

**MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE
MEETING OF THE
CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS HELD
IN THE CITY HALL, 4301 CITY POINT DRIVE
JULY 13, 2017**

1. Call to Order

The Strategic Plan Committee of the City of North Richland Hills, Texas met on the 13th day of July at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Workroom for the Strategic Plan Committee meeting.

Present:	Tim Barth	City Council Member, Acting Chairman
	Jerry Tyner	Planning and Zoning Commissioner
	Justin Welborn	Planning and Zoning Ex-Officio
	Amy Steele	Committee Member
	Blake Hedgecock	Committee Member
	Brent Barrow	Committee Member
	Brian Crowson	Committee Member
	Danny Beltran	Committee Member
	Lee Knight	Alternate Committee Member
	Karen Russell	Committee Member
	Mark Wood	Committee Member
	Suzy Compton	Committee Member
	Tracye Tipps	Committee Member

Absent:	Tim Welch	City Council Member, Chairman
	Rita Wright-Oujesky	City Council Member, Vice Chairperson
	Skip Baskerville	Committee Member

Staff Members:	Clayton Comstock	Planning Manager
	Clayton Husband	Principal Planner
	Chad VanSteenberg	Planner
	Paulette Hartman	Assistant City Manager
	Jimmy Perdue	Director of Public Safety

Acting Chairman Dr. Tim Barth called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. Approve minutes of the June 8, 2017 Strategic Plan Committee meeting.

APPROVED

Prior to approving the minutes, Planning Manager Clayton Comstock reviewed items requested from the Committee at the previous Strategic Plan Committee meeting.

A MOTION WAS MADE COMMITTEE MEMBER BELTRAN, SECONDED BY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONER TYNER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 8, 2017, STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION TO APPROVE CARRIED 12-0.

3. Discussion and input on the North Richland Hills Strategic Plan Update related to the current and future development direction of the city.

Planning Manager Clayton Comstock discussed June and July public input and focus group sessions.

To begin the discussion, Mr. Comstock asked the Committee, "What are the strengths of our community in relation to other communities in the region? What advantage do we have in terms of location, physical resources, or people? What do other people see as our strengths? What should be preserved in the community?"

Committee Member Brian Crowson stated the quality of collector and thoroughfare roads in the city are a strength.

Committee Member Suzy Compton stated close proximity to interstates and airports is a strength, but also stated this is an obstacle due to the added traffic from other communities. Ms. Compton also said having a hospital is a strength and very important for the city.

Committee Member Lee Knight stated the city has numerous wonderful churches.

Committee Member Brent Barrow stated improvements to schools, such as North Richland Middle School, are a large strength to the city and should continue to happen on other campuses.

Mr. Comstock then asked the committee, "What might be perceived inadequacies of our community? What could we improve? What should we avoid? What should be removed?"

Mr. Crowson stated the city does not have enough department retail, such as clothing, within the city.

Committee Member Amy Steele stated the lack of sit down restaurants in the city is a weakness the city should improve on.

Planning and Zoning Ex-Officio Justin Welborn stated aging infrastructure in commercial and residential zoning is a weakness for the city.

Committee Member Danny Beltran stated the past reputation of the hospital does not represent the reality of how much the hospital has improved and that the public should be made more aware of the improvements over the last decade.

Planning and Zoning Commissioner Jerry Tyner stated the unknown reality of the underground water lines could be a weakness of the city.

Mr. Wood continued from Mr. Beltran's hospital comment, stating that the hospital's EMS services is an asset to the city and is not perceived by the public to be as high quality as their services are in reality.

Committee Member Karen Russell stated a weakness for the city is the lack of affordable starter homes.

Mr. Comstock rephrased the question to ask, "What is one thing you would change about North Richland Hills?"

Mr. Crowson stated the city should avoid bars, adult entertainment venues, and tobacco shops.

Ms. Russell stated the appearance of city entrances on Rufe Snow and Davis Boulevard lacks greenery, has too many overhead utilities, and struggles with curb appeal and city signage or monument signs.

Ms. Compton stated the city should continue to follow the city's redevelopment code and not allow exceptions to any of the set standards.

Committee Member Blake Hedgecock stated there are areas within the city that seem to not flourish with retail or remain vacant.

Mr. Welborn continued from Mr. Hedgecock's comment stating the aging

infrastructure is outdated and not in demand.

Alternate Committee Member Lee Knight stated the change in traffic patterns have been affecting these areas and vacant businesses.

Committee Member Karen Russell asked if the city can require an aging structure to be demolished instead of allowing it to sit vacant, and if so it should be a weakness the city works to remove.

Committee Member Barrow asked if there is a plan for the remaining undeveloped portions of City Point Drive surrounding City Hall.

Mr. Comstock stated there is a plan, but there is a lack of understanding as to how much the land is worth in the Texas commercial market compared to the California commercial market.

Mr. Hedgecock continued from Mr. Comstock's answer that there are areas of the city that are not supporting the desired demand for retail saying the city's weakness comes from not having the ability to develop undeveloped or undeveloped land.

Mr. Comstock stated that a program to initiate the types of developments and redevelopments sought after could be accomplished with the right budget and incentives.

Mr. Hedgecock continued, stating that the city has a brand, but also needs an identity to accompany a brand.

Mr. Comstock said communicating the city's story and marketing the positive attributes of the city will help build an identity.

Mr. Hedgecock posed examples of other cities known based on identity.

Referring to a handout, Mr. Crowson asked if the old City Hall has sold.

Assistant City Manager Paulette Hartman stated the City accepted an offer.

Ms. Steele asked if there are incentives that are standard incentives or case-by-case basis.

Mr. Comstock replied, stating there are a few standard incentives, but most are given on a case-by-case scenario.

Mr. Welborn asked if large areas or projects are treated as a Public Improvement District (PID).

Ms. Hartman replied, stating the City is exploring PID's.

Mr. Welborn asked if HomeTown was a ten-year PID.

Ms. Hartman replied, stating HomeTown us a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF).

Mr. Comstock informed those who were not aware what a PID and a TIF is. A PID is a district where the property owners have an additional assessment. Once the assessment has been paid for there is no more additional cost. A TIF takes into account the value of the land and the improved value and reinvests the difference back into the district.

Committee Member Tracye Tipps asked if the current discussion pertained to residential or commercial development.

Mr. Comstock stated it concerns the whole city.

Ms. Tipps stated she has spoken with citizens asking for more code enforcement concerning lawn care and trash.

Mr. Beltran stated the city should avoid being change adverse and continue to be forward thinking and said the city should not be afraid to take a risk on new concepts to spur redevelopment.

Committee Member Amy Steele asked if Chick-Fil-A owns the property on Rufe Snow.

Mr. Beltran said Chick-Fil-A leases the property and Mr. Beltran sub-leases the property from Chick-Fil-A.

Ms. Steele then asked for clarification from Mr. Beltran that any improvements made to the property would need to be approved by the property and if the property owner and Chick-Fil-A have had a conversation about property improvements.

Mr. Beltran stated improvements would need to be approved by the property owner and that there has not been a conversation with the current owner.

Mr. Crowson asked if there is a strategy to help form Homeowner Associations (HOA) in neighborhoods without them.

Mr. Hartman stated that there could be a neighborhood association, and are currently

encouraging neighborhoods to form this type of association.

Mr. Crowson asked if we could map out neighborhoods that could potentially benefit from a neighborhood association.

Ms. Hartman stated the City have been working in Northpark Estates to help form a neighborhood association.

Ms. Russell stated that she has heard recently that the city has a lot of nice public artwork throughout.

Mr. Knight stated he is not a fan of red light cameras.

Mr. Comstock asked the Committee what opportunities exist for the revitalization of North Richland Hills. What are good opportunities facing the community? What alliances could we create that the community could benefit from? And, what could be added to improve the community?

Ms. Steele said that the Transit Oriented Development area is North Richland Hills' greatest opportunity today.

Mr. Wood reciprocated Ms. Steel's comment and asked the committee how the city could promote the area.

Mr. Crowson stated revitalization needs to extend past our city boundary and asked if there is a way to help propagate revitalization in surrounding communities.

Mr. Welborn said that PID's and TIF's could help increase revitalization opportunities in areas that are in need of revitalization.

Ms. Tipps stated that the city should focus on rejuvenating its population with young families or professionals.

Mr. Welborn stated families look for good school and that a good place to start rejuvenating areas would start with improving our schools.

Mr. Hedgecock stated the opportunity around City Point is a great opportunity for the right development this area needs.

Mr. Welborn stated older arterial roads should be modernized by burying utilities and

connecting sidewalks along arterial roads.

Ms. Russell asked how many of those surveyed during the 2015 Community Survey were homeowners and renters.

Mr. Comstock stated he believes most of those who responded to the 215 Community Survey were homeowners.

Ms. Compton stated she hoped the City will continue to revitalize the south side of North Richland Hills through initiatives such as the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

Ms. Steele stated investors who have flipped homes in North Richland Hills have sold the property at values too high for first time buyers. Ms. Steele continued saying she notices a lot of first time buyers going to north Fort Worth and Richland Hills.

Ms. Compton asked if other areas outside of the south portion of North Richland Hills.

Mr. Comstock said the boundaries for the Neighborhood Revitalization Program are within the North Richland Hills city limits, south and/or west of Northeast Loop 820, east of Rufe Snow and north of Glenview Drive.

Mr. Barrow asked what is considered an improvement.

Ms. Hartman stated there are different programs that define the criteria for what would be considered an improvement.

Mr. Wood stated a weakness of North Richland Hills is the number of automotive commercial uses.

Ms. Tipps asked if there is a rule or law limiting the number of auto related uses that can be within each other.

Mr. Hedgecock commented that part of the problem is that there is nothing else that can go into some of these buildings.

Acting Chairman Dr. Barth asked if continuing to build multi-family buildings is a threat to city in ten, fifteen, twenty years.

Mr. Crowson stated he was against more multi-family in the city.

Mr. Beltran stated he was against more multi-family in the city.

Mr. Welborn stated the average family earns \$60,000 a year with the average home costing \$250,000. He continued saying the median new home costs \$360,000 and climbing. He added that the right multi-family structure may not be a bad concept for some family.

Mr. Crowson stated multi-family brings in more cars than a single-family development does and said he does not want to see that type of increase in traffic.

Mr. Kight stated most new apartment buildings are rated A and B, not C and D. Mr. Knight continued saying North Richland Hills has a lot of C and D properties that could benefit from redevelopment, but is not sure how the city can encourage the redevelopment.

Mr. Beltran stated that redevelopment only lowers properties currently rated at a B.

Mr. Barrow said putting a restriction on allowing homes to be flipped and sold as rental properties.

Mr. Comstock said it would be a challenge for North Richland Hills to impose that type of restriction on property owners.

Mr. Comstock explained the areas of North Richland Hills that have been approved for multi-family.

Ms. Steele asked that there be a distinction in the conversation between multi-family and townhomes because townhomes should not be considered as a threat.

Ms. Russell stated that future big box retail should perhaps be seen as a threat since the future of this type of retail is not strong.

Mr. Comstock recapped the naming process for the strategic plan and presented names submitted by committee members.

4. Adjourn

Acting Chairman Dr. Tim Barth adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Dr. Tim Barth, Acting Chairman

Attest:

John Chapman, Secretary