

Land Use Code (LUC) Committee

December 11, 2008

5:30 – 7:30 PM

ParkWise Conference Room

Summary of Comments

Committee members in attendance

Albert Morales	Michael McDonald
Colin Zimmerman	Michael Guymon
Mike Baruch	Glenn Lyons
Karolyn Kendrick	Wayne Swan
Jim Portner	Rick Volk
Dick Walbert	Tom Warne
Mary Beth Savel	Ruth Beeker
Jim Campbell	Art Flagg
Pam Sutherland	Robert Medler
Jason Wong (alternate)	

Audience members

John Kromko	David Godlewski
C.T. Revere	Bill DuPont
Beryl Baker	Teresa Bommarito

Staff

Jim Mazzocco
Adam Smith
Aline Torres

Facilitator

Jan Aalberts

The April 2008 Clarion Associates diagnostic report is on-line at the Department of Urban Planning and Design website for review by members of the public. The website address is www.ci.tucson.az.us/planning/prog_proj/lucsimplication/1Clariondiagnosis.pdf.

Below is a summary of comments made during the meeting:

LUC Simplification Project

- The existing Code should be abandoned and a new Code should be adopted as soon as possible.
- Before any conversation occurs, the group should agree on a mission statement. Clear values and a common vision statement are necessary to determine the direction of how the Code is revised. “Benefit the entire town whether suburban or urban or infill development.” There are larger issues outside the reformat or simplification process.

- The General Plan reflects the values of the community and needs to be revisited and put in sync with the reformat/revision of the LUC.
- A simplified format is of little use by itself. Comprehensive changes to the LUC are needed and should be the focus. Simplification with some “band aids” is not the right project.
- The substance behind the Code is most important, not what’s in the book or if it can be read.
- Focus on functionality and uses that make sense.
- Have a “yes” Code rather than a “no” Code.
- A completely different Code is needed. We should move toward a form-based code.
- We are simplifying something that we don’t want to keep. We are going in the wrong direction.
- There is an attitude that arterial, downtown, and dense development is the “enemy”. At the same time, blading 600 pristine acres is what the LUC encourages.
- Business creation being able to change uses in existing buildings.
- Preserve neighborhoods. Use arterial roadways to foster more dense development.
- Look at the community as a whole – stop putting band-aids on development problems.
- Focusing on simplification will help identify problems as the reformat continues. A full revision will take at least 5 years, but this is a good first step.
- We need the political will to have a Code that reflects a modern, vibrant, livable, sustainable community.

Parking Reduction Plans

- Rely on parking studies and parking surveys. Use Pima County’s parking standards in the City.
- Existing buildings in the downtown should have no parking requirements. New development should have reduced requirements.
- Parking requirements should be based on zoning rather than on use.
- Parking overlays should be established in the City with reductions in the number of spaces required as development gets closer to downtown.
- Changing the Code is not a huge problem. Use a checklist for development (as in Tempe).
- The LUC ties into the General Plan. Is there a “shared values & mission statement” in the General Plan? The public should have input into the update of the General Plan.
- What will the transportation system look like in 10 years?
- When annexing, look at what parking requirements are already in place in Pima County and adopt those along with the land uses.
- Look at suburban/urban models and what of these models can be used in Tucson.
- Let Pima County DSD handle the suburban uses and parking issues. COT should handle urban uses and parking issues.
- More clarity to the proposed processes should be provided.

MDR – IID

- What types of development can request MDR?
- Development in the IID should reflect urban design best practices.

- Consider trade-offs in the IID such as streetscape and resource conservation improvements such as wider sidewalks, additional landscaping and bike racks.
- There is a concern that every MDR will have a development agreement attached to it.
- If we are looking to encourage development, there must be a clear set of incentives.
- Development agreements are too uncertain. It is easier to apply for variances.
- The draft criteria are too subjective.
- Shared values should be established so that everyone knows what is wanted.
- Negotiating development agreements can take up to 2 years.
- Will Sign Code variances be included as part of the MDR process?
- It is unclear what incentives are being offered.
- Bus pull-outs (built on-site) should be considered as a trade-off for parking space reductions.
- Parking, process certainty, outcome certainty, decreasing time and money used for negotiation rather than adding to the aesthetic of building sites.
- The City has an attitude that a project must be okay if there are no protests filed by the neighborhood. The truth may be that the neighborhood either didn't receive or understand the notice, is not organized or doesn't have the resources to protest.
- The City insists on using flawed approval procedures. Notices must be more informative. Developers should be required to have a face-to-face meeting with the neighborhood.

Call to the audience

- 207 considerations, building up to the sidewalks, public areas, retail/commercial uses ok except for bars. Rezoning should have certainty in terms of final uses on the site once the rezoning is approved and developed.
- How does the committee take the mission statement/shared values statement forward?