

## AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE - PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 9, 2008

**DEPARTMENT: PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

**DIRECTOR: M. MARGO WHEELER**

☐ Consent ☒ Discussion

**SUBJECT:**

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT

GPA-24484 - PUBLIC HEARING - APPLICANT/OWNER: EDPCN, LLC - Request to amend a portion of the Southeast Sector Plan of the General Plan FROM: MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO: HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL on 6.04 acres at 900 West Monroe Avenue (APN 129-78-503-023), Ward 5 (Barlow). The Planning Commission (5-2 vote) and staff recommend APPROVAL.

**PROTESTS RECEIVED BEFORE:**

Planning Commission Mtg.

1

City Council Meeting

10

**APPROVALS RECEIVED BEFORE:**

Planning Commission Mtg.

0

City Council Meeting

1

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Commission (5-2 vote) and staff recommend APPROVAL, subject to conditions.

**BACKUP DOCUMENTS:**

1. Location and Aerial Map
2. Conditions (Not Applicable) Staff Report
3. Supporting Documentation
4. Photos
5. Justification Letter
6. Protest letters
7. Submitted at meeting Letter by Dedra Geran submitted by Councilman Reese, letter by Trish Geran with protest petition and letter by Frank Hawkins for Items 94-96
8. Submitted after meeting Protest letter by Charleston Neighborhood Preservation for Items 94-96
9. Backup referenced from the 11-29-07 Planning Commission Meeting Item 21

Motion made by RICKI Y. BARLOW to Approve

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

RICKI Y. BARLOW, LOIS TARKANIAN, LARRY BROWN, OSCAR B. GOODMAN, GARY REESE, STEVE WOLFSON, STEVEN D. ROSS; (Against-None); (Abstain-None); (Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

Minutes:

MAYOR GOODMAN declared the Public Hearing open for Items 94-96.

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COUNCILMAN REESE submitted a letter he received from DEDRA GERAN.

FRANK HAWKINS, Community Development Programs Center of Nevada (CDPCN), appeared with SHARON BULLOCK, Project Manager, and asked for approval of the project, which he described.

He showed a site plan depicting the existing two-story building. To the east, there will be a three story building. In the north west corner of the site, there will be an 82-unit, two-bedroom, two-bath development. Another site to the west will be 100 tax credit apartments and to the north a commercial shopping center. The two-story building will buffer the four-story, and the three-story will buffer H Street. The entrance will be moved to H Street and Monroe Avenue. MR. HAWKINS added that they met with the residents and explained the project and the vast majority supported the project. The proposed development will be for working families with an income ranging from \$15,000 to \$26,000; store clerks, teachers, food and maintenance workers and retirees. The rent will be \$540 for the two-bedroom and \$450 for the one-bedroom. The 850 square foot two-bedroom, two-bath units will have kitchen appliances, with washer/dryer hookups, ceiling fans, patios and balconies. The clubhouse will have five computers and exercise rooms. The interior will have amenities, such as air conditioning and a pool. There will be covered parking as well. He also showed elevation depicting the front exterior with stucco and stone.

MAYOR GOODMAN clarified with MR. HAWKINS that the previous project housed families with zero income. The proposed project will house families that must have a job.

TED RUSSELL, Las Vegas resident, stated he is familiar with this section of town and has prayed for many years for development in Edmond Town Center. It is amazing to have development with such low rent rates. It is a fantastic project and a bonus in restoring this neighborhood, which he fully supports. He added that there needs to be more discussion about living wages in the face of new economic realities.

TRICIA DURAN submitted a petition from area residents opposing the apartment complex. The surrounding elements, such as Marble Manor Annex, still exist in this area and the project will give the same crumbing results and the crime rate will increase tenfold. The surrounding negative elements played a role in the demise of the Vons supermarket. She questioned where the added apartment dwellers would shop. Police and fire service calls will increase. The school located within two blocks of the proposed project will be affected. Low income housing already exists in the area and what the residents need is a taxable base middle income housing development in order to build up the economic development. The developer feels the project will attract more business; however, Edmond Town Center is pretty much empty now. Rather, middle income housing will provide counter balance and encourage infrastructure and diversity within this area; they want change and economic growth. Lastly on their behalf, MS. DURAN stated the area residents do not want this low income project and that the long term residents are not being considered as an important voice to the project.

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EDWARD WATSON, 1624 J Street, new President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), stated he received a number of calls to his office concerning this project. He has seen this type of project before and it turns into a massive crime rage. Elevators and dark hallways will eventually be filled with hoodlums and people will be attacked. The developer is asking for four buildings but will soon be asking for more. The project looks pretty and sounds pretty but it will bring a wave of crime. Many will lose their jobs; the city or another government agency will come in and take over the project. He resides across from a low-income apartment complex and when the project was first built, the residents were told there would be security and not drug dealers and prostitution. The Mayor and Council kept their word for two years, but now his home and car were broken into and he was within an inch of losing his life. He described a similar situation in St. Louis where the crime was so bad that nobody would deliver or provide services to the area. He understands the developer making money on the project but single family homes are needed in this area.

MAYOR GOODMAN was troubled by MR. WATSON'S comments, as his message is bleak to those who care about this City. He pointed out that during the morning session of the City Council Meeting, COUNCILMAN BARLOW was careful when asking a developer about an agreement that has to be signed when building a project owned by the City of Las Vegas or receiving benefits from the City in excess of \$15,000. The good news is that three to four thousand jobs will be created as a result of that project which is located near MR. HAWKINS proposed project. He believed this was a good deal as those getting employment will be part of the redevelopment of downtown and have an opportunity to live in a pretty complex. He wondered why there is so much negativity and why those working there cannot be confident that the apartments will be better and not create a crime ridden area.

MR. WATSON replied that he has seen this picture over and over again. One of Ward 5 residents biggest complaint is that all development occurring in the area is not done by those who live in the area. He mentioned that construction in the area is being done by those who live in Summerlin or Green Valley and many are not black. Therefore, he is not impressed. MAYOR GOODMAN replied that the City prides itself in diversity and statistics will bear that out. MR. WATSON stated he was speaking about construction of many projects where not one black person is employed.

COUNCILMAN BROWN remarked that MR. WATSON should have the answer for the Council, as he is familiar with the downtown core and in particular with this area. If he does not see a certain segment of the population working, it is incumbent upon him to explain why and what is wrong. It is too general and blanket of a statement. MR. WATSON responded that if there is someone who will listen, not only will he bring forth the problem, but he would suggest a solution. MAYOR GOODMAN suggested MR. WATSON call his office for an appointment.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON acknowledged MR. WATSON'S comments, but the City Council has to make tough decisions. He would also like to see middle income housing but no developer is knocking and asking to develop in this area. MR. HAWKINS is offering to replace a boarded up residential area with low income housing. In two years, it could become a problem, but today

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the area needs this type of development. The choice is to leave the area as it is or put in something that fills a need, and this fills a need. MR. WATSON replied that he would leave the area as it currently is.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON added that 6,000 people per month move to Las Vegas and this project will provide 4,000 jobs and housing is needed. He agreed there is a bigger issue, but the choice today is to provide rental property for working people or leave as is.

DEDRA GERAN stated it is a bad day when residents feel they would rather have the buildings boarded up and not developed because that is better than having crime and hoodlums. The residents just do not want the rezoning to medium density. They would support rebuilding, but do not support the four-story buildings. These residents are the constituents in Ward 5 and the owners do not live in Ward 5, including the applicant. She asked that the Council seriously consider the residents opposition of the project. The protests expressed at the Planning Commission meeting were documented but ignored. The residents filed an appeal. The residents are concerned that once the project is built, the ownership will be turned over to the Las Vegas Housing Authority. It will be a future step to building disastrous high rise low-income project only to abandon it. Crime will increase, including surrounding properties. Existing residents are elderly, low-income and the project will ignore the occupancy of each unit, including children who are not of working age. Sixty percent will be single parents and earning less than \$8,000 yearly and ninety-nine percent will be African American. The residents along Monroe Avenue are concerned they will lose privacy in back yards due to high density. The control of the building will be compromised with many floors and residents. There will be no 24-hour security. At the Planning Commission meeting, the owners lied about who will occupy the buildings, as there will also be some homeowners living there. The units are too small in square footage and the lack of green space and pavement will create an atmosphere of neglect. She indicated that 15 pages of opposition were completely ignored. She believes it would be a disgrace to name a low-income housing project after SARAH ANN KNIGHT, advocate for civil rights and an historian.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON remarked that they are not being ignored and that the documentation MS. GERAN referred to was made part of the backup. MS. GERAN replied that she made an appointment to see COUNCILMAN BARLOW after the Planning Commission meeting, but he was not there. She did not vote for the liaisons and expects the Councilperson to be there for the appointment. MS. GERAN stated she would support the two stories but four stories are too high. Schools in this area are already overcrowded.

COUNCILMAN ROSS complimented MS. GERAN on her writing skills.

DOROTHY BARNES stated that when she came to Las Vegas in 1999, she applied for Las Vegas Housing Authority housing. Her greatest fear was being placed in a crime infested area. She always wanted to live on the west side near her church but was always concerned about the area. She is terrified for these people living in taller apartment complexes and who cannot get assistance, unless they are in an upscale area and not on any programs that would provoke them

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to violence.

RASHAN JOSHUA COLLINS, street preacher, believes strongly in defending the poor. There is a strong need for low income housing for individuals. Sin is being promoted in the City on the rich/poor levels. He believes it would be helpful to have the Council and residents meet with those that seek to live in this development, which might relieve some of their concerns.

MR. HAWKINS indicated they are the last developer to build single family homes, Whispering Timbers. The single family home market is having problems right now. There is a misnomer as it will not stay the way it is. They will lose tax credits if not approved but their goal is to improve the neighborhood; the property cannot remain boarded up. Global Property Management Group will manage the property. There are guidelines and restrictions that must be followed. This is not public housing. They cannot discriminate against someone that applies for housing using vouchers. But there is a difference between vouchers and Section 8. He verified for COUNCILMAN WOLFSON that a property management company is on site seven days a week, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. MR. HAWKINS stated there is a need for density and residents with an income will spend money within their community. He has been working with residents even prior to buying the project and will continue working with adjacent neighbors. Regarding the issue of not hiring minorities, he noted that they have their own general construction company and approximately fifty percent of the contractor base is minority. He asked for approval.

COUNCILMAN BARLO thanked Ms. GILMAN for meeting with his staff and apologized for the conflict with his meeting schedule. The information she gave to his staff was helpful and allowed him to work with the developer. He lives in this area as well and is concerned with what happens in and around this community. There are not many developers who desire to develop in the immediate West Las Vegas area. There are times when he has to make a difficult decision on behalf of Ward 5 residents, and this is one of those moments. The corridor at Owens Avenue needs assistance with commercial businesses. The Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor is expanding from three lanes to six lanes with the intent of bringing more commercial. Rooftops and population are needed to support the commercial. He agreed with MR. WATSON that single family housing is needed but middle income housing is needed as well. The development on the corner of Monroe Avenue and H Street is a development he believes will be fresh in an area that has been dark for such a long time. This project will beam in the community as the individuals who will be living here will work to take care of their families. Any neighborhood can turn negative, but he would like to hear more optimism about their neighborhoods. He will make sure the developer does all he can to ensure that quality, market-rate units are built. It is important to bring forth housing and commercial for this corridor and he thinks the community will be proud.

The Councilman outlined some of the things he would like to see with the project. He asked that the landscaping be increased and beautified to soften the area and not make the project look so much like a prison, especially on Monroe Avenue and H Street. He would like to see a corner monument at H Street and Monroe Avenue. He does not want parking on Monroe Avenue on

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the north side of the street but instead a red curb and no parking signs to ensure residents on the south side are well buffered. He does not want any access off of Monroe Avenue, with the exception of crash gates on all major egress/ingress to the site. This project is a step up because in order to qualify, an individual must have an income of \$15,000 to \$26,000. People with this type of income need a safe and healthy environment to live in as well. He thanked MR. WATSON and MS. GERAN for their comments, but he will be moving forward with staff's recommendation for approval with the amendments. He hopes and prays that this will not be a "damn dumb" thing.

COUNCILMAN ROSS applauded MR. HAWKINS efforts, as this agenda item is a great concern with the neighborhood. COUNCILMAN BARLOW is working tremendously to make this area new and profitable and the Council supports him. The Councilman acknowledged the possibility of this area becoming blighted in years to come, but he supports the project, while still keeping in mind the residents' concerns.

MR. HAWKINS stated he was born and raised in this community and has invested millions of dollars in development. He has taken the worst area in this city and redeveloped it. Emerald Breeze is one of the three problems in the community and he is working to rid the community of that problem. He promised not to let the Council down as he cares about this community and stands by his commitment.

COUNCILMAN BARLOW added that he stands behind this development a 100 percent. He asked MR. HAWKINS to agree to all conditions as amended because he must hold them to these on behalf of the constituents. Additionally, the Councilman commented that the two units on Monroe Avenue must be demolished. He will contact Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to see what can be done. They will currently remain but he wants the entire site taken down as it is causing blight and wants the developer to be aware of this. MR. HAWKINS agreed to conditions as stated by the Councilman.

MARGO WHEELER, Director of Planning and Development Department, indicated that the landscaping is addressed in Condition 7, but she added the words "to meet code requirements" at the end of the condition. She also read into the record an additional condition regarding the monument sign.

BART ANDERSON, Public Works Department, explained that Condition 18 addresses the crash gate. He also read into the record an additional condition regarding the "No Parking" and red curb striping. MR. HAWKINS agreed to all conditions.

COUNCILMAN REESE remarked that he has known MR. HAWKINS for the past 12 years and finds him to be honest and sincere. He takes him at his word and the previous projects have always been top quality. Therefore, he will support this project.

COUNCILMAN ROSS stated he sits on the Las Vegas Housing Authority Board and has close relations with HUD, both locally and nationally. He offered his help and assistance to

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COUNCILMAN BARLOW.

MAYOR GOODMAN pointed out that the State of the City's Address theme was sustainability and the quality of life for residents, not just two years from now but for a long time. He is "pained" at some of the comments made but confirmed he will meet with MR. WATSON regarding solutions and public participation. He recalled a time when he attended a funeral at the Second Baptist Church for a long-time community resident and how impressed he was at the many people who knew her. She used her resources as a childcare provider, and he felt there was hope and the message was positive. He would like to start addressing this pessimistic attitude of little hope; that is not the message he wants to be sending to the world. He would be happy to meet with anyone to address their concerns. He sees this as a beautiful and a good project.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN added that they should look at resources from the City should help be needed.

MAYOR GOODMAN declared the Public Hearing closed for Items 94-96.

