

**Washoe County School District
Zoning Advisory Committee
Thursday, June 21, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

1.02 Roll Call

Members Polly Boardman, Beth Smith, Theresa Birchfield, Stephanie Hanna, Sierra Clark, Jennifer Peterson, Adam Carpenter, Joel Peixoto, Dana Galvin, and Melissa Boesen were present. Lorraine Toole and Araceli Martinez were absent.

1.03 Public Comment

Gideon Kaplovitz spoke about the development on the south side of I-80 in Verdi. It will be 600 homes when complete. He is concerned that the development is not being included in data tables of enrollment projections provided to committee. He asked the committee to write to council members about the developments and attend planning commission meetings to oppose the development.

Pablo Nava Duran spoke and summarized the recent board decisions regarding zoning in Spanish Springs, Sparks, and South Reno. He told the committee they were doing a good job.

1.04 Action to Adopt the Agenda

Stephanie Hanna moved to approve the agenda; Polly Boardman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, PRESENTATION, AND/OR ACTION

2.01 Discussion and Possible Approval of the Minutes from the May 17, 2018 Zoning Advisory Committee meeting (For Possible Action)

Sierra Clark stated she was not at the meeting, however the minutes listed her as present. Joel Peixoto moved to adopt the minutes with the amendment that Sierra Clark was absent. Polly Boardman seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

2.02 Presentation and Discussion on the Results of the May 22, 2018 Board of Trustees meeting, where the Board discussed zoning recommendations for

schools in Spanish Springs, Sparks, and South Reno (see Attachment A) (For Discussion Only)

Paul LaMarca, Chief Ombudsman and Strategies Officer began the presentation to summarize the Board of Trustees decisions at the May 22 Board Meeting. First, he stated that the changes stemming from new middle school in Spanish Springs were adopted as recommended, including the change to rezone Van Gorder Elementary School, Beasley Elementary School, and Sepulveda Elementary School to the new middle school and to keep Spanish Springs Elementary School, Taylor Elementary School, and Hall Elementary School at Shaw Middle School. The board also discussed the possibility of changes with the new elementary school slated to open in Spanish Springs in 2021, and asked that the committee look at zone for SSES and Van Gorder again next year. The Board approved the recommendations to rezoning for the new elementary school in South Reno, Nick Poulakidas Elementary School. The Board took a second look at zoning for Kate Smith Elementary, Agnes Risley Elementary, and Robert Mitchell Elementary. They approved a section of Kate Smith to be rezoned to Risley Elementary but they didn't approve the committee's recommendation to rezone a section of Robert Mitchell to Agnes Risley, based on concerns for safety because there is a large fence on Oddie that would make it difficult for kids to walk. The other item for consideration was a discussion of whether to rezone students from Juniper Elementary to either Maxwell Elementary or Drake Elementary, and consistent with committee recommendations they voted to move those students to Maxwell.

There was no further discussion on the item.

2.03 Discussion and Possible Action of Zoning Changes to Verdi Elementary School that Could Affect the Gomm Elementary School Zone and/or the Warner Elementary School Zone for the 2019-20 School Year (For Possible Action)

Adam Searcy, Chief Facilities Management Officer, presented and went through several options for rezoning Verdi Elementary School, Gomm Elementary School, and Warner Elementary School. The options he presented included:

Option 1: Take no further actions and keep existing zones.

Option 2A would rezone the Montebello Apartments and West 4th Street Corridor area from Verdi, to Warner and then Clayton Middle School.

Option 2B would rezone the same areas from Verdi, to Gomm and then Swope Middle School.

Option 3A is the same as 2A, but adds in Mesa Park area for rezoning from Verdi to Warner and Clayton.

Option 3B is the same as 2B but adds in Mesa Park area for rezoning from Verdi to

Gomm and then Swope.

Option 4 would rezone the entire area, including River Park, to Gomm and then Swope.

Option 5A would just rezone just Montebello Apartments from Verdi to Warner Elementary School and Clayton Middle School.

Option 5B is the inverse, and would rezone everything except for the Montebello Apartments from Verdi to Gomm and Swope Middle School.

Mr. Searcy also noted that there would be two additional classrooms installed at Verdi.

Chair Theresa Birchfield asked for public comment.

Public comment

Courtney O'Mara: Stated that she attended Gomm from 86 – 92 and currently lives less than 1 mile. She is a mother of a rising 3rd grader, a 4 year old and a 2 year old. She stated that her youngest will start at Gomm in 2021, and she was worried that according to the projects he would be there at the most overcrowded time. She stated that if no action was taken, Gomm would be at 100 percent capacity by 2021, and that if schools were rezoned to Gomm it would be over capacity. She said she does not want to rezone Verdi to Gomm because it would put Gomm over capacity.

Gideon Kaplovitz: He stated that he didn't believe the enrollment projections for Verdi included the additional developments, which are slated to bring 600 new homes to the area. He said there would be several hundred students moving to the area over the next ten years and he was upset that was no immediate plans to build a new school in the northwest. He also stated he wanted to stop the developments and demand that schools be built.

Nicole Chewjalearn: She stated that she is special education teacher at Verdi and the parent of 2nd grader at Verdi. She doesn't want to see students bussed for miles for safety reasons. She said that the Mesa Park neighborhood is 6.4 to Verdi and 2.6 to Gomm. It's 4.1 miles to Warner. Montebello is 8.5 miles to Verdi 2.5 to Warner. The bus picks up kids between 7:55 – 8:00 am for a 9:15 start time so they are traveling on the interstate to Verdi for over an hour each way. Over an hour on the bus each way on interstate. She stated that she had NHP poll traffic tickets and accidents and graphed it, and on top of this the on ramps are not compliant. She said that safety is the top concern of volunteers, staff, parents, and employees of WCSD and that they should take into consideration the potential dangers of having a bus travel on the interstate.

Robyn Sackrison: She stated that she was concerned that the enrollment projections didn't add up correctly and questioned whether they matched the numbers of the new developments. She said that the developments are all multi bedrooms so they will probably be filled with families with children. She also stated that that at Verdi Elementary, the resource teacher is in a faculty room so that hopefully a new classroom would address that. She said she wanted the committee to do what is right for

everyone.

Angie D'Antoni: She said she had a kindergartner and 4th grader at Gomm. She stated that she has spent a lot of time at Gomm looking at numbers and that she does agree that some of the developments need to be rezoned to Gomm, but not all of the areas. If you move everyone there it will go to 120 percent capacity, she said. She also stated that she had a concern with traffic safety. Current traffic during drop off and pick up times at Gomm was busy and she expressed concern that if more students were rezoned to Gomm the traffic would get worse. Our concern is safety, the traffic during drop off is a nightmare. The increase in bus zones more

Pablo Nava Duran: He summarized the various options and suggested that the committee wait to make a determination.

Paul Klein: He said he lives in the Gomm area with two kids. He wanted to mention the that Gomm is the only school of the ones mentioned that is located next to a commercial area which makes traffic bad. He also said that a new office park was just approved across the street, and that will create more congestion.

Theresa Birchfield opened it up for discussion among the committee.

Beth Smith asked about the move from 6th grade into Billingshurst, and Paul LaMarca and Adam Searcy both stated that it was an administrative decision, not a board decision, to move 6th grade into the middle schools. However, there hadn't yet been a firm decision about moving Verdi 6th graders to Billingshurst. Mr. Searcy stated that Billingshurst could hold more students because there was space to install portable classrooms there if needed. Stephanie Hanna stated that she was concerned about potential overcrowding at Billingshurst if students were rezoned there. She expressed concern that she wanted the Board of Trustees to know that she was concerned with overcrowding at Billingshurst. Dr. LaMarca stated that while the Zoning Advisory Committee couldn't make recommendations about the move of 6th grade from Verdi to Billingshurst, that information could be mentioned so that it is on the Trustee's radar. Beth Smith stated again that the numbers looked reasonable at Billingshurst without the elevation of 6th Grade and Mr. Searcy replied that the decision was technically still open although it is the policy of the District to try to elevate 6th grade to middle schools wherever possible.

Theresa Birchfield stated that she was leaning toward leaving much of the Verdi zone alone for the next several months until the committee can see more up to date 2018-2019 enrollment numbers. She stated that waiting until the fall would also give the committee the chance to see what developments are built and have a better idea of how many families are moving in. Sierra Clark said she agreed that more information was needed to make determinations. She said that she spoke with the Activities Director at Sommerset who gave her anecdotal evidence that more families with children were moving into Sommerset. The Activities Director told her they were at capacity for their children's programming. She also said she spoke to realtors who said that most of their clients were families with children moving from California. She wants to have more demographic information about who is moving to northwest Reno and Verdi before making a decision.

Beth Smith stated that she wanted to thank parents for reaching out and principals for allowing them to visit schools and ask questions. She appreciates the messages and the attendance at meetings and said she has heard everyone. She also said she agrees with Theresa Birchfield's suggestion that there isn't enough information available to make a decision. She said she understands that many neighborhoods are attached to Verdi and don't want to be rezoned, but she also understands the safety concerns with transportation on busses and that there are other schools that are closer to some of those neighborhoods. She said she'd like to see the decision tabled until the fall, until after enrollment counts are updated and there's a better idea of how many families have moved in. Polly Boardman stated that she was concerned if students were rezoned away from Verdi about what that would do to the teaching staff. She also stated that waiting to make a decision would be ideal and that the committee can keep a pulse on what is happening in the area over the next several months.

Stephanie Hanna stated that she would like to see a new school in Northwest Reno and asked if there was an updated timeline. Mr. Searcy said they were currently completing due diligence on former Northgate golf course property for consideration of a possible elementary school but that he doesn't have a tangible update with a timeline. Stephanie Hanna also asked why only two classrooms were being added to Verdi, instead of eight. Mr. Searcy stated that the additions were being done at the request of a developer at no cost to the school district.

Theresa Birchfield asked for a motion to table the discussion. Beth Smith made a motion to table item 2.03 until the next year of the Zoning Advisory Committee when more information became available. Dana Galvin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. CLOSING ITEMS

3.01 Announcement of Next Regular Meeting – Thursday, Sep. 20, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. WCSD Administrative Building, 425 East 9th Street, Board Room, Reno, Nevada 89512.

Theresa Birchfield stated that the next meeting would be Thursday, Sept. 20, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room.

3.02 Public Comment:

Pablo Nava Duran said he wants to talk about the new middle school in Arrowcreek next year, as well as revisit Verdi and talk about the new Wildcreek area high school.

Gideon Kaplivitiz stated that he wanted the school district to work with the city and other government agencies to have responsible growth and plan ahead.

Robyn Sackrison asked if the committee could discuss the guiding principles that they use for decision making. Chief General Counsel Neil Rombardo said the committee could not discuss that at the moment because it wasn't agendaized. Dr. LaMarca stated he would email the principals to Robyn.

Theresa Birchfield thanked Joel Peixoto for his time on the committee.

3.03 Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.