



# City of Rowlett

## Meeting Minutes

### City Council

### Planning and Zoning Commission

4000 Main Street  
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Thursday, August 9, 2011

5:30 P.M.

Rowlett Community Centre – 5300 Main St

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As authorized by Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, this meeting may be convened into closed Executive Session for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the City Attorney on any agenda item herein.

The City of Rowlett reserves the right to reconvene, recess or realign the Regular Session or called Executive Session or order of business at any time prior to adjournment.

**Council Present:** Mayor Gottel, Mayor Pro Tem Phillips, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Kilgore, Councilmember Pankratz, Councilmember, Davis Councilmember Miller and Councilmember Gallops

**Council Absent:**

**Commission Present:** Chairman Sheffield, Vice-Chairman Landry, Commissioner Crawley, Commissioner Charles, Commissioner Peebles, Commissioner Cigainero, Alternate Commissioner Kittrell

**Commission Absent:** Commissioner Alexander

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

##### 1A. City Council

Mayor Gottel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

##### 1B. Planning and Zoning Commission

Chairman Sheffield called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

#### 2. WORK SESSION ITEM

- 2A.** The consultant team led by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, LP (HOK) will provide the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission with an update and request a general consensus regarding the Realize Rowlett 2020 visioning process.

Erin Jones, Planning Manager gave a brief introduction of the Realize Rowlett 2020 project. She also spoke regarding the next steps in the visioning process.

Mark Bowers, HOK Project Manager, stated the purpose of the session was to provide:

- A reality check outlining key issues
- A draft framework plan overview
- A detailed discussion of each opportunity area
- An analysis of return on investment

Regarding the reality check and key issues, Mr. Bowers spoke about the following:

- Developable Area
- Market for development types
- Demographics
- Availability of utilities/infrastructure
- Site access issues
- Order of magnitude costs for roads/infrastructure

Anne Ricker, Ricker|Cunningham, spoke regarding the trade area and market realities. She reviewed the process for finding a city's trade area and how Rowlett's Trade Area compared to surrounding cities. Ms. Ricker explained how the city's higher than average family-oriented households and high homeownership figures affected the number of rental units despite the increasing demand. She stated that though Rowlett's demographics reflect a relatively affluent and highly-educated population, it was not yet enough to support high-end retailers. She stated that residents are currently "aging in place" both as a City and within the Trade Area and with the amenities available, such as the hospital and multiple medical offices, the number of aging residents is expected to grow and the demand for lifestyle products meeting the needs and choices of the older population will increase. Ms. Ricker explained that though Rowlett is surrounded by several suburban alternatives residential expansion should occur with the future transit improvements, waterfront amenities, a healthy quality of life, and policies and financing committing to improvement. She stated that demand for residential product types over the next ten years are forecasted to exceed 15,600 ownership units both attached and detached and approximately 6,550 rental units. She noted that along the Northshore area, distribution and warehousing operators will be interested in the improved transportation access however there is a low percentage of blue collar residents to provide employees. Ms. Ricker provided that Rowlett's employment-based development remains comparatively modest in size and building class, however it will grow as the housing inventory expands and diversifies, regional access is improved, and the City better advertises natural amenities. She noted that small businesses could find desirable office space within future infill developments and larger tracts of land would hold appeal for business park developments all contributing to a forecasted twenty four million square feet of employment development space growth. She stated that growth in the City's day and nighttime populations coupled with the enhanced regional transportation infrastructure and development of regionally recognized "commercial addresses" would better position Rowlett to capture an increasing share of the commercial growth and fill ongoing voids. She named garden equipment, sports, hobby, book and music as a few examples of existing voids. Mr. Bowers spoke regarding the draft framework plan. He stated that based on community input, market realities and guiding principles in many instances the community vision was not appropriate throughout the entire area and therefore each of the strategic opportunity areas was subdivided to show a vision specifically reflective of investment and prevailing constraints. He also noted some ideas that had been brought forth to allow better use of the City's natural amenities such as the possibility for water taxis and the need for synergy between areas.

Mr. Bowers introduced the first area as C-1 referenced as Lakeside Living with some of the key points of the area being that it is located with frontage along Lake Ray Hubbard with existing infrastructure and utilities but there was a possible need for roadway upgrades depending on density.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area C-1/Lakeside Living:

- Community within an community
- Base of little to no maintenance living
- Non-vehicular pathways, with golf carts or walking as primary mode of transportation
- Commercial located along water's edge accessible by boat
- Essential elements needed would be the right master developer and public access to the waterfront

A short video of an existing community in Florida with matching qualities of the vision was played.

Commissioner Peebles inquired where the data was acquired to determine demand and Ms. Ricker responded that she quantified how many people were in each price point and age group and used demographics and psychographics to determine at what point by need or choice a person moves into a category. Commissioner Peebles expressed concerns about the lack of developable acreage to form an entire community within the community and Ms. Ricker responded that it would be feasible to accomplish the vision even in the limited space and that through design the area could be easily recognized upon entry as the envisioned community and would serve as a nice transition near the surrounding single family neighborhoods. Chairman Sheffield stated that he felt that the use of single family detached homes should not be allowed in this area to preserve the intent of the vision. Ms. Ricker responded that with each area the consultant group had compiled a chart showing what uses were supported by the market, desired by the community and recommended by the consultants to aid in the final stages of the visioning process. Mayor Gottel inquired how the City would be able to sell the vision to the surrounding neighborhoods and to landowners and developers in order to build and bring the vision to life so that the property is not split and Ms. Ricker answered that it should be considered as a master planned community and by setting design standards and holding to the vision developers will work with those standards and implementation will progress. She noted that the highly amenitized master planned community fits well with all zoning outside of industrial and should be an easy sell to both developers and the surrounding single family detached neighborhoods. Comments were made about possibly removing the single family detached use from the area entirely to discourage overuse. Chairman Sheffield inquired as to what constitutes a high-end retailer and why Rowlett would not draw them and Ms. Ricker responded that retailers such as Anne Taylor would be considered as high end and though some of Rowlett's demographics would appeal to those retailers, there are a number of figures that were considered when determining new locations and Rowlett may have the incomes but not enough rooftops or drive by potential. Councilmember Pankratz commented on the best way to set the zoning for the area whether to use Planned Developments or Form Based Codes or possibly another method and spoke about the synergy of the vision and how it would be of great benefit to singles and older generation residents.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area C-2/Family Life:

- Continue the existing pattern of development in the area
- Limits on capacity of infrastructure
- Target a move-up market for residents desiring an executive lifestyle, significant acreage, and accessibility to regional amenities and activity centers
- Essential elements needed would be plans feasible relative to capacity of existing infrastructure

Chairman Sheffield spoke about this not being a near term project due to the infrastructure needs and Ms. Ricker agreed.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area D-1/Healthy Living:

- Neighborhood for people whose focus is on health and wellness
- Investment will reflect healthy lifestyle- walkability, access to recreational amenities, organic food choices, etc.
- Should not be stripped out retail
- Essential elements needed would be trolley or shuttle system allow for non-vehicular access, uniform design standards tailored to the specific area, and zoning encouraging appropriate balance of office, residential and retail uses

Commissioner Crawley inquired if the lack of developable acreage posed a significant hindrance and Ms. Ricker responded that it would be a challenge but the continued theme along the corridor would serve as an extension to the area. Commissioner Crawley spoke about the challenge that SH 66/Lakeview Parkway imposed on the walkability aspect of the vision. Linda Humble, City Manager spoke about healthcare jobs along Lakeview Parkway being the number one economic development opportunity within the City and approximately 25% of the jobs created in the past year have been along the SH 66 corridor. Commissioner Crawley noted that it would be more a hindrance to the residential aspect and Councilmember Gallops suggested the possibility of incorporating methods of crossing the highway into development. Mr. Bowers spoke about the possibility of commercial sites redeveloping.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area B-2/Woodside Living:

- Neighborhood with a mix of uses at a range of densities and limited commercial
- Residential product types supported by public spaces
- Transition in density from the highest at its core to the lowest at its edge
- Essential elements needed would be improvements to Muddy Branch necessary to leverage private investment, financing for infrastructure improvements, design guidelines and zoning

Councilmember Carl Pankratz inquired about the possibilities for recreational development along the Muddy Creek and Ms. Ricker responded that the waterfront areas should be opened up to public access and used by the general public. She also spoke about the possibility of water taxis to provide access to various points in the city. Mr. Bowers spoke about the possibility of extending Princeton Road to provide a secondary entry into Community Park.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area E-5/Active Living:

- Neighborhood for active people and families with outdoor and water sport activities
- Range of housing choices at accessible rates and emphasis on access to water
- Waterfront space will be set aside for limited commercial/entertainment venues
- All will appear unified in character and quality
- Essential elements needed would be appropriate signage and greater visibility for commercial and roadway improvements

Commissioner Crawley asked about constraints imposed by the City of Dallas on the take area property and Ms. Humble replied that the permitting process would still be followed but a good relationship with the City of Dallas existed and the proposal was feasible. Commissioner Crawley and Ms. Humble spoke about traffic patterns and current roads conditions and the effect it would have on the area. Commissioner Cigainero inquired about the impact of the watercraft on the lake in the area and Ms. Humble responded it would be low impact watercraft such as kayaks and small boats. Mr. Bowers commented that the water

taxis would primarily serve the southern portions of the lake where the depth is sufficient and Ms. Ricker spoke of possible incentives for the cooperation of commercial businesses along the water.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area E-1/Signature Gateway:

- Tallest buildings anywhere in the City (10+ floors)
- Class A corporate headquarter, residential and lodging tower supported by ground floor commercial, restaurant and entertainment venues
- Amphitheater located on water's edge
- Essential elements needed would be community education about height of buildings, zoning, design standards, market reconnaissance quantifying demand for high-end corporate headquarters, residential towers and lodging

Councilmember Pankratz requested further explanation of the need for height and Ms. Ricker stated that with the height of the PGBT bridge at that location it would be necessary to draw attention of passersby. Mayor Gottel commented on the limited access to the area and noted that the use would need to be commercial and residential as presented in the vision plan. Commissioner Crawley spoke about the need to wait for the right opportunity. Commissioner Peebles expressed concerns about the water taxis and mentioned a few places where the system has failed and Ms. Humble responded with the potential for success due to surrounding cities accessible by water.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area E-2/Lakeside Center:

- Community-serving facilities near and adjacent to the lake
- Multiple uses – residential and commercial anchored by civic uses and public spaces
- Day and nighttime commercial uses
- Linked with “Old Towne” through development programs and designs standards, trolley/shuttle system and public spaces
- Essential elements needed would be acknowledgement of the railroad, greater visibility for commercial, community “ownership” of the vision

Discussion regarding higher density in the area versus high density concluded in the need for a controlled mix of uses and not just single family detached homes as in surrounding neighborhoods.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area E-4/ Old Towne:

- Reflect the City's history in new mixed use, walkable development spaces
- Community's downtown with commercial destinations
- Linked with “Lakeside Center” through development programs and designs standards, trolley/shuttle system and public spaces
- Essential elements needed would be acknowledgement of the turnpike, greater visibility for commercial, community “ownership” of the vision

Councilmember Pankratz inquired if the two areas would have identical architecture and design and Ms. Ricker answered that it wouldn't but some key designs could be mimicked to create the flow from one to the other. Mayor Gottel clarified that the concept was being considered for approval and not the exact development design. Chairman Sheffield requested “Old Towne” and “Lakeside Center” to be described more individually with the key points to each for the next presentation. Commissioner Peebles suggested a visit to downtown Grapevine to experience a possible built out version of the vision area. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips commented that the vision is to guide the future development. Commissioner Crawley noted that simple elements such as the same brick pavers or type of streetlight can unify the areas while keeping the design unique.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area E-3/Regional Trade:

- Region-serving commercial uses, in-line commercial and professional space users, and moderate scale Class B office buildings
- Likely to attract junior retail boxes ranging in size from 25K to 100K square feet
- Essential elements needed would be signs and visible access points from PGBT, connections to area activity centers, sites devoid of physical challenges

Commissioner Crawley commented he felt the land could be more valuable without box retail and Ms. Ricker stated that the intent could be to keep the box retail away from the other vision areas where they may pose more of a risk.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area D-2/Business Beltway and D-3/Southshore:

- Business park and employment address
- Uses support the needs of visitors and employees of the hospital – medical office buildings, dining establishments, variety of housing options
- Obstacles to overcome include a lack of uniform design and sign standards tailored to the area, costs associated with enhancing and maintaining, and zoning that could allow for disproportionate amount of commercial retail

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area A/Northshore:

- Major employment hub
- Public amenities including bike paths and walking trails
- Timing of development directly related to availability of infrastructure, support of property owners, policies and regulations to ensure this will be a business address only

There was discussion about the time frames for long term versus short term.

Ms. Ricker gave a description of the vision for area B-1/Center for Commerce & Industry:

- Office and technology spaces supported by commercial and lodging operators
- Education and training institutions support technology tenants
- Development in a consistent manner with Northshore will be critical to present as a single business park environment
- Essential elements needed would be enhanced access to Muddy Creek, design standards, joint marketing with Northshore

There was a discussion about return on investment and where the best places to start implementing the vision would be. Ms. Ricker explained the next steps in the visioning process. Council members and Commissioners discussed final thoughts and experiences throughout the process. The Council and Commission expressed a consensus to move forward with the plan elements as presented.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

#### **3A. City Council**

Mayor Pro Tem Gottel adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

#### **3B. Planning and Zoning Commission**

Chairman Sheffield adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.