



## CITY OF DALLAS

### CITY PLAN COMMISSION URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE Thursday, November 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes

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Meeting	Dallas City Hall, 5BN	8:30 a.m.
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#### **Members Present:**

Jaynie Schultz (Chair), Tipton Housewright (Vice Chair), Noel Aveton, Mike Johnson, Allison Baker, Margot Murphy (City Plan Commissioner)

#### **Others Present:**

Peter Klein (Preston Center Advisory Task Force), Peer Chacko (Planning and Urban Design), Luis Tamayo (Planning and Urban Design), Asma Shaikh (Planning and Urban Design), Amy Albright (Planning and Urban Design)

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The meeting was called to order by Jaynie Schultz (Chair) at 8:30 a.m. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously after a motion by member Johnson and second by member Aveton.

Luis Tamayo provided an overview of the Preston Center area planning process to date; the process began in June 2014 when NCTCOG initiated a study due to regional traffic concerns. Several contentious zoning cases in Preston Center also highlighted the need for a plan. The Plan is a community-drafted effort spearheaded by the Advisory Task Force with planning support from consultants. Area plan precedents include Garland Road Vision Study and the Greater Casa View Area Plan.

Committee members as well as ATF representation made the following comments:

#### *General Comments on Plan and Process*

- Complete consensus among commercial property owners on all issues has not been reached; however, this Plan represents a step in the right direction capturing areas of agreement. The plan can be viewed as more of a “peace treaty” rather than development plan.
- Some members felt the Plan does not provide sufficient specificity on development and zoning details such as sidewalk widths, which could make decision-making difficult for City Plan Commission considering zoning requests.

- As Preston Center is a regional asset, “people want to be there” and the area is ripe for development and investment. Viewing Preston Center as an asset is better starting point for a plan vision than concerns about parking or traffic.
- Preston Center does not have infinite capacity. A Preston Center Plan crafted in 1988 grappled with similar issues as this plan. The community should consider the idea of relevancy – in order for Preston Center to stay relevant and competitive, change will be necessary.
- Did the Advisory Task Force consider having developers pay into a fund for streetscape improvements similar to what was done in Midtown for parks?
- Highland Park School District elementary schools are able to absorb a significant influx of students, if Zone 1 develops as residential.

*Comments related to the Parking Garage*

- The proposed underground parking garage with a park above will require creative funding, as free parking cannot generate revenue streams. New construction and redevelopment will increase values and property tax revenues to create a funding stream. “Build your way out, don’t bond your way out.”
- If action isn’t taken regarding the parking garage, the current parking corporation will make the existing garage “bigger and uglier” through self-funding. This is a regional asset that may require regional money.
- Underground parking is typically an unpleasant experience, and drivers usually do not want to go underground more than 1 or 2 stories. An alternative could be to tear down half of the existing parking garage and create a park, while improving or reconstructing the remaining half to be taller and more aesthetically pleasing.
- Were other parking solutions discussed such as shared parking agreements?

*Recommendations for Change to the Plan*

- It will be useful to see this Plan as a first step. Crafting a second phase plan for Zone 1 (with more design details and specificity) would be beneficial in strengthening the vision. Consider adding language that an additional plan will include further wayfinding and more specific planning recommendations for Zone 1 and (some members felt) Zone 4.
- The plan should consider including desired sidewalk widths.
- Create a consolidated bullet point list of the main goals and recommendations to facilitate the plan’s use for the Dallas City Plan Commission and City Council.
- The 24-month time-frame for the garage warrants mention in the Executive Summary.
- Consider the relationship between Zones 1 and 4 with regard to open space (strategically using the streetscapes as public space).
- Highlight the 24-month timeframe from page 26, include easy to reference bullet points, and highlight the importance of the public realm for Zone 4

With regard to future meetings, Committee will convene on December 1 for a briefing on Preston Center by the Advisory Task Force, and may provide a recommendation to CPC either December 1 or December 15. The meeting was closed to order at 10:10 a.m.