refer to the King City, California, cottage industry code.
 - b. Technology is allowing many more people to work from home – this needs to be reflected in the new zoning code
 - c. Why are places of work and residential areas spread all over the place? We need to rather create a more walkable community and address the existing spread out nature of Flagstaff – create meaningful transects.

4.4.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. The Code needs to address the issue of “setting rules that are predictable and non-subjective” and a “speedier review” of new developments. Ensure that Flagstaff is seen as predictable, and that code interpretation is consistent. Allow for investment backed expectations in a reasonable period of time.

- B. Agreement that there is a need to reduce the number of CUPs where possible to enable more uses to be permitted by right in conventional zoning districts. However, there needs to be a balance as to not remove them completely where they are appropriate to ensure that neighboring properties are notified of the CUP application.
- C. Similarly, there is a perception that conditional zoning is an impediment to new development as there are too many hurdles. Zoning conditioned on site plan review and approval often puts off developers.
- D. Need to develop a list of incentives to ensure that the form-based code is applied (general concern that it will be voluntary and not mandatory); e.g. an accelerated review process and placement of a project on the consent agenda at DRB. Time is a huge incentive, so the incentives must be so “compelling and tasty” that the form-based code will be applied. Also apply this logic to subdivision platting – go directly to preliminary plat without a conceptual plat review under certain (to be established) circumstances.

4.4.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

Regional Plan Policy Issue:

- A. Industrial Land – The supply of industrial land needs to be increased as there has been significant erosion of Industrial Land in Flagstaff. In addition, the land which is available for potential industrial development is viewed as undesirable primarily because the parcels are too small.
- B. Forward Scott Neuman’s ideas on home based businesses and social networking provided to the Economic Development Focus Group to the Regional Planning team as these could be incorporated as policy in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Entrepreneurship – how can one neighborhood help itself and the community as a whole? Micro-based businesses are appropriate within a neighborhood. A question that should be considered at a broader policy level is - does a particular neighborhood want to brand itself to bring back some form of business?
 - b. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County’s program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own.
- C. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County’s program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own
- D. Foster economic development in Flagstaff by creating policies that are a model for economic success.
 - a. Connect economic development to Smart Growth
 - b. Focus on more than just retail economic growth; e.g. promote and expand rural health, and promote NAU and CCC (research and new product development) to generate new jobs.

City Code Amendments:

- A. Flagstaff needs to find a way to support local business, and should consider a Local Preference Law that if legal would be passed by the City Council to become a part of the City Code.

City Staff – Administrative Process:

- A. One of the Focus Group members (Ms. Frawley) gave a brief overview of the model she has created for measuring whether or not a project meets the Regional Plan's goals and objectives. It is based on three aspects under which compliance with the Regional Plan can be measured; social values, environmental sustainability values, and economic development values. The model is simple to use in Flagstaff and is non-subjective and will be reviewed by City staff for possible inclusion into the review process for new projects.

4.5 Housing Focus Group

Chairperson: Brad Dixon, Civil Engineer
Vice-chairperson: Kathi Clark, Realtor

4.5.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. In Flagstaff we need to establish walkable neighborhoods with higher density and a variety of building types to support transit and multi-modal transportation options.
- B. Allow for residential development above and within existing commercial areas, such as along the Milton Corridor and Route 66. Ample parking is already in place in these corridors – better standards for shared parking based on use need to be developed.
- C. Emergency housing - Establish easier processing and approval procedures for the review of applications for Temporary Use Permits for emergency housing.
- D. Proposition 207 - Ensure that any new code provisions do not make the City vulnerable to challenge by property owners under Proposition 207.
- E. The new zoning code needs to provide more options and opportunities for senior housing, such as assisted living in more zoning districts.
- F. Housing affordability in general:
 - a. Agreement that the proposed Attainable Set-Aside Policy for Housing Incentives should not be incorporated into the zoning code.
 - b. Comments on housing policy included:
 - i. Affordable housing incentives must be simple, clear and concise, effective and useful
 - ii. Incentives for affordable housing would be cross-referenced in the new zoning code
 - iii. The policy should be written so it can be easily modified and updated
 - iv. Density bonuses are essential in the housing policy
 - v. Enhance and expand the in-lieu of fees concept as part of the incentives for housing affordability
 - c. Affordable housing should not be precluded in any zoning district.
- G. Review of the Housing Incentive Matrix:
(Compiled by Erika Mazza, Housing Planner to summarize all the incentives suggested by various groups and committees that have studied the issue)
 - a. Allow residential uses in commercial zones on all floors of a building.
 - b. Also allow ADUs in commercial zones.
 - c. Encourage existing single-family residential uses remain in commercial zones where it is non-conforming. Recommendation that the Termination of Non-Conforming Use section of the code should remain as it is a useful tool. However, it has been suggested by the City Attorney's office to eliminate this section.
 - d. Ensure that the cost implications to the City from granting financial incentives is not impacted, e.g. the City becomes responsible for the cost of improvements that otherwise would be borne by the developer.

H. General Zoning Code issues:

- a. Planned Option - The existing Planned Option section needs to be expanded with additional building types in addition to the existing building options.
- b. ADUs should be allowed in all zoning districts, not just residential zones:
 - i. Rethink the maximum size of ADUs (City clients have reported a desire to want 600-800 sq.ft. on less than an acre lot and maybe 1,000-1,200 sq.ft. for over an acre; but the size of the ADU needs to be scaled to the size of the lot and the main house)
 - ii. Also think about ADU size based on the Transect and character (proportional to context, lot size, building size, neighborhood characteristics, etc.).
- c. There is a need for more flexible standards that need to be applied in general to the whole LDC as part of the rewrite.
- d. Consensus that there was a need for new techniques for resource protection (while ensuring that incentives are maintained) – defer to Trees/Resources Focus Group.
- e. Lot coverage and FAR should be thought of differently to provide greater opportunities for housing affordability. In the areas where form-based codes will be applied this will certainly be completely different.
- f. Use a form-based code to ensure that small homes are built in historic districts consistent with existing character and scale. This idea should also be expanded to more broadly apply to all neighborhoods.
- g. Reexamine the Community Housing Policy Task Force's recommendation for reducing the minimum lot size in residential E-districts to say 5,000 sq.ft. for infill projects (or under a form-based code). The reason for this is that smaller lot sizes lead to great affordability and better chance of someone owning their home.
- h. The new zoning code must have enough flexibility to allow a new development to be economical – ensure that the rules are not too hard such that a developer walks away and does not pursue development. The code issue needs to be more incentive driven to effectively deal with this issue.
- i. Develop incentives with a form-based code to promote redevelopment in the Southside regardless of the fact that the Rio project is stalled. It is easier to deal with the floodplain issues associated with the Rio de Flag in areas like the Southside for new development than it is to remodel and redevelop existing structures where the 50% rule and other regulations apply.

I. Transitional Housing:

- a. Rethink the provisions for homeless shelters as adopted in the 2007 LDC amendments - consultant should address minimum standards for homeless shelters especially in relationship to regulations establishing thresholds for proximity to other homeless shelters. Rethink the ½ mile separation requirement, and possibly reduce it to ¼ mile. Research and review other codes.
- b. Important to be mindful of one neighborhood not bearing the brunt of many shelters being located there because of perceived negative impacts to that neighborhood (Southside is a recent example). But it is

also important to maintain the proximity to services – balance is needed.

- c. Consider homeless shelters in relation to forest as well (and parks) – Should they be close to places where the homeless traditionally live, or is their a greater concern for unattended fires and the risk to the community?
 - d. Also need to research and review other City's codes that deal with recovery homes, group homes, etc.
 - e. Group Homes... establish proximity standards to ensure that not too many are established on one street or cul-de-sac.
 - f. Consultant should define and research current best practices for transitional housing.
 - g. Look for increased flexibility in the zoning code to allow for the conversion of an existing home as transitional housing to provide opportunities for that interval step where someone leaves a shelter and transitions into other housing. Probably minimal Building Code implications.
- J. Co-housing, dorms and mini-dorms:
- a. Consultant should define and research current best practices for these types of accommodations.
- K. Conversion of McMansions to other building types to accommodate multiple families:
- a. This is an important issue that needs to first be resolved as a policy matter in the Regional Plan. If accepted and policies are put in place, then the zoning code would deal with it and provide the mechanism for allowing other housing types in typical single-family residential structures. Note that this would happen mostly in SFR districts.
 - b. This idea can also be effectively dealt with where a form-based code is applied.
- L. Replacement of manufactured housing:
- a. Older mobile homes are typically 8 feet wide. Replacement units are 10-12 feet wide. This creates a fire and safety issue with the Fire Code and Building Code (and the LDC) because of the difficulty of establishing the minimum separations between adjoining homes and property lines. Typically fewer units can be replaced.
 - b. There are two issues with the placement of manufactured homes under the LDC;
 - i. Existing manufactured home parks in zoning districts where they are not otherwise allowed (e.g. C-2-E zones)
 - ii. Existing manufactured home parks in M-H-E and MH zones where replacement should be allowed but site constraints sometimes make it really hard to achieve conformance with all regulations (e.g. setbacks, parking, etc.)
 - c. A quick overview of Building Code rules for manufactured homes;
 - i. The City has no jurisdiction over manufactured homes – both brand new or retrofitted homes have to be on a regular foundation
 - ii. Manufactured homes built to ICC standards can be placed in R1 and R-1-E zoning districts and are placed on a regular foundation

- iii. In other words the more expensive and typically better quality homes can be placed in any residential district; lesser ones in MH and M-H-E districts.
 - d. Three policy issues resulted from the conversation on manufactured homes;
 - i. Need for a policy to address replacement of a deteriorating manufactured home structure (Housing Policy)
 - ii. Develop a policy and implementation strategies that would promote more flexibility to allow replacement of manufactured homes in the areas where they would otherwise be nonconforming
 - iii. Need an overall review of where manufactured homes are allowed in the City.
- M. Ensure new houses are in scale with their neighborhoods:
- a. The integration of new development into existing neighborhoods in an appropriate manner based on scale, character, etc. is critically important. The existing LDC does not address this issue well.
 - b. McMansions – can be dealt with using form-based codes in areas like Old Townsite or Plaza. Essential to maintain character and keep new structures in proportion to existing neighborhood character and the scale of existing building types.
 - c. Discussion on the need to try to deter large structures on large lots.
 - i. Consider adjusting lot coverage standards to reduce the size of homes, but the group was concerned that this may trigger a Prop 207 claim.
 - ii. Realization that it was important to know what the community's desires are on this issue, and that this was a policy discussion for the Regional Plan team.
 - d. In conventional suburban residential developments, the cluster option may also be used to accommodate the desire to allow a range of lot sizes under the assumption that larger lots increase the potential for funding more affordable housing options in the project.
 - e. Use historic overlays (e.g. in Old Townsite) as a tool to help protect neighborhood character. [But this may be moot if a form-based code is successfully applied in these areas.]
 - f. Maintain the limitations on gated communities as stated in the LDC.
 - g. As part of the rewrite of the zoning code, the consultants need to deal with the gentrification issue – major concern for the tear down of two smaller older homes and in their place the construction of one large home on one combined lot. A form-based code can deal with this issue effectively. But how to deal with this in other areas of the City?
 - i. Suggestion that there be a separate process for review based on new standards that apply to the combined lots. This needs to be reviewed with the City's Legal Department.
 - ii. City of Denver has a code that requires that in a teardown, at least one wall of the original structure must be retained and incorporated into the new structure. Research and review this regulation.
 - iii. Also address the issue of gentrification through requirements for solar access rights – by requiring more open space between buildings, more control can be exercised over the size of the building. Refer to what cities in Wyoming are doing, and possibly Denver.

- N. Consideration should be given to the issue of student housing – especially in places like Southside (discussed by the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group). But this does require cooperative thinking/planning with NAU.
- O. The TND Ordinance (Chapter 10-17) needs to include additional affordable housing incentives.

4.5.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. Establish easier processing and approval procedures for the review of applications for Temporary Use Permits for emergency housing.
- B. The new zoning code must have enough flexibility to allow a new development to be economical – ensure that the rules are not too hard such that a developer walks away and does not pursue development. Ample and effective affordable housing incentives need to remain.

Building and Fire Code Focus Group:

- A. Concern with the cost implications resulting from the strict application of Building and Fire Codes when buildings are converted to condominiums or other residential uses (e.g. homeless shelters).

Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. Consensus that there was a need for new techniques for resource protection – simpler and more effective, and that affordable housing incentives needed to remain.

Neighborhood Planning Focus Group:

- A. The integration of new development into existing neighborhoods in an appropriate manner based on scale, character, etc. is critically important and was also discussed by the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group.
- B. The provision of appropriate housing for students especially in places like Southside is important while balancing the needs of permanent residents in those areas. NAU is a key player in this discussion and must be involved.

4.5.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

Regional Plan:

- A. The new zoning code must reflect community desires as stated in the Regional Plan and the update to the Regional Plan. It should include for example, housing options such as mixed-use development, location of housing relative to transit, etc.
- B. Integration of affordable housing policy - Housing policy must be established in the Regional Plan and implemented through the zoning code. Policy must not be established in the zoning code, but implementation tools in the zoning code may refer to the Regional Plan policy.
- C. Housing Affordability and Economic Development Policy - AMI and related issues are policy and should not be included in the zoning code.

- D. Encourage more owner occupied homes in areas of the City where rentals predominate.
- E. The Housing element of the Regional Plan should address the provision of opportunities for that interval step where someone leaves a shelter and transitions into other housing. It should set policy for increased flexibility to allow for the conversion of an existing home as transitional housing.
- F. Conversion of McMansions to other building types to accommodate multiple families:
 - a. This is an important issue that needs to first be resolved as a policy matter in the Regional Plan. If accepted and policies are put in place, then the zoning code would deal with it and provide the mechanism for allowing other housing types in typical single-family residential structures. Note that this would happen mostly in SFR districts.
 - b. This idea can also be effectively dealt with where a form-based code is applied.
- G. Replacement of manufactured housing:
 - a. There is a lack of incentives for the clean-up of old manufactured homes. The Regional Plan should develop policy and strategies for the replacement of nonconforming mobile homes to allow replacement where possible.
 - b. Three policy issues resulted from the conversation on manufactured homes;
 - i. There is a need for a policy to address replacement of a deteriorating manufactured home structure (Housing Policy)
 - ii. Develop a policy and implementation strategies that would promote more flexibility to allow replacement of manufactured homes in the areas where they would otherwise be nonconforming
 - iii. Need an overall review of where manufactured homes are allowed in the City.
- H. As a policy matter it is important to know what the community's desires are on the issue of trying to deter large structures on large lots and the idea of adjusting lot coverage standards to reduce the size of homes.
- I. Regional Plan team should discuss a potential policy regarding a limitation on the development of large lot large single-family homes on the periphery of the City as they are promoting sprawl. But large lot development in appropriate mixed-use projects like Juniper Point also increases the potential for funding more affordable housing options in the project (as allowed in TNDs and the Planned Affordable Option). Flexibility within a project can be achieved by a form-based code (TND).
- J. The Regional Plan must include policy statements that support the limitations on gated communities as stated in the LDC.
- K. At a policy level, the City should continue to require minimum and maximum densities, and should explore keeping the minimum 7-acre densities in areas other than PRAs (PRAs will be going away in the updated Regional Plan).

- L. The provision of appropriate housing for students especially in places like Southside is important while balancing the needs of permanent residents in those areas. NAU is a key player in this discussion and must be involved.

Engineering Standards:

- A. Consider allowing for a lower engineering standard that is not as expensive for most housing projects (provided that safety, long term durability, maintenance, etc. is not compromised).
- B. Similarly, consider restructuring the Engineering Standards based on the Transect (an idea that came from the Process and Procedures Focus Group).

General issues that while important are not specific to the zoning code rewrite:

- A. Healthy networking – deal with the unproductive homeless in the community.
- B. The lack of inclusionary zoning (and other policies that support affordable housing) in Arizona makes it harder to provide affordable housing in Flagstaff.

Infill Policy:

- A. The City's draft infill incentives policy should be finalized – review the policy based on community desires and needs. This policy will encourage urban infill, and as originally drafted would have allowed financial incentives for impact fees waivers as authorized under State statute. But now because the City's impact fees are so small, this incentive is not as effective. The State statute provides a guideline for incentives and there six criteria that must be considered in including a neighborhood in an Infill Policy.
- B. Infill policy to include affordable housing and to make sure that there is appropriate integration of policies when more than one may apply.
- C. Infill policy needs to be reviewed in areas where a form-based code will be applied, especially for example in the Southside neighborhood.
- D. The infill incentives policy would be adopted separately like the housing incentives policy – would not be in the Regional Plan.

Property Maintenance Ordinance:

- A. The PMO will be a separate ordinance that may be adopted into the City Code by the City Council after the zoning code rewrite project is completed.
- B. A noted concern with the PMO was the possible unintended effect it may have to cause gentrification and the resultant displacement of people from their neighborhoods who can no longer afford to live there.

4.6 Landscaping Focus Group

Chairperson: Gary Nelson, Realtor

Vice-chairperson: Jeff Stein, Landscape Architect

4.6.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

A. Discussion on what works well in the current Landscape Code:

- Results in some landscaping
- Achieves buffers
- Provides a mechanism for consistent application
- Street trees
- Water conservation is facilitated
- Good for large sites

B. Discussion on what does not work in the current Landscape Code:

- Not good for small sites
- Maintenance of street trees is an issue
- Unclear what is "recommended" or "required"
- Outdated
- Opacity requirements are excessive
- Weak on irrigation (wasteful)
- Enforcement is difficult – falls back on the Planner
- Doesn't meet purpose/intent
- Results in a monoculture of landscaping with frequent use of the same plants
- Landscape architect is not required
- Poor landscape design is common
- Lacks sustainable practice (requires plants to be trucked – high carbon footprint)
- Chemical use

C. Landscape code principles and philosophy:

- a. What is landscaping for? It is more than aesthetics. Important to also look at sustainability aspects, especially the question of where is the water going to come from? We should not be using potable water for landscaping. This should be the primary focus of our conversation. Think forwards not backwards – think about sustainability in landscaping. Landscaping needs to be an integral part of site design – not just an add-on at the end of a project.
- b. Think about landscaping in terms of making the buffer yard wider, storm water management, shade, cooling, roof gardens, etc. rather just aesthetics.
- c. Regional Plan asks for mixed use and TND, but the LDC asks for separation of uses with buffers between them. But with the TND this issue is somewhat relieved – but we need to deal with the rest of Flagstaff's strip development character. Therefore, develop an urban landscape palette for the form-based code areas and a revised suburban palette for the rest of the City. Former would not have opacity buffer yard requirements.

D. The landscape plant list and requirements in the Engineering Standards that apply in public rights-of-way should be coordinated with the plant lists and requirements proposed in the new zoning code.

E. User-friendly landscape code:

- a. Need to develop a more user-friendly and simple landscape code that truly is a long-term sustainable code.
- b. Allow flexibility in the code to promote more sustainable landscape practices.
 - i. Quality versus quantity of landscaping, i.e. allow a designer flexibility so he/she can prove that less plants appropriately selected and placed is better than more plant units crammed into a location.
- c. The code must a tool for designers that promotes diversity, character and form. There needs to be a balance between ensuring minimum standards are met and encouraging the planting of more landscape materials. Consider new criteria and incentives for flexibility.
- d. Acknowledgement that it is hard to go in a new direction with old standards – start fresh!

F. General landscape issues applicable at the City-scale:

- a. Need for consistency of street trees from one project to another, as well as other landscaping (shrubs, etc.).
- b. Landscape pallet should vary for different areas based on natural landscape conditions (e.g. presence of ponderosa pines) and local micro-climates.
- c. Keep variety as an option with a common thread based on local areas. But be careful of not limiting the plant palette in higher T-zones.
- d. Landscape standards should be established for the context of the place – e.g. industrial areas should have a lesser landscape standard.
- e. Create incentives to encourage people to add landscaping where it currently does not exist – encourage removal of asphalt and concrete in non-conforming developments and addition of landscaping instead. E.g. – the new finance building that replaced the palm reader on Route 66.
- f. Need to think about landscaping coordination across property lines to create more seamless landscape environments wherever possible.
- g. Beautification - encourage neighborhoods to improve landscaping.
 - i. Uniformity – match landscape design from one project to another; and from one area/neighborhood to another
 - ii. Ensure new landscaping is compatible with the surrounding area
 - iii. Beautification (which is subjective) will result from enhanced landscape standards.
- h. At the larger City level and the site level, first, look at grade and drainage and use this as a determinant of landscape design by attempting to contain natural flows as much as possible.
 - i. Thinking about long term sustainability – but be careful that these visionary ideas do not stomp on American freedom and property rights?
 - ii. In areas of the City where natural drainages can be contained and stored (e.g. Switzer Canyon Wash), establish a different landscape palette than elsewhere where irrigation is provided, i.e. landscape standards are based on water availability
 - iii. Suggest that we do not need plant lists – plant whatever you can based on water demand (rainwater, etc.) Should no longer be using drinking water for landscaping – 50 years from now this will seem preposterous!

- iv. Be bold! How will the City's zoning code transition to accommodate these concepts?
 - i. Consider a Transect of water use – more urban uses potable water; more rural transects use captured water. Walmart is using rainwater capture to irrigate landscaping. Set up goals for the landscaping section based on the transect that allows staff/developer to formulate what is expected of landscaping per project based on where it is in the City.
 - j. Conflict in community values – there is often a community desire for street trees with large canopies as in other parts of the country, but this is not possible without lots of water. Yet the community also wants more sustainable street landscape design. But large street canopies may be OK in areas like Old Townsite where the Rio provides a water source.
 - k. Downtown landscaping makes the Downtown look like anywhere USA. We should promote a more local landscape palette that is unique to Flagstaff – plant trees that can be sustained on their own in the long term after short term irrigation.
 - l. City staff and designers should work more on a "case by case" basis to meet the intent of the code while recognizing natural features or existing adjacent property landscape in meeting the intent of the LDC. For example, use of LIDS such as detention areas should remove the requirement for irrigation of plants within that area since they will be able to be sustained from runoff. Or, bufferyard requirements should be lessened if it can be demonstrated that the bufferyard of the adjacent property is sufficient. Under current code, it is possible to have a "double" or "redundant" bufferyard if both parcels are implementing the standards. Similarly, if two parcels are being developed simultaneously, the developers should be able to provide a "joint" bufferyard where each is responsible for 50%.
 - m. City should work with County, US Forest Service, etc. to develop a program of mulching to provide a desirable size mulch for projects. For example, with all the prescribed burning that is conducted, it would be a more sustainable approach to convert some of that bio-mass to mulch of a certain specification (size) and make it available to contractors for use in projects within the City.
 - n. City landscaping requirements should differentiate between sites that have reclaimed water and those that do not, and opacity/species requirements should be different for sites with potable vs. reclaimed water.
- G. Ideas for an appropriate landscape palette for Flagstaff:
- a. Need to open up the existing landscape palette originally created by the Arboretum to provide more diversity and more sustainability.
 - b. Other types of plants should be integrated to make the community more interesting. A native and non-native mix is appropriate.
 - c. Ground covers - other elements such as organic ground cover materials (local grasses and other ground covers) should be added into the code, as well as recommendations on the use of boulders for accents. Rather use organic materials than rock for unvegetated areas such as medians and landscape peninsulas/islands in parking lots. But the requirement for planting local grasses may cause a concern to the City Parks Dept. from a maintenance perspective.

- i. Xeriscape Council recommendation was to use native grasses instead of gravel, etc.
- ii. Rather than allowing areas of turf it would be better to define native grasses instead
- iii. Need to add appropriate ground covers and flowering plants
- iv. Encourage the planting of ground covers rather than the use of extensive areas of rock as is the practice now.
- v. Create an incentive to use bark mulch rather than inorganic rock mulch because it does break down. It is important to ensure the right size so that it does not wash out (larger is better).
- vi. Ground cover planting is also a better solution for buffer yards in lieu of rock mulch.
- d. Promote diversity in landscaping and not settle for compromises.
- e. Create more flexible standards for native species based on availability. Remember this thought - "*Sustainability realistically means delayed gratification*".

H. Sub-committee formed to review the landscape plant palette:

Their recommendations include;

- a. Natives are good, but it is hard to get plants that meet the current size requirements of the LDC
 - i. Suggestion – reduce the plant sizes for native species – e.g. 1 gallon is preferred over 5-gallon
 - ii. Add perennials as appropriate for Flagstaff
- b. Agreement that non-native adaptive species are also appropriate. But a range of sizes for non-native adaptive species is still needed.
- c. Recommendation – promote the use of native or naturalized plants. Consensus that the City should be a leader in the use of native and naturalized plants – suggest that we develop less stringent regulations for private development.
 - i. City should lead by example with native plant use
 - ii. In commercial developments, natives should be encouraged, but naturalized species would be required
 - iii. In multi-family developments, less restrictions should be included in the new code.
- d. In response to the LDC's existing requirement for a 4" caliper tree, rather suggest that two 2" trees should be planted instead.
- e. Similarly it was suggested that five 1-gallon shrubs would be better than one 5-gallon shrub. May be more expensive, but survivability is much better.
- f. Two elements need to be a fundamental purpose of the new landscape code for the City;
 - i. Sustainability
 - ii. Promotion of Flagstaff's unique character
- g. Discussion on the idea of a focal point of more intense landscaping – allow greater landscape density here, and then develop a hierarchy of less intensive landscaping modeled on the City of Tucson code.
- h. Suggestion that smaller plant sizes should be promoted in the back/less visible areas of a development in lieu of the existing buffer needs. Use walls and fences more instead of dense landscaping as a buffer or screen.
- i. Ensure that the new code provides a tool for greater design opportunities by landscape architects rather than the current code that

is essentially “landscaping by the numbers” and that does not promote creativity

- j. Develop more information as a handout on Flagstaff’s micro-climates for out-of-town developers and designers. Dan – Warner’s has a plant list for different areas of the City.
 - k. Need to coordinate the ROW plant list with the Community Development Division plant list for private development. Other plant lists include the Flagstaff Xeriscape Council plant list available on the Arboretum web page.
 - l. When reviewing a project, staff must check to see that the proposed plant list meets the recommended list of approved plants.
 - m. Agreement that it would be OK to have a separate plant list for public property (e.g. ROW) where hardier plant species are required, as well as the plant list for private development. But they should be coordinated.
 - n. Current code requires over planting in some areas of a site (e.g. parking peninsulas or other areas). This is a problem with small sites in particular.
 - o. Suggestion that we revisit the plant unit requirements – rather allow a plant to grow to its normal size rather than “x” feet on center.
 - p. Recommended plant lists, bufferyards and irrigation requirements should be based on the Transect and/or character areas.
 - q. Need consistency between all City landscape plant lists and within all City documents. LID needs to be integrated with the planting components of plant lists.
- I. Revised landscape standards:
- a. Using the City of Tucson code as a guide; it is appropriate to establish a hierarchy of watering zones using established xeriscape principles (i.e. small “oasis” zone and 2-3 other zones based on their location and function on a site). Options need to be formulated for different parts of the site – e.g. Street landscaping, foundation landscaping, parking area landscaping. Where perhaps more ground covers are planted in areas where snow is dumped (parking islands).
 - b. Move section 19 from the Engineering Standards and put into the landscape section of the zoning code.
 - c. Table 10-06-002-0003 – consider an Option D to the Plant Unit Alternatives based on the use of the site. E.g. for an auto dealer have less of a need for buffer yard screening on the frontage (lower plant height) and perhaps more landscaping between dealers.
 - i. Create more diversity in the plant unit alternatives – look at long term needs.
 - ii. Table 10-06-002-0003 consider this as “landscape unit alternatives” rather than “plant unit alternatives”
 - iii.
 - d. The opacity requirements as currently written limit flexibility. Reinforce the need for appropriate screening where it is necessary in suburban environments to ensure buffers between inappropriate uses.
 - e. Cross-reference the LID standards into the landscape code.
 - f. Develop new landscape standards for conventional zones and the new Transect zones.
 - g. Instead of “landscaping by the numbers”, rather promote good landscape design and allow more plants in some areas and less in others – flexibility is important to deal with unique site issues.

- i. Look at landscaping in places like the Auto Mall not per site/lot, but rather as a design for the whole project.
 - ii. What is the goal of the buffer yard in a multi-lot development? Need more tools for flexibility in these kinds of projects – allow greater curb appeal for example, and less landscaping elsewhere.
- h. Buffer yards:
 - i. Should be more than plants for separation of uses; also think about it for other functions, e.g. storm water management (integrate landscaped swales that capture rainwater and design the project around this kind of concept).
 - ii. Walls and fences are appropriate elements in the landscape code and need to be addressed more comprehensively than they are now. They are an appropriate means of separating uses in the right locations.
 - iii. Also need flexibility to ensure that even if different zoning districts are required to have buffers, if the uses within the zones are compatible, less restrictive standards should apply. With a future change of use to a more incompatible use, more restrictive standards could then be applied.
 - iv. Suggestion to drop the complex opacity calculations -- go with a simpler formula and perhaps less plants.
- i. Integrate art installations into landscape design.
- j. Define xeriscape. How does it integrate with LID? Suggest we consider cooling units rather than opacity as a measure of calculating the amount of required landscape materials. For example, for each 1 acre of paving, calculate the number of plants to mitigate the heat impact and storm water impact. Widen buffer yards to store rainwater for use on site for landscaping. Integration of LID and landscaping more important than “happy greeny growies” for separation between properties.
- k. Create alternative landscape standards – less restrictive on the number of required species – but more focused on sustainable goals. This would be an option to the usual landscape standards that require a min. number of species etc.
- l. Also review the list of components that should be required in landscape irrigation – master valve, flow sensors, rain sensors, etc. Should be reduced if possible, and updated.
- m. Suggestion that we include a requirement for an improved soil to be brought onto a development site to mitigate the impacts of construction (concrete spills, compaction, etc.). This would at least give the new plants a chance to survive. Also, soils are often compacted so water puddles and does not drain. Address this in the new code.
- n. Stagger different sizes of plant material to ensure there is variety in the final landscape product. But the group agreed smaller plants are more sustainable and would have a lower mortality rate – this goes against the notion of staggering sizes. Issue may need to be thought of based on the size of the project.
- o. If a landscape architect is hired, provide more leniency on the plant palette based on good design rather than “planting by the numbers”. Appropriate for large projects – smaller projects have more restrictive standards. Important to have a minimum standard because some developers would not add landscaping if they could get away with it.

- p. Suggestion that a developer emphasize public right-of-way landscaping to improve the streetscape in a new project or subdivision. Developer of each parcel then would have a lesser need for landscaping on that parcel.
- q. Natives – look to smaller sizes rather than the current standards; too hard to get bigger sizes; there is a better success rate with smaller plants – better root to leaf ratio; ornamentals come in smaller sizes; and there is better availability.
- r. Too hard to get a 4" tree – better to have two 2" trees.
- s. Parking lots and landscaping:
 - i. Consensus that we should use less rock mulch than we do now
 - ii. Rather use natural grasses to resist weed growth in the long term
 - iii. Should espouse the LID standards – more natural in design. Will become drainage areas and landscaping will follow suit.
 - iv. Suggestion - if permeable pavement is provided, offer an incentive to require less landscaping
 - v. Connect landscape areas within the parking area so that surface water can be channeled and collected and used for on-site retention to water to plants – less off-site water flow as a result
 - vi. Define canopy areas for parking areas.
- t. Water needs/irrigation - General discussion on the notion that the new zoning code needs to transition to the reality of less water.
 - i. We are an "instant gratification society"! Agreement that should promote smaller trees and more ground covers (e.g. thyme, vinca, etc.). We need to educate about the need to exercise patience ...
 - ii. Promote a policy of using temporary irrigation systems associated with the planting of native species. This has the advantage of lowering costs and not creating a dependent system. Need to associate temporary irrigation systems with a specific plant list.
 - iii. Code should require water harvesting rather than irrigation systems based on potable water. E.g. Tucson – 50% of water use comes from water harvesting, i.e. consider working landscaping backwards – calculate how many plants can be supported by the surface runoff within a project. First focus on the need to provide water - then look at landscape design, i.e. allow less plant units if water is reclaimed and recycled back to the landscape areas. Stormwater usage with LID needs to be integrated into the landscape code – use runoff on site and as a determinant of how much landscaping is needed and where it should be placed
 - iv. For example, do not have raised landscaping and address water harvesting by lowering landscape areas
 - v. Define landscape in terms of restoration – use plant lists for specific areas of the City
 - vi. Need to tie these ideas into the LID requirements of the City – make it more available to landscape architects. (Need to ensure that the new requirements are not more expensive – prove that rainwater harvesting is less expensive than installation of irrigation). Intent is to create a water based code

- vii. Allow non-permanent irrigation systems as Tucson does. Should also be allowed in Flagstaff with an emphasis on water storage and detention in lieu of permanent irrigation systems. Need to get away from the mandate for a permanent watering system.
 - viii. Need to continue to promote the LID code – needs to be directly cross-referenced into the zoning code.
 - ix. Discussion on the issues with capturing runoff water from the roadway and diverting it for watering use on private property. Many potential legal and design concerns. But this idea is better applied on private property from drives and parking areas (per LID) or within the public right-of-way to provide water to medians or parkways. E.g. “Dodge diverter” on Dodge Ave. at the Mall.
 - u. Find the right balance between deciduous and evergreen and seasonal planting needs.
 - v. Pondersosa Pines - discussion on the issue of transplanting ponderosa pines. Consensus that it is better to plant new ones even if they are imported and smaller in size – be patient as they do grow slowly, but they have a better survival rate.
- J. Street Trees (snow removal coordination)
- a. Landscape materials in the parkway are often damaged by snow storage and trees are frequently damaged by the plows.
 - b. Cinders are an on-going problem to landscape areas – use black rock mulch rather than red rock mulch as a possible solution. Or use a larger size bark mulch streets as it would also "conceal" cinders as they would be incorporated into the natural breakdown of the organic material.
 - c. Colorado – list of salt tolerant plants could be useful (Honey Locust is one). Staff will research this list and provide to the consultant.
- K. Allow more freedom with guidelines for landscape design, i.e. a "case by case" approach works here. If a designer can demonstrate that captured water is sufficient for plant establishment and growth, then they should not be held to the letter of the code. Also, if a designer can demonstrate that sufficient bufferyards already exist on adjacent properties, some lower bufferyard standard should be considered acceptable by City staff.
- L. Requirement for a landscape architect:
- a. Arizona statutes through the Registrar of Contractors allows an architect to function as a landscape architect. Makes it hard to require a landscape architect.
 - b. But offer an incentive - if a landscape architect is retained and LID principles are integrated into the landscape design, then maybe incentives are offered for less plants, placement, etc. Could be an incentive for a developer hiring a landscape architect.
 - c. Ideas from this group for sustainability etc. may weed out other professionals from doing landscape plans and allow landscape architects to do them. May be more enticing
 - d. Consensus – no requirement for a landscape architect – but create incentives that would require a landscape architect by offering rewards if one is used.

- i. Over a certain threshold limit – require a landscape architect. Put the onus on the landscape architect to ensure that the plants are correctly planted and placed.

M. Community Gardens:

- a. Community gardens are for general food production (policy to be promoted through the Regional Plan). Provides another way of dealing with local food supply issues. Integrate the idea of gardens and edible landscaping into the schools as well – set aside areas of schools for growing food. There are already 3 youth gardens in the school district.
- b. Communal water collection to support community gardens – needs to be addressed in the Regional Plan as well.
 - i. Encourage more community gardens on City and other public lands for lease by residents – especially where run-off can be captured and utilized. Also use parks as community garden plots, e.g. Victory Gardens. Idea - dedicate an area per neighborhood as a community garden on city park land.
 - ii. Encourage community gardens on commercial developments and multi-family developments as part of the open space requirement (more usable public open space – e.g. in RM-M-E and UC). Allow community gardens in more zones as useful open space
 - iii. Need to address maintenance issues in the long term – what if the garden is left in an unproductive state?
 - iv. Think about liability issues with community gardens on private (e.g. commercial developments). Probably easily resolved through waivers.
- c. Edible gardens in a multi-family residential project should be credited against the landscape needs for the project. But how would we deal with long term maintenance and enforcement if the garden is not kept up? Need to add a requirement for replacement landscaping if needed.

N. Edible landscaping:

- a. Edible landscaping should be promoted throughout the community (to be included in landscape section). Edible landscaping is a way to provide a food source for the homeless. There is a nationwide movement to integrate edible landscaping into landscape design, especially on publicly owned property as City parks and other lands provide opportunities for edible landscaping.
- b. Consider areas for food production as part of the requirement for landscaping as an element on private property – may be easier on SFR lots than commercial though.
- c. Edible landscapes should be encouraged in sheet run-off areas in all new developments and at a local community gardens.
- d. Useful idea as an alternative as a buffer between commercial and industrial uses
- e. Edible plants include plum and other fruit trees, berry bushes, currants, etc. May be an impact on wildlife wanting to feed that may require edible landscape areas to be fenced.
- f. Potential conflict with water use. Assess whether edible landscape areas consume more water than typical landscape areas. There are ways to grow food and use minimal water. Needs to be more education on this. Use best practices to water roots only, rather than

top watering. Also locate community plots in water detention/retention areas. Much less water demand than grass.

- g. A plant list of edible plants should be provided in the code and recommended where suitable.

O. Users Guide/Landscape Pattern Book:

- a. Suggestion to consider a users guide/pattern book for landscaping to help promote better landscape practices in Flagstaff, especially if a landscape architect is not hired. It should be more than just a list of recommended plants. Lots of photos and illustrations to capture the essence and character of Flagstaff. Take photos of winning designs from the Xeriscape Council annual competitions.
- b. Build from existing pamphlets on the subject, and study what Phoenix and Tucson have done.
- c. There is an issue with resources and timing to get this done – perhaps use interns? Or tap into a gardening group in town (Master Gardeners) to get this completed?
- d. This is a project most likely completed after the new zoning code is adopted.
- e. The current code has basic sketches for the plant units. These should be enhanced with similar sketches in elevation or perspective to demonstrate the intent of the design.
- f. Also include links to websites or on-line lists of resources.

P. Concluding Thoughts:

- a. Agreement that we need to write the code to allow water harvesting, native plants with smaller sizes, more restorative landscaping, temporary irrigation systems and flexibility to allow for new ideas.
- b. Promote a better environmental approach that is more sustainable as a way to attract development – e.g. Walmart.
- c. Enforcement needs to be significantly upgraded to ensure that landscape materials are replaced when they die or are damaged. This is especially important in the long term with a change of property ownership.

4.6.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

None.

4.6.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

Utility Division:

- A. Discussion on the need for more/alternative restrictions on water use for landscaping is not the purview of the zoning code and is better addressed in the Utility Division's policies and procedures.
- B. Similarly, the issue of enforcement of water policy (by for example, expanding the number of volunteers) should be left to the Utilities Division.
- C. Continue and expand education on water conservation in the community.

Maintenance (City Code):

- A. Strive to limit pesticide/fertilizer and other chemical use because of its affect on stormwater runoff and drainage channels

- B. Control of noxious weeds and the need for education on this issue does not need to be addressed in the zoning code.

City staff:

- A. Explore the possibility of building inspectors doing more post construction landscape review/inspection to assist the PDS staff who are limited in resources.
- B. Consider developing a check list – soil depth, plant species, irrigation, etc. to help with on-site review of landscaping before the installation is approved. Also check the holes before planting to ensure that the plants will survive.
- C. Consider using form or spreadsheet based submittal documentation. For example, those used for LEED certification credits. This would make the documentation process more consistent and well defined for the designer, thus making it more "user friendly". It would also save time for both designers and City reviewers as calculation methodologies would be consistent.
- D. City staff need to employ better enforcement to require replacement of landscaping when it dies.
- E. Additional project post-adoption of the new zoning code – develop a users guide/pattern book for landscaping to help promote better landscape practices in Flagstaff, especially if a landscape architect is not hired. It should be more than just a list of recommended plants. Lots of photos and illustrations to capture the essence and character of Flagstaff. Take photos of winning designs from the Xeriscape Council annual competitions. Build from existing pamphlets on the subject, and study what Phoenix and Tucson have done. Use interns to complete the project or tap into a gardening group in town (Master Gardeners) to get this completed.
- F. City should study urban wildlife habitats and existing corridors and landscape plans should be reviewed with some attention paid to enhancing. For example, future development on the Southside along the current Rio de Flag should be required to preserve and enhance that corridor with appropriate plants that improve the wildlife habitat.

Regional Plan:

- A. Develop policies to support communal water collection to support community gardens. Provides another way of dealing with local food supply issues. Integrate the idea of gardens and edible landscaping into the schools as well – set aside areas of schools for growing food.
- B. Potable water should not be used for irrigating landscapes. Therefore, as an active policy effort the City should pursue more aggressive plans to extend reclaim water service. Until that happens, potable water may be used, but should be used judiciously.

4.7 Neighborhood Planning Focus Group

Chairperson: Kim Tittelbaugh, Citizen

Vice-chairperson: Debbie Shelton, Realtor

4.7.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. The new zoning code should provide direction on the policies established in the Regional Plan for neighborhoods. Approach to the neighborhood should promote flexibility to deal with new technologies (e.g. in home-based businesses) and allow the neighborhood to be as diverse as it desires to be.
- B. The new zoning code should acknowledge, maintain and support the diversity and richness among Flagstaff's neighborhoods. It should also promote networking and interaction between residents within a neighborhood.
- C. What defines and makes a neighborhood?
 - People
 - View
 - Economic system – mom/pop stores
 - Surrounding area
 - Preserving/Refurbishing
 - Keep character alive, maintaining historical quality/value
 - Give more autonomy to neighborhoods in planning
 - Give incentives to maintain identity
 - Balance
 - How to build nicer buildings to fit into neighborhoods.
 - PMO (policy) the lack of it hurts neighborhood character
 - Consideration of geological terrain
 - Design review guidelines
 - Offsite parking incentives
 - Traffic flow
 - Porches
 - Civic space
 - Neighborhood evolution
 - Convenience in walkable communities – provide essential services that are useful and convenient
 - Proximity to schools
 - Community gardens as an open space element and a way to bring neighborhood residents together.
- D. City-wide problem of parking in front and exterior side yard setbacks:
 - a. Reduce snowplow parking restrictions to allow parking on the street all year. As an alternative consider permitting parking on one side of the street only in winter as in TNDs.
 - b. Reduce the width of existing streets, eliminate curbs & gutters and build shoulders with gravel/rock. This would help with stormwater issues as well – more percolation and less runoff (Note this is not a zoning code issue; forward idea to Engineering staff).
 - c. Hold new development within neighborhoods to a higher standard and address the parking needs with new standards.
 - d. Consider one-way streets as a possible solution?
 - e. Review existing parking standards and figure out how to deal with parked cars. Neighborhoods naturally evolve – codes either need to evolve as well or residents must live with and accept change even if it

has unforeseen consequences. A possible solution is leave existing neighborhoods with their parking issues – learn from the past and plan for growth, i.e. adapt to changing family needs rather than retrofit.

f. Enforce the existing standards and regulations in the zoning code – but this does not resolve the issue when there is no place to park vehicles.

g. Retrofit neighborhoods – explore alternatives for enhanced walking/biking systems so that people drive less and need fewer cars.

h. Downtown – allow more residential over existing commercial businesses. Shared parking. Could also be applied elsewhere in the City as a principle.

i. Write the code so that the intention of a section/regulation is clearly stated rather than the method to achieve that goal. e.g. Minimize stormwater runoff is a goal. It can be achieved by using pavers and similar materials.

E. Parking issues in neighborhoods:

a. The Southside neighborhood is appropriate for parking garages – work with NAU.

b. Parking garages must be worked into the character of a neighborhood – essential to have liners (retail, office, residential) and to include mixed-use where appropriate. Activity centers are already planned under the Regional Plan – coordinate with neighborhood needs for parking.

c. Require residents to provide proof of parking access to provide security and ensure the garage is not used by others.

d. Provide storage in parking structure for residents.

e. Allow shared parking on the side yard between buildings when the side yard setback on each property is too narrow for a vehicle (but this has numerous ownership, entitlement, and easement issues).

f. Develop one parking garage to provide parking for students, residents, and businesses on the Southside.

g. In some neighborhoods consider a “no parking” requirement based on walkability within the neighborhood (need to provide better transit/more multi-modal options though).

h. Balance parking enforcement with community needs and expectations.

i. Develop a program to allow for in-lieu fees for parking to support a parking garage.

j. Use parking garages for future alternative energy installations.

F. Underground parking - Desirable where feasible; but cost of excavation because of hard rock a concern.

G. Parking issues for rentals/students:

a. This is an existing problem – and it must be addressed as a future challenge for dealing with rentals (how much parking to provide?)

b. Suggestion that we explore the idea of a separate parking standard for residential rentals? But there may be a legal issue with this idea?

c. Explore the notion of restricting parking to a maximum number of vehicles parked on a property, as well as a minimum. May have some issues here with single-family residential parking?

d. Consider communal parking offsite within a neighborhood for additional parking and for ADUs: e.g. at Thorpe Park

- e. Design our communities with tools such as TND and form-based codes as a mixed use walkable compact neighborhood to minimize the need for cars.
- H. ADUs in neighborhoods - ADUs need to be smaller and should not be allowed on the second floor above a garage because of privacy issues. ADUs must be "accessory" and therefore smaller in mass, bulk and scale to the primary structure. Privacy is certainly an issue for adjacent properties, as is the need to ensure ADUs do not change the neighborhood character or affect a neighbor's property.
- I. Connectivity issues:
- a. The new zoning code should require better connections to implement Regional Plan policy -- improve connections/lot linkage between subdivisions and neighborhoods to make neighborhoods more walkable and appropriate street design to slow traffic. Link neighborhoods with pedestrian paths, open space/green corridors, etc.
 - b. Revisit the street design standards to slow traffic in neighborhoods through better layout based on connectivity that minimizes fast through traffic.
 - c. Provide standards for walkability in new subdivisions.
 - d. Need to plan for convenience in walkable communities – must provide essential services that are useful and convenient (this is also an attribute of a neighborhood).
- J. Future neighborhoods/growth as compared to existing established neighborhoods:
- a. We should not make a distinction between the older mixed use neighborhoods like Southside and La Plaza Vieja, and platted subdivisions like Continental or University Heights which residents also call "neighborhoods".
 - b. HOAs help to define neighborhood character and boundaries. Older neighborhoods can also create their own HOAs or associations to protect the neighborhoods.
 - c. Important to value the different types and kinds of neighborhoods in Flagstaff and therefore to keep new regulations in scale with what exists. Ensure that we build on what we have and respect what is in the neighborhood. Important to appreciate and support the diversity of neighborhoods in Flagstaff. Study and document them – Kim Sharp has already done much of this work with the Neighborhood Character Study.
 - d. Ensure that new development is built at an appropriate scale to existing development in the neighborhood.
 - e. Consider how the principles/ideas on what makes a neighborhood as defined by this group should be incorporated into a new neighborhood (i.e. subdivision) project?
- K. Scale - relationship to neighborhood character:
- a. Established neighborhoods need to be protected by appropriate zoning to ensure that inappropriate land uses are not brought into the neighborhood. If the existing neighborhood community wants to change its character and allow for a change of use (to for example, mixed-use), clearly define the process for doing so. This should not be driven by the City, and instead should be driven by the residents –

vision plan, charrette, form-based code, etc. with the City's support. [Much of this is in the TND ordinance – chapter 10-17 of the LDC]

- b. Change is inevitable – need to plan for change to either hold onto existing community values and resist change, or to embrace it and allow something else. Regional Plan policy is an appropriate venue for dealing with change at the community level.
 - c. Plan for appropriate uses on the boundary of neighborhoods – if not, then these uses can impact the character of the neighborhood.
 - d. Dilapidated homes need to be repaired as a way to reinforce true community character – broken homes lower property values and create the wrong image for a neighborhood (PMO issue).
- L. Student interactions with neighborhood residents:
- a. Kim Sharp has an intern working for her researching the Town Gown issue, i.e. how to make a healthy community with both transient students who may not care for a place, and long term residents who do. Her final report will be forwarded to the consultants and the Focus Group members when it is completed.
 - i. “As a student, your neighborhood is your campus”.
 - ii. How to define a greater community for students?
 - iii. Code specifically for areas adjoining NAU to support the student population without alienating the local long-term residents as well. Don't want segregation per se – find a way for artful integration in neighborhoods.
 - b. La Plaza Vieja deals with load parties and other “nuisances” by calling PD. Over time the students are learning and adapting their behavior – not really a zoning code issue though.
 - c. As we deal with student issues, it is important to deal with them based on neighborhood character to ensure they are integrated in a manner that is in scale and appropriate to the neighborhood.
- M. Home-based businesses (live/work and work /live building types):
- a. Expand opportunities for live/work and work/live building types – but be mindful of traffic issues, sound, etc. and other impacts on neighborhood character.
 - b. General support for home-based businesses – keeps residents in the neighborhood during the day as it offers eyes-on-the-street which is a positive aspect.
 - c. Vacation rentals – deal with as a separate issue in the zoning code rewrite.

4.7.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Housing Focus Group:

- A. Discuss and if possible address the vacancy issues associated with second home owners and the issue of rentals in neighborhoods when they overwhelm the neighborhood.

Downtown Focus Group:

- A. While mixed use in Downtown Flagstaff is important and necessary, be cognizant of the concern for adding density and creating more traffic and parking issues.

4.7.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

City staff:

- A. Property Maintenance Ordinance
 - a. Needs to deal with the issue of “junk” stored in yards.
 - b. Dilapidated homes need to be repaired as a way to reinforce true community character – broken homes lower property values and create the wrong image for a neighborhood.
- B. In neighborhoods, the width of existing streets should be reduced, curbs gutters should be eliminated, and shoulders constructed with gravel/rock to help provide more on-street parking to deal with the current problem of vehicles being parked in front setback areas. This would help with stormwater issues as well – more percolation and less runoff.

Regional Plan Policy:

- A. Address the issue of planning for neighborhood preservation and integrity and building a sense of community within neighborhoods.
- B. Forward Scott Neuman’s ideas on home based businesses and social networking provided to the Economic Development Focus Group to the Regional Planning team as these could be incorporated as policy in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Entrepreneurship – how can one neighborhood help itself and the community as a whole? Micro-based businesses are appropriate within a neighborhood. A question that should be considered at a broader policy level is - does a particular neighborhood want to brand itself to bring back some form of business?
 - b. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County’s program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own.
- C. Reinforce the policy already in the Regional Plan that we need to design our communities with tools such as TND and form-based codes as a mixed use walkable compact neighborhood to minimize the need for cars.
- D. Regional Plan must identify areas for future change from single-use subdivisions to mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods by including participation of the residents using a charrette and other tools.
- E. Regional plan needs to address the link between transit corridors and areas appropriate for densification in neighborhoods.
- F. Regional Plan policy is an appropriate venue for dealing with change at the community level. Change is inevitable – need to plan for change to either hold onto existing community values and resist change, or to embrace it and allow something else. The challenge is to enhance or maintain the existing character of a neighborhood while acknowledging change.
- G. There is a strong need for a stronger NAU/Southside partnership with more engagement between both sides. This is important because NAU has plans to expand by 4,500 new students who will need accommodations. 1,000 students will be housed on campus in new housing – but we will need to find an est. 3,500 new housing units in areas near NAU so that we don’t encourage more driving. What is appropriate density in areas near NAU? NAU must

communicate with the City and neighborhoods -- should be dealt with in Regional Plan and other policy documents in the City.

- H. How to keep students here and to build a long lasting sense of community?
This is hard to achieve but should be discussed in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Expanded internship programs
 - b. Requires a coordinated effort from all sectors of the community
 - c. Reinforce outdoor activities and hobbies (personal interests) as a way of keeping students here
 - d. Deal with housing cost issue – find a mechanism for assisting students to purchase a home, rather than them renting a home as an incentive to stay.

Home Owners Associations:

- A. HOAs are not regulated or enforced by the City. This is not an issue for the zoning code rewrite.

4.8 Outdoor Lighting Focus Group

Chairperson: Wes Lockwood, Lowell Observatory

Vice-chairperson: Gerry Craig, Citizen

4.8.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. Revise the purpose statement to make it less astronomical in intent.
Statements/phrases that need to be included in the purpose statement include:
- Dark skies
 - Energy efficient
 - Natural resource and part of natural environment
 - Minimize light pollution and glare
 - Safety, security and productivity
 - Flexibility in lighting provision
 - Night time aesthetics
 - Enjoyment of the night sky
 - Require rather than encourage
 - Health benefits
 - Tourism – by-product of dark sky
 - Impact on wildlife – bird migration
 - Promote good lighting design
 - Strive to be a model dark sky city
 - Great community value
 - Astronomical observations
- B. The new code section must be simple, clear, concise, effective and user-friendly to citizens and developers.
- C. Ensure coordination of the Outdoor Lighting code with IBC and other codes. For example, street lights on private streets need to comply with the Engineering Standards requirements for street lights.
- D. Currently the existing LDC does not adequately address the issue of placement of new light fixtures on existing buildings. This is a loop hole that needs to be fixed. This implies also dealing with lumens per acre for existing developments.
- E. Better define the breaks between lighting zones – especially in the Butler/I-40 area. There is no need to change the zone II boundary on the east side of town because of the observatory off Lake Mary Road. The astronomical zones should be added as a GIS layer.
- F. Fix the problem of interior light spilling through windows to the exterior – Chris Luginbuhl has provided draft language to staff to resolve this concern.
- G. Update the sports lighting section of the code (this accounts for one-third of the light pollution in Flagstaff – Wes Lockwood has provided draft language to staff to resolve this concern.
- H. LED and CFL lighting and other technological advances in outdoor lighting need to be addressed in the new code. Recommendation that the new code should address the effect that is desired, rather than the technology behind the light source.

- I. Agreement that exposed neon lighting should only be permitted on Route 66 and Historic downtown as part of sign design only.
- J. Agreement to keep the current astronomical zones, but adapt them as necessary to the Transect as it is applied in the City.
- K. Non-conforming lights – Consensus that when addressing nonconformities, enforcement staff will need to require compliance with the new Code whenever any changes occur.
 - a. Concern that all lights pre-1989 are “grandfathered” – they account for 50% of existing lights in Flagstaff.
 - b. Reducing non-conforming lights is an incentive that can be tied to a comprehensive lighting plan.
 - c. Continue with pro-active education reinforcing the pay back in energy efficiency resulting from eliminating old lights and adding new compliant lights. Work with the Dark Skies Coalition – but resources are an issue (money and volunteer time). Also City and APS could work together on an incentive program.
 - d. Look at some flexibility within a set threshold for allowing more light than the code would otherwise require when a property owner is trying to update their project and bring it into compliance when other pre-existing constraints prevent full compliance (Refer to Z. below).
- L. Residential lighting - Chris Luginbuhl has provided draft language to staff to resolve this concern based on his experience with lighting standards typically adopted by HOAs (typical standards include a fully shielded requirement, 75w per fixture limit, no light trespass, and no clear glass (frosted OK).
 - a. In SFR zoning districts the new code must delete the maximum lumen cap and should require that light fixtures must be fully shielded or soffit mounted and there must be no light trespass for all new construction. This standard would also apply to manufactured homes. (But there is a concern that all new residential construction must have fully shielded exterior lighting as it is too restrictive. Clear glass should not be permitted, but a colored or even a frosted diffuser cuts down enough on offensive glare to make it an acceptable and desirable form of exterior lighting. At the very least an outdoor fixture should have a diffuser so that the light bulb itself cannot be seen. The attractiveness of many outdoor light fixtures comes from the glass that is used to cover the light bulb.)
 - b. Enforcement is an on-going issue because it is hard to know when non-complaint fixtures are added by a home owner, and it is hard to prove that a violation exists.
 - c. Place the residential outdoor lighting standards in one location in the new zoning code for ease of use.
 - d. Note that the building code required exterior stairs to be lighted – this may be an issue in terms of the type of light fixture installed.
- M. Lumens v. candle power – agreement to maintain the lumen approach used by the current code as lumens are easier to understand and apply to all uses. Under the LDC lumens are not refined enough and shielding requirements must be added.
 - a. The new code must better define lumens and shielding requirements for outdoor lighting for all uses. For example, rather than continue with the lumens per acre standard of the LDC, the new code should have a lumens per fixture limit.

- b. Consensus to leave the code as “initial lumens” rather than attempting to deal with light loss/efficiency decline over time. Discussion that this is open to interpretation, and hence the issue has been avoided in the past. The use of initial lumens is unambiguous, which is why this is the preferred approach. Large advantage for LPS because they have low lumen loss over time. With new lighting technologies there will likely be less loss of lumens over time. Metal halide is the worst for lumen loss – up to 50% loss over time.

- N. LPS lighting in parking areas/color rendition:
 - a. The new zoning code must only allow LPS lighting in parking areas (delete the word “preferred” from the LDC)
 - b. Good color rendition should be allowed for pedestrian use – i.e. walkways to and from buildings and areas where people congregate (i.e. Heritage Square); but not areas that pedestrians walk through (parking areas)
 - c. Add to zones II and III the regulation currently in zone I to add 10% white light to LPS lighting to achieve better color rendition.
 - d. Pedestrian lighting – need to add more white light in pedestrian areas. These should rather be Class 1 lighting. Need to carefully define pedestrian areas. Suggestion to rather allow 10% max. white light of the lumen budget for the property in lighting design.

- O. Motion detectors – with proper shielding and a no trespass requirement, motions detectors are acceptable. There is no need to define their use specific to certain zones as they are most likely to be installed only in SFR zones, and should not be prohibited in commercial zones by small business owners. Would not be an issue in MFR zones.

- P. Definition of “fixture” – check that it is clear with regard to LED lights and amend as necessary.
 - a. Insert better definitions and diagrams for fully shielded, partially shielded and unshielded fixtures.

- Q. Winter ‘holiday’ lights - agreement that the existing code adequately addresses holiday lights, and maintain the existing days that seasonal holiday lights are permitted. Do not require the light strings to be removed when they are not in use.

- R. Landscape/architectural lighting – agreement that to address lighting that points up (to illuminate a tree or buildings) the fully shielded requirement would satisfactorily address this problem, i.e. ground mounted lights pointing up onto a building or tree would not be permitted, but trees/buildings could be lighted from the top down.
 - a. Decorative lighting – look at lamp output and size. Need to allow LED in a variety of colors, but if color changes are permitted, it is important to define how frequently changes would be allowed.
 - b. It was agreed that solar-powered lights are not an issue and need not be addressed in the code.

- S. Canopy lighting on gas stations – existing regulations in the LDC allow someone to make the canopy bigger and therefore get more lighting. But design guidelines promote reduced canopy area (better design) and therefore less lighting. Resolve this conflict.

- T. Security or emergency lighting - should not be included with lumen calculations as they are wired for a power failure or an alarm and are not activated/turned on unless in an emergency. They would not be wired to a motion detector. But how do you define "security" lighting –concern that this is a loop hole. Maybe define the issue more precisely as "emergency lighting".
- U. Sign lighting - maintain the standards in place in the LDC and exempt internally illuminated signs. Sign lighting is not an issue for the observatories, even from downtown. However, externally illuminated signs proposed in a new development must count toward the overall lumen count.
- V. LED – rather than attempting to control output, we should rather deal with the effect, i.e. no blinking, flashing, etc. lights.
 - a. Consensus that ideas from the Sign Focus Group should be used on this issue.
 - b. Consensus that change of color is acceptable if the changes occur during the day. However, there should be no changes in decorative lighting that changes minute by minute.
- W. Explore the idea of a light curfew in parking lots and schools
 - a. In residential areas probably need to keep lights turned on.
 - b. But schools, churches etc. could be subject to a curfew unless there is an insurance risk. Property owners may want more indemnification in case of crime (mugging) or theft.
 - c. As an option, turn off some lights and leave a basic minimum of light in parking areas. It was noted that some Texas schools reduced vandalism by turning off the lights; this provided a savings on crime related costs and energy savings.
 - d. Alternatively, we could write a code that requires certain lights within X distance of a building to be turned on, or dim lights or turn off X percentage of lights in a parking area. Also have street lights providing light in parking area and keep some lights on near the buildings.
 - e. Needs input from Flagstaff PD.
- X. Comprehensive lighting plan for large developments similar to that used for a comprehensive sign plan
 - a. A Comprehensive Sign plan provides incentives for a larger sign but the City has more control over the design of the sign. i.e. if a bigger sign is needed, then the City can ask for a better designed sign that meets community aesthetic values. Perhaps this could be applied to the lighting code.
 - b. Under the current code, what additional benefits could we get for which we offer incentives?
 - i. Trade more light for a curfew?
 - ii. Trade more lumens for a different background on a sign?
 - iii. Reduction of non-conforming lights?
 - iv. Brainstorm for other tradable credits and incentives ...
- Y. Cross reference to the International Dark Skies Association list of dark sky approved/friendly light fixtures
 - a. Need to review the fixtures and ensure they parallel our code. But there is a possibility that over time the list may be amended and inappropriate fixtures added as it a private organization that may be swayed by other

communities with less stringent standards than Flagstaff. Use the lamps approved in the IDA as a guide – not a guarantee of use.

- Z. Lighting in multi-family complexes – look at some flexibility within a set threshold for allowing more light than the code would otherwise require when a property owner is trying to update their project and bring it into compliance when other pre-existing constraints prevent full compliance.
 - a. An opportunity for a staff approved waiver based on set criteria
 - b. Codify what City staff are all ready doing for this kind of situation – e.g. gas stations.
 - c. Consider requiring a lighting designer to get involved to assess what is possible and what the constraints are, then submit to the city for review and approval. The lighting study should be fairly inexpensive – and the cost would easily be made up in energy savings in a short period of time.

4.8.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. Add design options for how to accomplish appropriate architectural lighting in the design guidelines (up-lighting of buildings is no longer permitted).

Signage Focus Group:

- A. Note that internally illuminated signs should be exempt from lumen calculations; however, externally illuminated signs proposed in a new development must count toward the overall lumen count.
- B. Coordinate recommendations on LED lights used for lighting and signage with the Signage Focus Group.

4.8.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

City Staff – Administrative Issue:

- A. Update and maintain the lighting inventory of all existing outdoor light fixtures.
- B. Develop a program to continue/further education about appropriate light fixtures in Flagstaff. City staff to work with Dark Skies Coalition.
 - a. Fixture availability – residential and commercial
 - b. Use City resources for education on outdoor lighting – web page, etc.
 - c. Develop additional hand out materials
- C. Encourage local merchants to promote the sale of the correct/most appropriate outdoor light fixtures in Flagstaff (Dark Sky compliance stickers, etc.)
- D. Continue with pro-active education reinforcing the pay back in energy efficiency resulting from eliminating old lights and adding new compliant lights. Work with the Dark Skies Coalition – but resources are an issue (money and volunteer time). The City and APS could work on an incentive program.
- E. At some point in the future, staff should entertain the idea of an amendment to the City's IGA with HUD (or approve a new one if it does not exist) to override the Federal and State regulations that only allow for unshielded "jelly jar" light fixtures on manufactured homes.
- F. GIS Section – add the astronomical zones as a GIS layer.

4.9 Process and Procedures Focus Group

Chairperson: Kara Kelty, Citizen

Vice-chairperson: Kent Hotsenspillier, Land Surveyor

4.9.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. Desired qualities of a new zoning code:
 - a. Easy to use and apply
 - b. User-friendly to citizens and developers
 - c. Improved and expanded flow charts and graphics are needed
 - d. Code interpretation should be accurate and consistently reliable regardless of which staff person is rendering the interpretation. (This is especially an issue with interpretation of the design guidelines).
 - e. Add an improved definition/explanation of the processes and distinctions between discretionary and non-discretionary reviews and reduce redundancies
 - f. The new zoning code should be written at the level of the professional user; develop a user guide for the lay user.
 - g. Ensure that all fees and timelines (except perhaps statutorily defined time lines) should not be incorporated in the new zoning code and should be in a separate document.
 - i. The fee schedule needs to be an appendix to the Code (adopted separately to the zoning code) because it is then easier to amend.
 - ii. It was also noted that the fees and timelines must be clear, predictable, and easily accessible.
 - iii. The new code's process section should follow the example already set in the Subdivision Regulations – point to a separate document for the number of copies needed, time frames and fees.
 - h. Predictability is an important value – Predictability in time lines can influence the economic impacts of developers. “Surprises” can cause delays and have a negative effect on the developer's financing.
 - i. Develop a review schedule for the code every 10 (?) years, typically soon after the Regional Plan has been through the amendment and approval process.
- B. For each major section in the code, define the purpose of that section (or consider putting it into a separate users guide).
- C. The new Code must clearly state how it will be applied (the “Applicability Section”), especially with regard to nonconformities that are created by the adoption of the new zoning code. An example for consideration would be modifications to previously approved CUPs.
- D. It is important to ensure that the goals and policies of the Regional Plan can be properly implemented through the zoning code and that there is consistency between the two documents.
- E. Evaluate and modify how uses will be defined – ideally we would no longer refer to the SIC listing of uses, and instead should generalize and simplify.
- F. Prior to adoption it is important to test the new code to ensure that any new regulations work as they were intended and to ensure that increased costs to

development are minimized. Compare projects approved under the LDC with the new code's standards. Also important to understand any unforeseen Proposition 207 implications.

- G. Conditional Use Permits – as much as possible the number of conditional uses in zoning districts should be reduced. (This issue was also discussed by the Economic Development Focus Group)
 - a. Careful consideration should be given to deleting the Termination of Nonconforming Use section supported by the City Attorney as it allows for the on-going use of otherwise non-conforming uses (mostly residential) in commercial districts in neighborhoods such as Southside and north of Downtown. (This issue was also discussed by the Housing Focus Group?)
- H. Predictability and flexibility - It was agreed to keep what is already working in the Design Guidelines and DRB process so that flexibility and good results are not lost (strengthen and/or maintain design options in DRB and the review process).
- I. The economics of Flagstaff can drive developers away. Possibly allow for flexibility in requirements to save on costs (i.e. landscaping). But this may also diminish predictability.
- J. Promote more pre-application meetings:
 - a. Need to explore preliminary meetings and the level of submittal requirements for them.
 - b. Provide more detail initially with development applications. May result in fewer surprises but could be more expensive initially.
 - c. This is a way to resolve the current "Catch 22" in that property owners cannot find buyers because they don't know what can be done with the property and cannot find out what can be done with the property until a proposal is submitted.
- K. Proposed public participation amendments - Concerned Citizens of Flagstaff:
 - a. "Concerned Citizens of Flagstaff" have developed ideas for improving the opportunity for getting public input early in a public process for certain defined large projects.
 - b. City staff have already developed a preliminary draft that builds on these ideas and applies them to various public review procedures. Support for including them in the new zoning code.
 - c. Ideas for how a public meeting should be structured were included as well and are reported on in Section 4.9.3 below, some of which have been adopted by the City Council.
 - i. Suggestion that City staff speak at the beginning of an item of review, and at the end to make final comments and clarifications as necessary.
 - ii. Discussion that the suggested 30 minute time limit for developers to speak/present to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council is too restrictive, especially on large projects when there has been so much time and money allocated to the project.
 - iii. Explore Coconino County's process that allows for a work session prior to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council meetings. Agreement that a work session should be added

prior to action by the Council and Planning and Zoning Commission for large projects even though this may add additional time.

- d. Support for the use of site visits by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council as they are helpful in obtaining additional project information prior to making a decision.

- L. Training for staff and users – It is essential to train staff on the new code to ensure that there is consistency in interpretation and use after the new Code is adopted. It was also concluded that there will be a need for the City Council to allocate funding to provide for both staff and public training, and that it would be beneficial to combine staff and public training to encourage a team approach.

- M. Dispute resolution - A dispute resolution process needs to be incorporated into the Code to deal with interpretation disputes. Preferably the person resolving the disputes (note this is separate from an appeal process to the BOA) should not be City staff – perhaps an ombudsman or civil hearing officer?

- N. Review of staff survey of the development review times for other Arizona cities:
 - a. In general review times for Flagstaff are better than other surveyed communities in the state – but the City is slower in TIAs and public improvement plans (first review) overall.
 - b. Yuma is generally fastest overall, but they contract out review services. Initial plan review is quick – but field changes are very slow.
 - c. It is rare that a site plan is approved in 21 days, although the noted review times are accurate. The real issue though is dealing with conflicts within the existing code – this takes a LOT of time.
 - d. The quality of submittal documents is a key determinant in the amount of time it takes to secure approval for a project.

- O. Minor Land Divisions (MLDs):
 - a. Review the thresholds for minor divisions at which there is a requirement for public improvements
 - b. MLDs – state statutes provide a simplified administrative process for smaller subdivisions as well as regulations on the number of splits that can be processed in MLDs.

- P. Graduated regulations for the scale of a project:
 - a. Make review of smaller projects (e.g. infill) easier and more administrative than larger projects.
 - b. Recommend a graduated time frame process, e.g. 3, 5, 7 week review for commercial projects based on size and complexity.
 - c. Also look at a simplified process for subdivisions based on their size. Coconino County has a three step process for subdivisions – 10 lots, 20 lots and over 20 lots.
 - d. This idea needs to be explored further ... especially for infill projects (reduced fees, reduced time frame for approval) Example – Comfort Keepers where there was only a minor change in use, and no construction. Suggest that this should not have gone to DRB – staff review only
 - e. Create additional/improved review/processing time incentives for small projects – some are already in the design guidelines.

- Q. Requirement for professionals to make submittals:
- a. Ensures a higher standard of submittal documents and frequently saves time and money in the long run.
 - b. Often a developer does not know what they are doing and do not realize that a professional is required by Statute; this can result in delays. Unfortunately they then have to hire a professional to complete the work anyway, and often the project has progressed so far that it is hard to make changes to accommodate better site and building design.
 - c. If a professional is eventually needed, the professional should be brought onto the team sooner rather than later.
 - d. Need to add thresholds in the existing code (as there are none now) for the use of design professionals for site planning applications.

4.9.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Economic Development Focus Group:

- A. The economics of Flagstaff can drive developers away. Possibly allow for flexibility in requirements to save on costs (i.e. landscaping). But this may also diminish predictability.
- B. The Economic Development Focus Group also suggested that as much as possible the number of conditional uses in zoning districts should be reduced.

4.9.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

City Staff:

- A. Issue of "better relationships" and need for coordinated and consistent standards of review.
 - a. There has been improvement in the DRB process, but it appears that not all Sections are still on the "team" and continue to be too individual in projecting their needs.
 - b. Suggestion that it would be beneficial to require all Sections to record their comments on a single set of plans.
 - c. The City's single-point-of-contact (SPOC) plays an essential role in solving conflicting comments and standards.
 - d. It is equally important to have a SPOC representing the project on the development side.
 - e. Agreement that a process needs to be established with clear rules and expectations for who does what and, if there is a change in staff, there needs to be a meeting to hand off knowledge and background of the project.
- B. Suggestion on the need for revised processes and procedures that allow for better communication between staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the City Council (but no specific recommendations were offered).
- C. Need for better coordination of staff comments:
 - a. For example, separate code related comments from suggestions.
 - b. SPOC (Single Point of Contact) has really helped.
 - c. Reinforced the need for a SPOC (project representative) on the developer's side as well.
- D. Front counter staff and the need for more availability of planners. City should review internal process and procedures, and to provide more training for accuracy and consistency.

- E. Suggestion that City staff should hold periodic reviews to ensure that processes meet objectives and expectations.
- F. Implement the Concerned Citizens of Flagstaff's recommendations for how a public meeting should be structure, some of which have been adopted by the City Council.
 - a. Suggestion that City staff speak at the beginning of an item of review, and at the end to make final comments and clarifications as necessary.
 - b. Discussion that the suggested 30 minute time limit for developers to speak/present to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council is too restrictive, especially on large projects when there has been so much time and money allocated to the project.
 - c. Explore Coconino County's process that allows for a work session prior to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council meetings. Agreement that a work session should be added prior to action by the Council and Planning and Zoning Commission for large projects even though this may add additional time.
 - d. Support for the use of site visits by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council as they are helpful in obtaining additional project information prior to making a decision.

City Attorney's Office:

- A. Deal with the issue of Termination of Nonconforming Use via conditional use permit.

Economic Impact:

- A. Discussion on the challenge of balancing the economic impacts on development costs in order to maintain community values (preserving trees and/or requiring better looking buildings).
- B. Also considered were timelines and required studies (i.e. traffic impact analyses & utility analyses). It is important to note that the City has no role in an economic impact analysis of a potential development.

4.10 Signage Focus Group

Chairperson: Phil Keesee, Northern Arizona Sign Company

Vice-chairperson: Phil Scandura, Citizen

4.10.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

- A. Temporary signs:
 - a. Develop new regulations and a review/approval process for temporary signs such as banners and A-Frame signs and for special sales events.
 - b. Also develop a section to deal with real estate signs (for sale, lease, rent) and construction signs (i.e. new subdivisions or projects that will be under construction).
- B. Add back into the zoning code the political sign section that was removed from the code some years ago.
- C. The new section on signs must be reformatted and rewritten to ensure that it is easy to use and understand with enhanced readability and better illustrations. The group discussed the need for a good code that allowed business to use signage to promote themselves through better signage and yet maintain the community's desires for attractive signs that do not clutter the highways, i.e. the new code must strike the right balance between the needs of business owners and other community values such as aesthetics.
- D. Continue to ensure that no billboards are permitted in Flagstaff as well as no freeway oriented signs. The current code prevents signs on frontages on I-40 and I-17. Flagstaff as a community does not want these signs as we are trying to be a walkable community. Freeway character is important in Flagstaff and should not be violated by signs and walls, etc. It's a fairness issue – do not want businesses near the freeway to have a competitive advantage. Rather want visitors to spend money throughout the community.
- E. Improve cross-references in the zoning code to for example, the Historic Preservation section, Downtown Historic Overlay, HDRO, etc.
- F. If a Transect or character-based zoning code is proposed for Flagstaff, then the sign code will have to be written to support this, e.g. promoting the use of exposed neon signs along Historic Route 66.
- G. Review the sign maintenance section and ensure that there is enforcement by City staff and that it is consistent.
- H. The new code must be tested with real examples of proposed signs and compared to the existing code.
- I. Review process for signs:
 - a. Ensure that the standards in the sign code are easy to interpret and ensure that exceptions are clearly defined to minimize different answers from different staff. If exceptions are going to be allowed, they must be clearly spelled out.

- b. Provide flexibility for special circumstances either through the Board of Adjustment as a variance or through a staff administrative process (administrative waivers).
- c. Clearly define an appeal process for a decision of the staff to a higher body.
- d. Include more illustrations in the sign code and better flow diagrams illustrating the sign approval process.
- e. The concept of “design enhancements” that allows for larger signs provided different materials and better design is achieved is good – but it needs to be more clearly defined.
- f. When a section of the LDC is updated, the ordinance number and adoption date for the specific code section is listed; but it requires researching each portion to find out what the change was. It was suggested that amendments to portions of the Zoning Code needed to be summarized in a specific location and then could be footnoted so that the details of each amendment could be easily understood.
- g. Check if the LDC includes a provision that there is no need for sign permit review for signs that are not visible from a public street. If so, this should be amended.

J. Off-site signage issues:

- a. Historically, the consensus in the community has been no off-site signs (resulted from past concerns with bill boards) as there was concern with proliferation of signs along main roads. A relaxation of the rules for A-frame signs, banners, etc. is an effort to reinforce the notion of no permanent off-site signs. The group agreed to maintain the rule of no off-premise signs.
- b. A potential option is to use the “directional signs” provision in the Code to provide direction to a property without a street frontage.
- c. Add a new real estate signs section into the temporary signs section of the code.
- d. Review the status of the bill in the State legislature (SB1022) that as proposed limits a city’s ability to regulate political signs on public rights-of-way.

K. Height, size and quantity of signs:

- a. Agreement that the height limit for freestanding signs should be increased to 12 feet without design enhancements being put into place. This would allow multi-tenant complexes to put more signs for their tenants on the monument.
- b. The existing height provisions for building mounted signs are good, but consideration should be given to refining the 25-foot maximum height rule on large buildings (carefully!)
- c. Consensus that the current size and quantity rules in the existing Code are good.
- d. If the Transect is used as an organizing tool in the new zoning code, height of signs and their design needs to be based on the transect and the character of the district in which they are located. For example, the new code needs to have separate rules for big box buildings (i.e. larger signs for the Mall). A comparison with sign rules in other communities on this issue is needed.
- e. Clear rules must be established for measuring height. Agreement to use the top of curb elevation from which to determine sign

height when the sign is placed in a hole or otherwise below grade. All other signs would be measured from natural grade.

L. Aesthetics of signs:

- a. Must be based on character within the City (e.g. Downtown would have more “period” smaller signs compared to Route 66 or the Mall). Consultant should propose language to include ideas for enhancing the aesthetics of signs in Flagstaff based on context and character.
- b. Sign regulations must be based on context. The Downtown businesses are mostly OK with the current guidelines and standards.
- c. Suggestion that as a good practice the local sign industry should show their clients which signs work and which do not.
- d. Agreement that there is no need to regulate letter height and that other existing rules deal with this adequately for the majority of the city. Perhaps a letter height rule could apply to Downtown and other walkable areas to allow the creation of more pedestrian friendly signs? A review of the ICC Sign Code may be needed for guidelines on letter and sign size relative to speed?
- e. The sign standards for live-work units and cottage industries in residential areas need to be revised to allow for bigger signs (currently only home occupations are permitted in residential areas with limited signage).
- f. Support for the notion that exposed neon lights should be promoted especially in specific corridors (Route 66 district or Down Town district). They could even be used as an architectural feature.

- M. Major and minor road definitions are used in the sign code to regulate signs size, but currently it is hard to know how these classifications are applied in the City. Need to include a link to the Regional Plan for ease of use or include a map in the new zoning code. Also provide a copy at the front counter and/or add a reference or map in the Sign Permit packet.
- a. For a future change of designation from a minor to a major arterial, sign size should be based on the ultimate classification of the arterial.

- N. Clear view zones need to be defined in the Engineering Standards rather than in the zoning code.

- O. Moving signs or flashing signs used by ADOT or road crews are supposed to attract the driver’s attention and pass on critical information. They are temporary in nature and should not be part of the sign code.

- P. Murals – if there is no text or logo on the mural, it’s not a sign. But if text or a logo is included, then it’s a sign and would be subject to the sign code. Address this in the new zoning code.

Q. Architecture as a Sign:

- a. A good well-designed building is inherently a sign because it attracts attention. But concern with buildings being painted in corporate colors to turn the building into a sign. If we allowed buildings to be painted in corporate colors, it is cheating the sign

code and is a fairness issue because it is hard for non-corporate businesses to compete.

- b. New code should keep the branding of a corporation within the sign area limitations, including roof and wall area. Corporate colors when applied to a building are a sign and need to be included in the sign area.

R. Permit Fee Schedule:

- a. Inherently unfair because it is not based on the size and number of signs per building/project. Fee needs to be based on cost recovery for the City.
- b. Set a minimum fee – then base the remainder of the fee on the area and number of the signs. Consensus that a fee process based on sign value should not be used as it could discourage well designed signs.
- c. Research other community's fee schedules. Phil and others to provide good examples to staff.

S. Frontage Definition:

- a. Accommodate signage for businesses in Downtown that front an alley. A simple way to deal with this is to amend the "frontage" definition so that it also includes alleys.
- b. Also expand this to include businesses on Heritage Square with a "public space" provision – create an exception (there is an exception in the code already but it is poorly located).
- c. Agreement that it is appropriate to allow signs on a building that faces a frontage road, but not on a freeway.

T. Window Signs:

- a. Addressed in the LDC but not actively enforced. Consistent enforcement is needed.
- b. A painted window display should also count to the limitation on window sign area, e.g. "I Do I Do Wedding Center".
- c. In the downtown area it is important that windows are not obstructed – especially with perforated vinyl.
- d. Simplify the existing code and remove the ambiguity. Is the 25% value for window signs appropriate and consistent with other cities codes?
- e. Address how the new perforated vinyl window signs will be regulated with regard to the percentage of the sign that is permitted on a window (currently 25%).
- f. Consensus that there should be no permit for indoor temporary window signs (food promotion posters in fast food restaurant for example) – amend the existing LDC which requires window signs to be permitted. Permanent window (vinyl, etc) need to be permitted. In the alternative, it was suggested that small window signs less than the 25% coverage maximum should not be permitted, unless they are part of the permit application if other signs are being installed.
- g. Research other community's to see what they do with window signage.

U. New Technology:

- a. Need to establish clear definitions and regulations for the use of vinyl sign covers and perforated signs otherwise they will be difficult to enforce.
- b. Need to deal with the new "TV"-like signs that are now common in other larger communities. Research what other communities are doing to address these signs.
- c. LED Signs;
 - i. Full animation is available on LED and newer technology signs. Current code doesn't allow animation and the group agreed that it should remain as not allowed.
 - ii. Changeable type face on an LED sign currently has some accepted industry exceptions that are not written into the existing sign code. E.g. gas stations are assumed to be allowed to change their prices once a day.
 - iii. Maintain the current standards in the LDC for time and temperature signs.
 - iv. Discussion on the use of LED signs as a monument sign for multi-tenant developments to allow each of the smaller tenants to have an opportunity for highway signage. The discussion on frequency of text changes were resolved to be no more than once per hour for all businesses. Should the entire face of the sign be able to change or just 20% of the sign? Examples included monument signs for small shopping centers that would allow the "non-anchor" store names to be sequenced through every hour. Then the discussion was what if the entire cabinet was an LED and the sign included a LOGO, hours of operation, etc., and the entire LED cabinet changed...was that then an issue of changeable copy or did it need a separate permit for each sign that was rotated through? Consultant – how do other communities address this issue?
 - v. No resolution on whether the changeable copy LED sign would apply to a single use development, e.g. Walgreens.
 - vi. The sign code should be written to include new technologies (even those that are currently not available; such as three dimensional halo-graphic projections or something not yet known). But how?
 - vii. Add definitions, e.g. "animation" which should not be permitted. When text changes, it should happen instantly, otherwise if it is allowed to diffuse from one image to another, it would be animation. Also add definitions for "changeable copy" and "frequency" - in terms of how often changeable copy can be changed.

V. Sign Illumination and Dark Skies Issues:

- a. Discussion in conjunction with LEDs that are adjustable. They are brighter during the daytime and can either be manually or automatically dimmed at night. If they are not dimmed at night, the graphics will wash out and the sign is not readable. Most LED signs are louvered to provide sun-shading of the sign face. Without it, some signs may be unreadable. LEDs provide a very "straight" or narrow beam of light (similar to laser lights) and therefore shading is important.

- b. Currently signs are regulated by color, not brightness – lighted letters can be no more than 50% of the sign cabinet. Consensus that the background should be controlled by light output rather than color. If this is infeasible, it was recommended that white be maintained as a prohibited background color, but permitting other colors (e.g., yellow) that are currently banned.
- c. Recommendation that sign lighting should be figured into the total lumen count for a property.

W. Design enhancements\Incentives:

- a. Current design enhancements offer very little for the cost involved. The expense of natural materials is often prohibitive to a new business owner
- b. An issue is also maintenance as the materials promoted for sign enhancements (wood, etc.) are hard and expensive to maintain.
- c. Recommendation that the consultant should suggest more practical percentages for design enhancements.
- d. The existing section of the LDC in which the height of the sign is expressed as a percentage of the building is little confusing and should be better defined.
- e. If more mixed-use is permitted in Downtown under a form-based code, then the implications to signage needs to be addressed to ensure that signs are not placed on upper floors.
- f. Design enhancements need to be amended (as written they do not work from a maintenance perspective because of the materials promoted in them). Instead of material enhancements, it may be possible to consider area enhancements (i.e. wider signs). The group agreed that single businesses are OK at 10-feet (per the existing Code) but would like design enhancements to be more achievable.

4.10.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. When a section of the LDC is updated, the ordinance number and adoption date for the specific code section is listed; but it requires researching each portion to find out what the change was. It was suggested that amendments to portions of the Zoning Code needed to be summarized in a specific location and then could be footnoted so that the details of each amendment could be easily understood.
- B. Sign design and placement in new development projects needs to be addressed as soon as possible in the design/review phase of the project because experience has shown that architects do not give enough consideration to this issue and often problems arise late in the project's review that make them harder to resolve. Conceptual sign placement and perhaps even conceptual sign design needs to be added to the submittal checklists.
- C. A new fee schedule for sign permits is needed.
- D. Sign placement needs to be better coordinated with landscape plans and tree resources preserved on a site - need for a composite site plan.

Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. Architecture of a building including signs needs to be in conformance with the design traditions of Flagstaff ... consider regulating the colors of buildings. This is one way to deal with corporate sign colors.
- B. Recommendation that non single-family residential buildings (i.e. commercial, multi-family, etc.) should be required to receive permit approval for a repaint.

Outdoor Lighting Focus Group:

- A. LED signs and lights are louvered to provide sun-shading of the sign face. Ensure this is also addressed in the outdoor Lighting section of the new zoning code.
- B. Coordinate recommendations on LED lights used for lighting and signage with the Outdoor Lighting Focus Group.
- C. Recommendation that sign backgrounds should be controlled by light output rather than color.
- D. Recommendation that externally illuminated sign lighting should be figured into the total lumen count for a property. Internally illuminated signs would remain exempt.

4.10.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

Administration issues by City staff:

- a. Processing of sign permit applications in a timely manner
- b. Consistent interpretations
- c. Consistent and effective enforcement

4.11 Trees and Resources Focus Group

Chairperson: Steve Nelson, Citizen

Vice-chairperson: Steve Gatewood, Forest Consultant

4.11.1 Hand-off Issues to the Consultants and City Staff

A. General comments and observations:

- a. "Trees will re-grow" – comment made about how all of old downtown was clear cut many years ago; now 40-50 years later, mature, native and non-native trees have matured.
- b. University Heights is an example of where trees have been protected without codes.
- c. Simplicity is important – do right preservation without complex calculations.
- d. Since the 1991 code was adopted, reductions in standards have allowed for affordable housing, TND, and design review (regulating architecture).
- e. Trees as a natural resource help to define the character of Flagstaff. For example, the natural quality of Flagstaff must be preserved so that the mass clearing that occurred on the existing Wal-Mart site will not happen again.
- f. Important to think about the City as an ecosystem that is always changing. Figure out how the code can promote a dynamic system – e.g. wildlife corridors for migrations, etc.
- g. The new zoning code should focus on the functions we want (tree) resources to provide, not just saving trees for the sake of saving them. For example, if public or private open space is preserved in development these spaces may be able to provide the wildlife corridors, biodiversity, noise and light abatement, etc. that is desired.
- h. Flagstaff's "Dark Skies" is a resource and community value that must continue to be protected (This issue is the focus of the Outdoor Lighting Focus Group).
- i. It is important to maintain natural resources (trees, slopes, floodplains, grassland and other vegetation types, dark skies, viewsheds) within the City.

B. Consistent with other Focus Groups, it was agreed that the new zoning code must be simple, concise and easy to use. Also all applicable codes used in the City must be coordinated – zoning code, various Building Codes, Fire code, WUI code, etc.

C. Viewsheds: - Viewsheds are a resource and must be addressed in the new Zoning code.

- a. Building heights need to be limited in certain areas of the City to protect view sheds and character (also discussed by the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group and the Downtown Focus Group).
- b. Overhead utilities – the LDC already requires utilities in new developments to be placed underground (both APS and Engineering Standards) - doesn't need to be covered in the new zoning code.
- c. The Design Guidelines offer incentives/flexible measures for view preservation.
- d. View shed corridors are defined already in the Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan.

- e. Viewsheds should be protected – do not allow billboards, solar collectors or wind turbines that could impact view sheds.
- f. Concern - ensure that private property rights are not violated by imposition of view sheds.

D. Wildfire issues:

- a. Needs to be coordination between approaches to minimize wild fire concerns and the need to ensure preservation of tree resources in the zoning code.
- b. Flagstaff Fire Department (FFD) looks at a site as though it is undeveloped and does not thin and do fire wise clearing/thinning based on a concept site plan. It is a forest stewardship plan.
- c. FFD and Community Development staff do a group review in advance of any proposed thinning.
- d. FFD intent is to return forest to natural historical conditions for two reasons:
 - i. Forest health is very important – thinning minimizes the destruction by bark beetles
 - ii. Fire protection – wildfire management by forest thinning – focuses on horizontal separation and reduction of ladder fuels. Desire to achieve “clumpy groupiness” as the means to minimize fire danger and satisfy other concerns (Aesthetic, more natural, wildlife, etc.).
- e. FFD leans on the high side with thinning, i.e., to keep more trees knowing that more trees will be lost through development.
- f. It was noted that tree canopies will only grow slowly after thinning and trees will grow steadily (many are 90 plus years old)
- g. Agreement that trees are a critical resource that define Flagstaff’s character; balance this value with a concern for fire safety from wildfire.
- h. Some members of the group propose that the tree count for a parcel should be based on the pre-thinning distribution of trees, rather than the post-thinning distribution. This is different to the current approach based on the agreement between CD and FFD as currently tree resources are based on post-thinning distribution
 - i. In the alternative it was suggested that we establish different standards based on location within the City – use similar logic to the approach currently used by the USFS based on objectives for that location.
 - ii. Or, we could find a middle ground based on a new basal area calculations
 - iii. But coverage resulting from pre-thinning is typically much the same as post-thinning because the FFD removes the smaller trees located under the larger trees (e.g. Camryn Pines). The LDC already allows for thinning of trees that are diseased and pest infested.
 - iv. Expectation that the consultant will research this issue and come back with a recommendation.
- i. Make a distinction between protection of forest resources on a large undeveloped site, as compared to protecting an individual tree or trees on a site. There is a place for both.

- E. WUI codes (International Wildland Urban Interface Code):
 - a. FFD defines defensible space as management of the entire property, not just a specified distance requirement from a structure.
 - b. Cross reference this topic to the zoning code. WUI comes first as a part of a stewardship plan for an area.
 - c. Ensure there is no conflict between the zoning code and the WUI Code (Process and Procedures Group)

- F. Two strategies for when resources are destroyed in the event of a catastrophic fire event:
 - a. Naturally caused fire - landscape code should address the need for revegetation and the planting of trees. When reinstating resources destroyed, also be sure to address erosion issues and impacts off-site.
 - i. Reseeding is beneficial, but planting of native trees is very difficult because of our soils. It is important to fell burned trees parallel to the slope and reseed behind them.
 - ii. List resources for mitigation in zoning code, such as NAU, U of A Agricultural Extension Office, USFS, State Land Dept, etc. as these agencies can all offer assistance.
 - iii. Possibly use the USFS model for rehabilitation on private land and put the burden on the land owner.
 - iv. FFD will work with property owners to facilitate seeding and mitigation
 - b. If trees are intentionally removed, then tools for mitigation and compensation/enforcement are needed to resolve the destruction. Seek ideas from the planning consultants.

- G. Establish mitigation tools:
 - a. Mitigation is a valuable mechanism for replacing relevant resources lost through development.
 - b. There are existing mitigation rules in the LDC, but they apply to pre-development conditions, e.g. to the Staples development. Allowed for preservation of trees on a separate parcel so that more clearing could be accomplished on the Staples site. It has also been used by staff to deal with post-development issues, e.g. the Nackard property, now Marriot.
 - c. Suggestion to provide mitigation where tree resources are lost and another valued resource is preserved to offset the tree or slope resource (e.g. a wetland).
 - d. Mitigation banking – replacement should be higher value than the lost trees. One way to do this is to make a developer mitigate lost trees by contributing off-site resources through open space preservation. Would apply if a developer cannot preserve resources on his site because of unusual circumstances. Compensate for the level of value that is being lost – acres, percent, ratios, etc. (e.g. mitigate at a 10:1 ratio). To be successful the mitigation requirement must be higher than the equivalent resources lost.
 - e. Staff reviewed the protection factors for resources by land use category;
 - i. Reaching the 50% resource preservation for MFR is a major challenge because the incentives are not strong enough. Commercial and industrial development is also hard, but

- developers can typically work around the resources that need to be protected.
- ii. Slope protection in new subdivisions is relatively easy to attain – but it is hard to attain in previously platted subdivisions where resources have not been calculated.
- f. Apply resources based on urban context and transect – Regional Plan would be a tool to identify appropriate locations for resource protection and open space.
 - g. Idea – if resources cannot be preserved on site, then the developer can buy x-times more land some where else in the City as open space for permanent resource preservation. Need to establish a mechanism to ensure the resources are protected in the long term future – e.g. with easements or other legal tools.
 - i. Need to ensure that the City will take the land dedicated to open space/tree resource preservation through a mitigation strategy and maintain it. In the alternative, use the Trust for Public Lands as a resource to take and hold the land as well as other volunteer conservancy organizations.
 - h. Include the option of Transfer of Development rights (TDRs).
 - i. Also possibly deal with mitigation issues for view corridors through TDRs. But it is hard to assign a value to “view sheds”. Consultants to review this notion and provide a recommendation. One idea would be to possibly regulate building height on ridge tops (i.e. provide a lower height limit). But this has possible Prop 207 implications unless incentives are offered and TDRs are in place.
 - j. Review of existing mitigation tools relative to Marriott project – the Planning and Zoning Commission asked for less trees than the LDC otherwise required to create a more natural setting. Asked for a more natural setting of the replacement trees – instead of 3:1 replacement ratio, City agreed to 1:1 and a more natural planting scheme with terraces, etc.
 - k. There needs to be a clear distinction between mitigation as a pre-development concept and compensation/penalties for the intentional/unintentional damage to trees and other resources.
 - l. Need heavier penalties for tree removal – this was a directive from the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council resulting from the Nackard/Marriott project.
 - m. Need better mitigation tools to provide more flexibility to create a better product. Promote negotiation up front – back up with heavier penalties at the back end. Reinforces the need for mitigation scales based on location, quantities, etc.
 - n. Steve Gatewood volunteered to provide sample codes from other communities. John Aber at Coconino County may also have some sample codes.
 - o. Mitigation concepts should also apply to wildlife corridors and grasslands.
 - p. Need to preserve blocks of trees in urban areas – don’t want to allow too much tree removal on commercial etc. lots.
 - q. Consensus –ponderosa pine trees do not have to be replaced everywhere. This concept should be based on the transect – replace ponderosas on periphery on lower transects and allow other species in the higher transects.

- H. Consensus that we should integrate the credits or counts for resources lost as a result of construction in utility easements. This would allow more flexibility for utility easements, drainage easements, sidewalks, etc.
- I. As a community we will need to have adequate information on providing a value to resources of all kinds. Is this dealt with in the Regional Plan?
 - a. Currently the LDC requires the use of a land surveyor to document trees, slopes, and floodplains.
 - b. If "quality" is a measure of value to a resource such as trees, a forester/arborist will also be needed.
 - c. Grasslands, ecosystems, wildlife corridors, etc. will also have to be mapped. This would be useful as a mitigation tool and to get community buy-in.
 - d. Also has implications to the Regional Plan and of course, all users of the zoning code.
- J. A hand out based on the signs that will be posted at the Flagstaff Arboretum providing useful information on forest health issues will be posted to the zoning update webpage.
- K. Solar and wind energy systems – impact on resources:
 - a. State statutes now limit cities from enacting zoning codes to restrict solar installations.
 - b. Protected tree resources may have an impact on the efficiency and operation of wind energy systems and solar systems.
 - c. Need to balance conflicting values for Green solutions with need to protect trees, preserve view sheds.
 - d. Establish a hierarchy – what is most important, based upon Federal, State and local mandates to ensure that there are no conflicts. This is also a values discussion – what does the community value and what are more important than others?
 - e. Wind energy needs to be dovetailed with view sheds so that accessory wind energy systems are not located within view sheds.
- L. Maintain naturally functioning eco-systems:
 - a. Also include grasslands as a resource that needs to be preserved as grasslands are a natural environment providing open space and support for wildlife. Grassland should be considered as equally as important as the preservation of trees.
 - b. Expand resources to include wildlife corridors and linkages, water, natural vegetation types. We would have to define standards for each type of vegetation – for example, oaks are smaller than 6" and need a different standard.
 - c. The expanded definition of resources (e.g. grasslands) is important in the PRAs where there is more open land than forest.
 - d. USFS has a list of what native plants should be in Flagstaff. This could be used as a guide or standard to rehabilitate an area that has been disturbed or overrun with exotic species. This is more of a Landscape Focus Group issue.
 - e. How does the current LDC apply resources to a site that does not have tree resources? The Landscape Surface Ratio (LSR) open space requirement applies if there are no tree/slope/floodplain resources on a site. Essentially this creates private open space within a new

- development. Therefore, using LSR or an equivalent, we can achieve the protection of other resources like grasslands and oaks.
- f. Currently a site is designed to match the code without necessarily thinking about how best to use the resources on a site – frequently results in poor site design and does not always result in the best resources being preserved. Would do better to evaluate the resources on a site and designing with them.
 - g. Ensure that a property owner may remove exotic trees from their property, (e.g. Siberian Elm and Russian Olive), which has the potential to create dense cover in unmaintained yards around the downtown area. Replacement trees such as native cottonwoods and box elder grow equally fast, are less invasive, and provide superior habitat value.
 - h. Manage development to provide appropriate connected habitats for wildlife to ensure it is protected.
 - i. Discussion on whether safeguards for oversight should be added where appropriate to ensure that what is required by the code translates to the ground – expectation of what is wanted is actually achieved. Staff response – oversight is already there through inspectors, planners, etc.
 - j. In terms of developing the new zoning code, the issue is really about testing of the new regulations compared to the existing one. And the need for simpler codes to achieve desired results. Code needs specific objectives – define what we want to achieve through resource preservation.
 - k. The desire to maintain naturally functioning ecosystems is especially important in outlying areas of the City and T1 through T3. More urban ecosystems/environments occur in T4 through T6. But ensure that in the T4 through T6 areas as many natural elements as possible are incorporated, especially with regard to drainage design – use naturally functioning and more pleasing open channels where feasible. Also, less tree resources will be preserved (actually inevitably all will be removed – See TND ordinance).
 - l. Find a simpler more effective approach than we have now - Balance forest resources with site capacity calculations.
 - m. Look at the **quality** of trees and other native vegetation and their **location** rather than the quantity of trees.
 - i. Preserve some small trees under (6") as well as large trees to create healthier ecosystems.
 - ii. Consolidate preserved trees as a cluster of trees so that those preserved on one parcel are contiguous with those on an adjacent parcel or open space areas – also use drainages.
 - iii. Ensure that credit is provided for trees disturbed or removed in drainage easements. Under the current rules, there is no incentive for creating a natural channel – allow flexibility in the design parameters to allow a more natural channel to flow around existing trees.
 - iv. Creates better wildlife habitat areas and the potential for greater diversity – connectivity of open space/habitat areas is important.
 - n. Preservation and protection during construction and post-construction is very important.

- i. Maintain the integrity of all natural resources (grasslands, trees, native vegetation, slopes, floodplains, etc.) during and after construction.
 - ii. Ensure that FFD and others are involved in decision making with CD staff.
- o. Concluding thoughts on this issue:
 - i. Need for consistency between city codes – this is an issue comprehensively addressed by the Process and Procedures Focus Group
 - ii. Important to emphasize the need for corridors – wildlife, resources, view sheds, walkability, ecological connectivity
 - iii. Slope resources are an important amenity to preserve.
- p. Need to educate about wildlife – but wildlife is not appropriate everywhere (transect based again!). Follow up with Sara Reif at Az. Game and Fish Department on sustainable wildlife corridors along washes and drainages and where in Flagstaff wildlife corridors are appropriate
- q. Coordinate with the Process and Procedures Focus Group – add a requirement that wildlife colonies (e.g. prairie dog colonies) should be mapped and included in the submittal requirements in Chapter 10 (Process and Procedures).

The Arizona Game and Fish Department has provided the following definitions for use in the new zoning code:

Sustainable wildlife corridor: A swath of land that facilitates wildlife survival and reproduction by allowing movement between habitat blocks even when the surrounding landscape is converted to other uses. This means that barriers within the corridor are mitigated, management activities are compatible with wildlife movement, and landowners in and around the corridor act as stewards. For some highly mobile species, like birds and bats, habitat “stepping stones” separated by barriers can serve as a corridor. However, for most species, a sustainable wildlife corridor must be free of barriers and connect large blocks of habitat. Barriers can include, but are not limited to, roads, railways, residential and commercial development, fences, and areas where the vegetation has been significantly altered or lost.

Travel mitigation area: An existing roadway and/or railway where wildlife habitat connectivity is threatened and/or public safety is threatened by vehicular collisions with wildlife. In travel mitigation areas, consultation with the Arizona Game and Fish Department will aid in siting and design of wildlife crossings across barriers. Attention should be paid to zoning and land uses in and around travel mitigation areas to ensure that wildlife crossings do not lead wildlife into urbanizing areas

- M. Preservation of natural stream-beds:
 - a. Rural flood plains are mapped by the City and are therefore protected.
 - b. Design guidelines encourage natural channels – but there is a need for real incentives to do this and make it easier to sell to a developer.
 - c. Rural floodplains (i.e. FEMA 100 year flood plain designation) are mapped in the LDC and are permanently protected. A LOMR (Letter of Map Revision) etc. cannot be used to redesignate a rural floodplain.

- d. However, urban floodplains and channels do not have the same level of protection and may be subject to change, and may be channelized, culverted, etc. The zoning code, based on policy direction from the Regional Plan, should establish based on character districts and/or the Transect where this may be appropriate.
 - e. Develop meaningful incentives to protect the channels that have not been mapped in the urban floodplains.
 - f. Recommend that any future under-grounding of natural streams should be prohibited.
- N. Balance the need for affordable housing and resource protection:
- a. Giving up resources is not the best way to provide an incentive for affordable housing. Rather develop more financial incentives and do not compromise trees and other resources. Current resource trade-offs do not go far enough to meaningful as they have only been sparsely used so far.
 - b. Consensus that we should not compromise tree resources in the name of affordable housing. The group agreed that the existing standards for housing incentives should be kept and that no further reductions should be proposed.

4.11.2 Concerns\Recommendations that Overlap with other Focus Groups

Landscape Focus Group:

- A. Plant Lists for public ROW and private property– will be discussed by the Landscape Focus Group.
- B. Landscape standards should include requirements for the replacement of native trees removed through construction or other means that should have been preserved on a site.
- C. The USFS has a list of what native plants should be in Flagstaff. This could be used as a guide or standard to rehabilitate an area that has been disturbed or overrun with exotic species.

Outdoor Lighting Focus Group:

- A. Flagstaff's "Dark Skies" is a resource and community value that must continue to be protected.

Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. The Design Guidelines offer incentives/flexible measures for view preservation. Strengthen and make them standards.

Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. Ensure there is no conflict between the zoning code and the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.
- B. Add a requirement that wildlife colonies (e.g. prairie dog colonies) should be mapped and included in the submittal requirements in Chapter 10 (Process and Procedures).

4.11.3 Recommendations to be addressed in a different way

City staff:

- A. Develop GIS software to assist with resources calculations:

- a. It was generally agreed that this was a developer's tool to facilitate easier calculation of resources using GIS.
- b. Intent is to develop a standard system/program for calculating resources and reporting on the calculations to be used by all applicants and their consultants. Would make it easier for staff and applicants.
- c. Use county data as it is accurate and accessible.
- d. It could include a link to Google Earth (but accuracy is an issue)
- e. USFS has soils and slope data that may be useful.
- f. Encourage the use of existing available tools in the interim until the final product is developed.

Regional Plan:

- A. At a broader policy level it is important to determine what the community values in terms of finding balance between conflicting values for "Green" solutions (solar, accessory wind energy systems, etc.) with the need to protect trees, preserve view sheds. Which are most important? Consider a priority system for natural resources.
- B. The impact of higher density development (e.g. TND) on resources was discussed and it was agreed that it is best resolved holistically at the level of the entire site (i.e. allow clearing in higher Transect zones and require preservation in lower Transect Zones). But it was also agreed that this issue should be considered at the Regional Plan level, i.e. at the level of the community/City as a whole, whereby we might develop policy to allow some sites/properties to be cleared more than others. An example would be industrial uses where tree preservation is less important than in a commercial or residential area.
- C. As a policy issue, it was suggested that the City should maintain land as open space and should accept land offered to it from developments where open space was not possible or not desired. Policy - encourage more public access to open space. The subdivision platting process also deals with this, i.e. creation of private open space within new projects.
- D. The community should have a discussion about the issue of day-lighting existing covered channels and if and where this may be appropriate.
- E. As a community we will need to have adequate information on providing a value to resources of all kinds. Is this dealt with in the Regional Plan?
 - a. Grasslands, ecosystems, wildlife corridors, etc. will also have to be mapped. This would be useful as a mitigation tool and to get community buy-in.
 - b. Also has implications to the Regional Plan.

Arizona Game and Fish Department:

- A. Wildlife education is not a zoning code issue – coordinate with Sara Reif at the Dept. Also, Russ Balda (NAU ornithologist) who is a local expert on birds in Flagstaff.

5.0 SUMMARY OF OVERLAPPING THEMES BETWEEN FOCUS GROUPS AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTARY FROM THE CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP – JULY 1st and 22nd MEETINGS:

A summary of the issues that overlap from one Focus Group to another is provided below. These issues have been copied from the previous pages in this report and are summarized in this format so that the numerous ideas suggested between the Focus Groups can be more easily studied. Many of these overlapping themes were discussed by the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) at their meetings on July 1st and July 22nd. Additional thoughts and ideas that resulted from the CAG's discussion in these meetings are also summarized below.

4.1 Building and Fire Code Focus Group

From the Housing Focus Group:

- A. Concern with the cost implications resulting from the strict application of Building and Fire Codes when buildings are converted to condominiums or other residential uses (e.g. homeless shelters).

4.2 Design Guidelines Focus Group

From the Downtown Focus Group:

- A. Design guidelines will be addressed for the Downtown through a form-based code and with the input of the Design Guidelines Focus Group.

From the Outdoor Lighting Focus Group:

- A. Add design options for how to accomplish appropriate architectural lighting in the design guidelines (up-lighting of buildings is no longer permitted).

From the Signage Focus Group:

- A. Architecture of a building including signs needs to be in conformance with the design traditions of Flagstaff ... consider regulating the colors of buildings. This is one way to deal with corporate sign colors.
- B. Recommendation that non single-family residential buildings (i.e. commercial, multi-family, etc.) should be required to receive permit approval for a repaint.

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. The Design Guidelines offer incentives/flexible measures for view preservation. Strengthen and make them standards.

4.3 Downtown Focus Group

From the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group:

- A. While mixed use in Downtown Flagstaff is important and necessary, be cognizant of the concern for adding density and creating more traffic and parking issues.

4.4 Economic Development Focus Group

From the Process and Procedures Focus Group:

- A. The economics of Flagstaff can drive developers away. Possibly allow for flexibility in requirements to save on costs (i.e. landscaping). But this may also diminish predictability.

- B. The Economic Development Focus Group also suggested that as much as possible the number of conditional uses in zoning districts should be reduced.

4.5 Housing Focus Group

From the Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. Design guidelines need to apply uniformly to all projects, and there should be no exceptions to deal with housing affordability.

From the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group:

- A. Discuss and if possible address the vacancy issues associated with second home owners and the issue of rentals in neighborhoods when they overwhelm the neighborhood.

4.6 Landscaping Focus Group

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. Plant Lists for public ROW and private property– will be discussed by the Landscape Focus Group.
- B. Landscape standards should include requirements for the replacement of native trees removed through construction or other means that should have been preserved on a site.
- C. The USFS has a list of what native plants should be in Flagstaff. This could be used as a guide or standard to rehabilitate an area that has been disturbed or overrun with exotic species.

4.7 Neighborhood Planning Focus Group

From the Design Guidelines Focus Group (through the CAG):

- A. It is important to coordinate neighborhood planning with design guidelines, especially with regard to Level I (Neighborhood Planning) and a future form-based code.

From the Housing Focus Group:

- A. The integration of new development into existing neighborhoods in an appropriate manner based on scale, character, etc. is critically important and was also discussed by the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group.
- B. The provision of appropriate housing for students especially in places like Southside is important while balancing the needs of permanent residents in those areas. NAU is a key player in this discussion and must be involved.

4.8 Outdoor Lighting Focus Group

From the Signage Focus Group:

- A. LED signs and lights are louvered to provide sun-shading of the sign face. Ensure this is also addressed in the outdoor Lighting section of the new zoning code.
- B. Coordinate recommendations on LED lights used for lighting and signage with the Outdoor Lighting Focus Group.

- C. Recommendation that sign backgrounds should be controlled by light output rather than color.
- D. Recommendation that externally illuminated sign lighting should be figured into the total lumen count for a property. Internally illuminated signs would remain exempt.

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. Flagstaff's "Dark Skies" is a resource and community value that must continue to be protected.

4.9 Process and Procedures Focus Group

From the Building/Fire Code Focus Group:

- A. As noted in A. above, it is recommended that the new zoning code must include "pointers" or references to applicable sections of other codes such as the Wildland Urban Interface Code, International Building Code and International Fire Codes.
- B. As noted in B. above, emphasize the need for pre-application meetings and establish minimum requirements for pre-application reviews.
- C. Staff comments should be recorded on a single plan set that is routed from one section or staff person to another (digitally or manually, i.e. hand written comments).

From the Design Guidelines Focus Group:

- A. Codify a revised pre-application meeting process either into the new code or into staff procedures.
- B. Important to establish an efficient/quick design review process for the City.
 - a. The submittal requirements for new projects and the approval process needs to be refined to address the submittal needs specific to each stage of the review and approval process.
 - b. Find other ways to get clients/developers to talk to the City Architect in a pre-design meeting before a submittal is made (incorporate into new zoning code).
 - c. Establish a two-step or three-step process with specific submittal needs and requirements for each step of the process - pre-application; conceptual review; final review.
- C. It is really important to have design professionals on a new development project coordinate their ideas and their plans. Better communication is essential to eliminate conflicts on the plan sets.
- D. In the event of a disagreement between a developer/citizen and staff on a design issue associated with the application of the design guidelines, there is recourse by appeal to the Planning and Zoning Commission. But this does need to be better articulated in the zoning code.
- E. Consider passive solar design when thinking about tree resources, and for example, allow for the removal of trees on the south side of a building but protect and preserve trees on the north and west side of a building. Consider

developing flexible measures to address conflicts between design issues and resource preservation.

- F. A site analysis diagram needs to be a minimal submittal requirement for all new projects – assess solar orientation, etc.

From the Economic Development Focus Group:

- A. The Code needs to address the issue of “setting rules that are predictable and non-subjective” and a “speedier review” of new developments. Ensure that Flagstaff is seen as predictable, and that code interpretation is consistent. Allow for investment backed expectations in a reasonable period of time.
- B. Agreement that there is a need to reduce the number of CUPs where possible to enable more uses to be permitted by right in conventional zoning districts. However, there needs to be a balance as to not remove them completely where they are appropriate to ensure that neighboring properties are notified of the CUP application.
- C. Similarly, there is a perception that conditional zoning is an impediment to new development as there are too many hurdles. Zoning conditioned on site plan review and approval often puts off developers.
- D. Need to develop a list of incentives to ensure that the form-based code is applied (general concern that it will be voluntary and not mandatory); e.g. an accelerated review process and placement of a project on the consent agenda at DRB. Time is a huge incentive, so the incentives must be so “compelling and tasty” that the form-based code will be applied. Also apply this logic to subdivision platting – go directly to preliminary plat without a conceptual plat review under certain (to be established) circumstances.

From the Housing Focus Group:

- A. Establish easier processing and approval procedures for the review of applications for Temporary Use Permits for emergency housing.
- B. The new zoning code must have enough flexibility to allow a new development to be economical – ensure that the rules are not too hard such that a developer walks away and does not pursue development. Ample and effective affordable housing incentives need to remain.

From the Signage Focus Group:

- A. When a section of the LDC is updated, the ordinance number and adoption date for the specific code section is listed; but it requires researching each portion to find out what the change was. It was suggested that amendments to portions of the Zoning Code needed to be summarized in a specific location and then could be footnoted so that the details of each amendment could be easily understood.
- B. Sign design and placement in new development projects needs to be addressed as soon as possible in the design/review phase of the project because experience has shown that architects do not give enough consideration to this issue and often problems arise late in the project’s review that make them harder to resolve. Conceptual sign placement and perhaps even conceptual sign design needs to be added to the submittal checklists.

- C. A new fee schedule for sign permits is needed.
- D. Sign placement needs to be better coordinated with landscape plans and tree resources preserved on a site - need for a composite site plan.

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. Ensure there is no conflict between the zoning code and the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.
- B. Add a requirement that wildlife colonies (e.g. prairie dog colonies) should be mapped and included in the submittal requirements in Chapter 10 (Process and Procedures).

4.10 Signage Focus Group

From the Outdoor Lighting Focus Group:

- A. Note that internally illuminated signs should be exempt from lumen calculations; however, externally illuminated signs proposed in a new development must count toward the overall lumen count.
- B. Coordinate recommendations on LED lights used for lighting and signage with the Signage Focus Group.

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. Ensure that the placement of signs is not in conflict with other standards for the preservation of trees and the placement of landscaping.

4.11 Trees and Resources Focus Group

From the Housing Focus Group:

- A. Consensus that there was a need for new techniques for resource protection – simpler and more effective, and that affordable housing incentives needed to remain.

Other CAG Recommendations:

- A. Document the history of the zoning code: Find a way to document the history of the zoning code and in particular the provisions within the new zoning code. This would allow a lay reader or someone new to the community to understand the philosophy and intent behind a regulation – documentation of oral history of the code.
 - a. Develop an “interpretive manual” for the new zoning code, similar to the interpretive manuals adopted with the IBC.
 - b. An introductory narrative at the beginning of the new zoning code may also suffice to achieve this at a broader level.
 - c. Suggestion to format the manual as a series of bullets to keep it simple and to help the reader
 - d. The manual should include a history of decision making and why certain things are in the code (a philosophical synopsis), and an explanation of the regulations (user guide).
- B. Recommendations on the role/importance of a pre-application meeting:
 - a. Discussed at length by the Design Guidelines Focus Group and the Process and Procedures Focus Group, and it was emphasized again at the CAG meeting.

- b. A pre-application meeting is an incentive in the eventual outcome of the project. City staff will document the result of the pre-application meeting.
- c. City already has a voluntary pre-application requirement – no fee. It’s an opportunity for a developer to meet with City staff to brainstorm and share needs, and for both parties to understand and the City’s desires for the project. Comments are not binding ... yet the pre-application meeting helps to protect the applicant as well as the City. Revise the current process to make it a mandatory meeting.
- d. Suggestion -- make the need for a pre-application meeting scalable to the size of the project. Need to balance a desire for the pre-application meeting with the costs associated with preparing for the meeting. Should not be significant though as the intent of this pre-application meeting is that it is a very conceptual discussion. Intent is for staff to inform a client of what he can do, rather than what he cannot do, i.e. to be more proactive.
- e. Ensure there is better connectivity between the desires of the City and the economic impact to development from application of such things as the design guidelines, etc.
- f. Reinforce incentives in the design guidelines to make them more useable.
- g. It was noted that the subjectivity of the current LDC is the cause of the need for so many meetings and the lack of consensus on what is possible – with a more predictable code, there will be better understanding by all users. Code must also offer options and variety, i.e. promote flexibility.
- h. Pre-application meeting as the staff have already instituted is essential to discuss a preliminary site. It’s an opportunity for an applicant to work with staff to design the project in a “mini-charrette format”. Simple conceptual site plan and tracing paper on which ideas can be expressed. The meetings need to be informal and not binding. Intent is to build consensus and understanding. The Single Point of Contact will ensure consistency.
- i. It is important that all suggestions are honored by both staff and the applicant.
- j. There is value in increasing the number of meetings with staff to enhance understanding of needs and desires from both staff and developers.

6.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FORWARDED TO OTHER GROUPS/INDIVIDUALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

A summary of the issues discussed by each of the Focus Groups that are not necessarily directly related to the zoning code rewrite project is provided below. Many of these ideas have great value, and will be forward to City staff, the Regional Plan team, and other organizations and groups in the hope that they will be useful. These issues and ideas have been copied from the previous pages in this report and are been summarized in this format so that they can be more easily understood.

Policy Issues for Consideration in the Regional Plan:

From the Downtown Focus Group:

- A. In a few years when the Downtown parking garages are completed, redevelopment is likely under a form-based code in the blocks closest to the garages. The Downtown Focus Group recommended that taller buildings should be permitted close to the parking garages on the perimeter of the Downtown and that in the heart of Downtown itself new buildings should be no taller than the existing tallest buildings. They also thereby acknowledged that the Downtown core may not be subject to much redevelopment, and that it should be kept as it is under a form-based code.

From the Economic Development Focus Group:

- A. Industrial Land – The supply of industrial land needs to be increased as there has been significant erosion of Industrial Land in Flagstaff. In addition, the land which is available for potential industrial development is viewed as undesirable primarily because the parcels are too small.
- B. Forward Scott Neuman’s ideas on home based businesses and social networking provided to the Economic Development Focus Group to the Regional Planning team as these could be incorporated as policy in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Entrepreneurship – how can one neighborhood help itself and the community as a whole? Micro-based businesses are appropriate within a neighborhood. A question that should be considered at a broader policy level is - does a particular neighborhood want to brand itself to bring back some form of business?
 - b. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County’s program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own.
- C. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County’s program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own
- D. Foster economic development in Flagstaff by creating policies that are a model for economic success.
 - a. Connect economic development to Smart Growth
 - b. Focus on more than just retail economic growth; e.g. promote and expand rural health, and promote NAU and CCC (research and new product development) to generate new jobs.

From the Housing Focus Group:

- A. The new zoning code must reflect community desires as stated in the Regional Plan and the update to the Regional Plan. It should include for example, housing options such as mixed-use development, location of housing relative to transit, etc.
- B. Integration of affordable housing policy - Housing policy must be established in the Regional Plan and implemented through the zoning code. Policy must not be established in the zoning code, but implementation tools in the zoning code may refer to the Regional Plan policy.
- C. Housing Affordability and Economic Development Policy - AMI and related issues are policy and should not be included in the zoning code.
- D. Encourage more owner occupied homes in areas of the City where rentals predominate.
- E. The Housing element of the Regional Plan should address the provision of opportunities for that interval step where someone leaves a shelter and transitions into other housing. It should set policy for increased flexibility to allow for the conversion of an existing home as transitional housing.
- F. Conversion of McMansions to other building types to accommodate multiple families:
 - a. This is an important issue that needs to first be resolved as a policy matter in the Regional Plan. If accepted and policies are put in place, then the zoning code would deal with it and provide the mechanism for allowing other housing types in typical single-family residential structures. Note that this would happen mostly in SFR districts.
 - b. This idea can also be effectively dealt with where a form-based code is applied.
- G. Replacement of manufactured housing:
 - a. There is a lack of incentives for the clean-up of old manufactured homes. The Regional Plan should develop policy and strategies for the replacement of nonconforming mobile homes to allow replacement where possible.
 - b. Three policy issues resulted from the conversation on manufactured homes;
 - i. There is a need for a policy to address replacement of a deteriorating manufactured home structure (Housing Policy)
 - ii. Develop a policy and implementation strategies that would promote more flexibility to allow replacement of manufactured homes in the areas where they would otherwise be nonconforming
 - iii. Need an overall review of where manufactured homes are allowed in the City.
- H. As a policy matter it is important to know what the community's desires are on the issue of trying to deter large structures on large lots and the idea of adjusting lot coverage standards to reduce the size of homes.
- I. Regional Plan team should discuss a potential policy regarding a limitation on the development of large lot large single-family homes on the periphery of the

City as they are promoting sprawl. But large lot development in appropriate mixed-use projects like Juniper Point also increases the potential for funding more affordable housing options in the project (as allowed in TNDs and the Planned Affordable Option). Flexibility within a project can be achieved by a form-based code (TND).

- J. The Regional Plan must include policy statements that support the limitations on gated communities as stated in the LDC.
- K. At a policy level, the City should continue to require minimum and maximum densities, and should explore keeping the minimum 7-acre densities in areas other than PRAs (PRAs will be going away in the updated Regional Plan).
- L. The provision of appropriate housing for students especially in places like Southside is important while balancing the needs of permanent residents in those areas. NAU is a key player in this discussion and must be involved.

From the Landscaping Focus Group:

- A. Develop policies to support communal water collection to support community gardens with garden plots that can be leased to residents. Community gardens provide another way of dealing with local food supply issues. Integrate the idea of gardens and edible landscaping into the schools as well – set aside areas of schools for growing food.
- B. Potable water should not be used for irrigating landscapes. Therefore, as an active policy effort the City should pursue more aggressive plans to extend reclaim water service. Until that happens, potable water may be used, but should be used judiciously.

From the Neighborhood Planning Focus Group:

- A. Address the issue of planning for neighborhood preservation and integrity and building a sense of community within neighborhoods.
- B. Forward Scott Neuman's ideas on home based businesses and social networking provided to the Economic Development Focus Group to the Regional Planning team as these could be incorporated as policy in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Entrepreneurship – how can one neighborhood help itself and the community as a whole? Micro-based businesses are appropriate within a neighborhood. A question that should be considered at a broader policy level is - does a particular neighborhood want to brand itself to bring back some form of business?
 - b. There is a strong social orientation too, as demonstrated by the County's program for home-based businesses. Children of home based businesses often start their own.
- C. Reinforce the policy already in the Regional Plan that we need to design our communities with tools such as TND and form-based codes as a mixed use walkable compact neighborhood to minimize the need for cars.
- D. Regional Plan must identify areas for future change from single-use subdivisions to mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods by including participation of the residents using a charrette and other tools.

- E. Regional plan needs to address the link between transit corridors and areas appropriate for densification in neighborhoods.
- F. Regional Plan policy is an appropriate venue for dealing with change at the community level. Change is inevitable – need to plan for change to either hold onto existing community values and resist change, or to embrace it and allow something else. The challenge is to enhance or maintain the existing character of a neighborhood while acknowledging change.
- G. There is a strong need for a stronger NAU/Southside partnership with more engagement between both sides. This is important because NAU has plans to expand by 4,500 new students who will need accommodations. 1,000 students will be housed on campus in new housing – but we will need to find an est. 3,500 new housing units in areas near NAU so that we don't encourage more driving. What is appropriate density in areas near NAU? NAU must communicate with the City and neighborhoods -- should be dealt with in Regional Plan and other policy documents in the City.
- H. How to keep students here and to build a long lasting sense of community? This is hard to achieve but should be discussed in the Regional Plan.
 - a. Expanded internship programs
 - b. Requires a coordinated effort from all sectors of the community
 - c. Reinforce outdoor activities and hobbies (personal interests) as a way of keeping students here
 - d. Deal with housing cost issue – find a mechanism for assisting students to purchase a home, rather than them renting a home as an incentive to stay.

From the Trees/Resources Focus Group:

- A. At a broader policy level it is important to determine what the community values in terms of finding balance between conflicting values for Green solutions (solar, accessory wind energy systems, etc.) with the need to protect trees, preserve view sheds. Which are most important? Consider a priority system for natural resources.
- B. The impact of higher density development (e.g. TND) on resources was discussed and it was agreed that it is best resolved holistically at the level of the entire site (i.e. allow clearing in higher Transect zones and require preservation in lower Transect Zones). But it was also agreed that this issue should be considered at the Regional Plan level, i.e. at the level of the community/City as a whole, whereby we might develop policy to allow some sites/properties to be cleared more than others. An example would be industrial uses where tree preservation is less important than in a commercial or residential area.
- C. As a policy issue, it was suggested that the City should maintain land as open space and should accept land offered to it from developments where open space was not possible or not desired. Policy - encourage more public access to open space. The subdivision platting process also deals with this, i.e. creation of private open space within new projects.
- D. The community should have a discussion about the issue of day-lighting existing covered channels and if and where this may be appropriate.

- E. As a community we will need to have adequate information on providing a value to resources of all kinds. Is this dealt with in the Regional Plan?
 - a. Grasslands, ecosystems, wildlife corridors, etc. will also have to be mapped. This would be useful as a mitigation tool and to get community buy-in.
 - b. Also has implications to the Regional Plan.

Historic Preservation Commission:

- A. The Downtown Focus Group recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission with advice from the planning consultants would make a recommendation whether the existing Downtown historic district can be replaced by a form-based code.

City Staff:

- A. The Design Guidelines and Housing Focus Groups suggested that the engineering standards be revised based on the Transect.
- B. The Housing Focus Group also suggested that consideration be given to allowing a lower engineering standard that is not as expensive for most housing projects (provided that safety, long term durability, maintenance, etc. is not compromised).
- C. City Code Amendments – The Economic Development Focus Group suggested that Flagstaff needs to find a way to support local business, and should consider a Local Preference Law that if legal would be passed by the City Council to become a part of the City Code.
- D. The Economic Development Focus Group also suggested that Ms. Frawley's model that she has created for measuring whether or not a project meets the Regional Plan's goals and objectives should be reviewed by City staff for possible inclusion into the review process for new projects.
- E. The Landscape Focus Group suggested the need for more/alternative restrictions on water use for landscaping is not the purview of the zoning code and is better addressed in the Utility Division's policies and procedures. Continue and expand education on water conservation in the community
- F. Similarly, the issue of enforcement of water policy (by for example, expanding the number of volunteers) should be left to the Utilities Division.
- G. City staff should strive to limit pesticide/fertilizer and other chemical use because of its affect on stormwater runoff and drainage channels.
- H. Control of noxious weeds and the need for education on this issue does not need to be addressed in the zoning code.
- I. Explore the possibility of building inspectors doing more post construction landscape review/inspection to assist the PDS staff who are limited in resources.
- J. Consider developing a check list – soil depth, plant species, irrigation, etc. to help with on-site review of landscaping before the installation is approved. Also check the holes before planting to ensure that the plants will survive.

- K. City staff needs to employ better enforcement to require replacement of landscaping when it dies.
- L. Consider using a form or spreadsheet based submittal documentation. For example, those used for LEED certification credits. This would make the documentation process more consistent and well defined for the designer, thus making it more "user friendly". It would also save time for both designers and City reviewers as calculation methodologies would be consistent.
- M. Additional project post-adoption of the new zoning code – develop a users guide/pattern book for landscaping to help promote better landscape practices in Flagstaff, especially if a landscape architect is not hired. It should be more than just a list of recommended plants. Lots of photos and illustrations to capture the essence and character of Flagstaff. Take photos of winning designs from the Xeriscape Council annual competitions. Build from existing pamphlets on the subject, and study what Phoenix and Tucson have done. Use interns to complete the project or tap into a gardening group in town (Master Gardeners) to get this completed.
- N. City should study urban wildlife habitats and existing corridors and landscape plans should be reviewed with some attention paid to enhancing. For example, future development on the Southside along the current Rio de Flag should be required to preserve and enhance that corridor with appropriate plants that improve the wildlife habitat.
- O. The Neighborhood Planning Focus Group recommended that in neighborhoods, the width of existing streets should be reduced, curbs gutters should be eliminated, and shoulders constructed with gravel/rock to help provide more on-street parking to deal with the current problem of vehicles being parked in front setback areas. This would help with stormwater issues as well – more percolation and less runoff.
- P. The Outdoor Lighting Focus Group suggested that the lighting inventory of all existing outdoor light fixtures in the City needed to be updated and maintained.
- Q. Also, a program to further education about appropriate light fixtures in Flagstaff needed to be developed/expanded. City staff to work with Dark Skies Coalition.
 - a. Fixture availability – residential and commercial
 - b. Use City resources for education on outdoor lighting – web page, CityScape, etc.
 - c. Develop additional hand out materials.
- R. Encourage local merchants to promote the sale of the correct/most appropriate outdoor light fixtures in Flagstaff (Dark Sky compliance stickers, etc.).
- S. Continue with pro-active education reinforcing the pay back in energy efficiency resulting from eliminating old lights and adding new compliant lights. Work with the Dark Skies Coalition – but resources are an issue (money and volunteer time). Also City and APS could work together on an incentive program.

- T. At some point in the future, staff should entertain the idea of an amendment to the City's IGA with HUD (or approve a new one if it does not exist) to override the Federal and State regulations that only allow for unshielded "jelly jar" light fixtures on manufactured homes.
- U. GIS Section should add the astronomical zones as a GIS layer.
- V. The Process and Procedures Focus Group discussed the issue of "better relationships" and the need for coordinated and consistent standards of review.
 - a. There has been improvement in the DRB process, but it appears that not all Sections are still on the "team" and continue to be too individual in projecting their needs.
 - b. Suggestion that it would be beneficial to require all Sections to record their comments on a single set of plans.
 - c. The City's single-point-of-contact (SPOC) plays an essential role in solving conflicting comments and standards.
 - d. It is equally important to have a SPOC representing the project on the development side.
 - e. Agreement that a process needs to be established with clear rules and expectations for who does what and, if there is a change in staff, there needs to be a meeting to hand off knowledge and background of the project.
- W. Suggestion on the need for revised processes and procedures that allow for better communication between staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the City Council (but no specific recommendations were offered).
- X. Need for better coordination of staff comments;
 - a. For example, separate code related comments from suggestions.
 - b. SPOC (Single Point of Contact) has really helped.
 - c. Reinforced the need for a SPOC (project representative) on the developer's side as well.
- Y. Front counter staff – need for more availability of planners. City should review internal process and procedures, and to provide more training for accuracy and consistency.
- Z. Suggestion that City staff should hold periodic reviews to ensure that processes meet objectives and expectations.
- AA. Implement the Concerned Citizens of Flagstaff's recommendations for how a public meeting should be structured, some of which have been adopted by the City Council;
 - a. Suggestion that City staff speak at the beginning of an item of review, and at the end to make final comments and clarifications as necessary.
 - b. Discussion that the suggested 30 minute time limit for developers to speak/present to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council is too restrictive, especially on large projects when there has been so much time and money allocated to the project.
 - c. Explore Coconino County's process that allows for a work session prior to Planning and Zoning Commission and Council meetings. Agreement that a work session should be added prior to action by the Council and

- Planning and Zoning Commission for large projects even though this may add additional time.
- d. Support for the use of site visits by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council as they are helpful in obtaining additional project information prior to making a decision.
- BB. Deal with the issue of Termination of Nonconforming Use via conditional use permit.
- CC. Discussion on the challenge of balancing the economic impacts on development costs in order to maintain community values (preserving trees and/or requiring better looking buildings).
- DD. Also considered were timelines and required studies (i.e. traffic impact analyses & utility analyses). It is important to note that the City has no role in an economic impact analysis of a potential development.
- EE. The signage Focus Group had the following recommendations for City staff:
- a. Processing of sign permit applications in a timely manner
 - b. Consistent interpretations
 - c. Consistent and effective enforcement.
- FF. The Trees/Resources Focus Group noted that the City staff needed to develop GIS software to assist with resources calculations:
- a. It was generally agreed that this was a developer's tool to facilitate easier calculation of resources using GIS.
 - b. Intent is to develop a standard system/program for calculating resources and reporting on the calculations to be used by all applicants and their consultants. Would make it easier for staff and applicants.
 - c. Use county data as it is accurate and accessible
 - d. It could include a link to Google Earth (but accuracy is an issue)
 - e. USFS has soils and slope data that may be useful
 - f. Encourage the use of existing available tools in the interim until the final product is developed.

Property Maintenance Ordinance:

- A. The PMO will be a separate ordinance that may be adopted into the City Code by the City Council after the zoning code rewrite project is completed.
- B. A noted concern with the PMO from the Housing Focus Group was the possible unintended effect it may have to cause gentrification and the resultant displacement of people from their neighborhoods who can no longer afford to live there.
- C. The Neighborhood Planning Focus Group noted that the Property Maintenance Ordinance needed to address "junk" stored in yards and that dilapidated homes need to be repaired as a way to reinforce true community character – broken homes lower property values and create the wrong image for a neighborhood.

Downtown Management Plan/Downtown Manager:

- A. The Downtown Focus Group discussed the issue of concentration and variety of stores in the Downtown with the idea of establishing a master tenancing plan. They acknowledged this was best addressed by the Downtown Manager and property owners.
- B. Signage and way finding systems for Downtown (comprehensively addressed in the Downtown Management Plan).

Infill Policy:

- A. The Housing Focus Group noted that the City's draft infill incentives policy should be finalized – review the policy based on community desires and needs. This policy will encourage urban infill, and as originally drafted would have allowed financial incentives for impact fees waivers as authorized under State statute. But now because the City's impact fees are so small, this incentive is not as effective. The State statute provides a guideline for incentives and there six criteria that must be considered in including a neighborhood in an Infill Policy.
- B. Infill policy to include affordable housing and to make sure that there is appropriate integration of policies when more than one may apply.
- C. Infill policy needs to be reviewed in areas where a form-based code will be applied, especially for example in the Southside neighborhood.
- D. The infill incentives policy would be adopted separately like the housing incentives policy – would not be in the Regional Plan.

Other:

- A. From the Housing Focus Group came the idea of promoting healthy networking within the community of agencies with a common desire and goal to deal with the unproductive homeless in Flagstaff.

7.0 CONCLUSION:

The recommendations of all the Focus Groups as compiled in this report as well as the additional ideas and observations from the Citizens Advisory Group on overlapping themes between Focus Groups will be forwarded to the planning consultants and City staff.

These recommendations are profoundly important as they represent the ideas, suggestions and opinions of the numerous citizens who volunteered their time to attend meetings and discuss ideas for improving the zoning code for the City. They will be therefore considered very seriously as staff and the planning consultants work to draft a new and improved zoning code for the City.

To those citizens and City staff members who attended the many meetings necessary to provide the recommendations and ideas contained in this report, a sincere "*Thank you*" to you all!

8.0 ATTACHMENTS:

- Master Calendar for all Focus Groups – May through August, 2009
- Responses to interviews conducted by Ms. Alex Frawley, (Economic Development Focus Group)
- Results of survey of the development review times for other Arizona cities, (Process and Procedures Focus Group).