

PLANNING AND ZONING MINUTES
MINUTES OF THE BENSON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
January 21, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Andrew Abernathy opened the meeting at 6:04pm.

2. PLEDGE

Chair Andrew Abernathy led the pledge.

3. ROLL CALL

Dennis Bringham, Andrew Abernathy, and G. Tinnie Graves were present. A quorum was present.

4. WORK SESSION

Chair Andrew Abernathy opened the discussion on parking. With the city aerial maps spread on the table, the Commission discussed the shape of the city and the desirability and likelihood of expanding the commercial core from 4th Street into the surrounding neighborhoods, particularly 5th Street and 3rd Street. The feasibility of shared parking for the existing businesses was discussed with current examples (the former City Hall site) and potential sites, like the VFW, being discussed and debated. The Commission agreed that shared parking is the most effective solution to creating a walkable area and reducing the development requirements on existing business and any potential new development since the existing street layout doesn't leave physical space for parking on each individual parcel.

The Commission discussed the possibility of "flipping" the businesses on Fourth Street so they face the alley, which would then be converted into a walking plaza. Commissioners generally agreed that flipping the businesses would make a more pleasing aesthetic for walking if the alley were cleaned and the businesses were able to create patios or other entryway designs. Commission Dennis Bringham asked if flipping would ever be feasible for some of the businesses because it might require extensive interior remodeling, such as moving offices currently located in the rear, in addition to the exterior remodeling. Discussion briefly turned to financing mechanism for this type of redevelopment, both public and private.

The idea of creating two one-way streets (Fourth and Fifth) was briefly discussed. A roundabout in the area of Fourth/Fifth and Land to diverge into two one-way streets was demonstrated using the aerial maps. Discussion turned to ownership of the rights-of-way, particularly Fourth Street, which is owned by ADOT. Chair Andrew Abernathy mentioned that ADOT has offered ownership of Fourth Street to the City in the past, but the City has not accepted because repairs and maintenance are needed.

The work session ended with minimal changes to the written code, but a better understanding of the layout of the town and the potential design and redevelopment that could positively impact the look and walkability of the town on both sides of Fourth Street if supported through sufficient funding and long term goals.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dennis Bringham motioned to adjourn the meeting. Chair Andrew Abernathy seconded. Motion passed 3-0 and the meeting closed at 6:58pm