

City of Wimberley
221 Stillwater
Wimberley, Texas
Minutes of Special Meeting of City Council
October 27, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

City Council meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Steve Thurber.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Steve Thurber and Councilmembers Tom Talcott, Cindy Anderson, Matt Meeks, Pam Showalter, and John White.

Staff Present: City Administrator Don Ferguson

Workshop Session

A workshop to discuss issues relating to the proposed Central Wimberley Master Plan.

Mayor Thurber explained meeting procedures and reiterated the goal of the Plan to guide the growth of Wimberley and preserve its unique character. To facilitate discussion, Mayor Thurber read a list of *Frequently Asked Questions (attached to these minutes)* highlighting community concerns.

Discussion included:

- Charrette process and public involvement
- Execution of the Plan and associated costs
- Public vetting of the proposed Plan
- Plan recommendations on connectivity, including streets, sidewalks, trails, and parking
- Need for a master plan to promote responsible growth
- Uncertainty regarding future Council actions
- Purpose of the Plan as a long-term vision containing conceptual designs
- Need for wayfinding signage
- Possible economic impact of the Plan
- Implementation of specific projects, policies, and programs, including the City's role in the implementation process
- Prioritization of certain improvements, such as mobility and parking
- Alternate options for illustrating specific Plan elements
- Possible re-naming of the Plan as a "Vision" (for Wimberley's future)
- Scheduling an additional workshop to address each item listed in Table 5 (pages 77-78)

Mayor Thurber proposed Monday, November 3, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. as a viable date to schedule an additional workshop meeting and Council agreed.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Thurber called the meeting adjourned.

Adjourn

Mayor Thurber called the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Recorded by:

Cara McPartland
Cara McPartland

These minutes approved on the 6th of November, 2014.

APPROVED:

Steve Thurber
Steve Thurber, Mayor



Central Wimberley Master Plan FAQ

Streets

- **Community concern:** *“Streets in the plan do not allow left turns by vehicles.”*
 - There is no mention in the Master Plan of eliminating left turn lanes. All streets in the Master Plan are multi-directional. We are not sure where this idea was spawned. A few concepts for Wimberley Square do explore the closure of Hinson Street around the Square; thereby removing the left hand turn onto Hinson Street from Ranch Road 12. Reference Master Plan pages 39-41; 55-56; and 97-99.

- **Community concern:** *“How can the City maintain Ranch Road 12?”*
 - Ranch Road 12 is owned by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). As a transportation department, TxDOT roadways are intended to move automobiles at greater speeds than other roadways in the region – a goal that conflicts with Wimberley’s desire to maintain a slow, more rural pace of life. As part of a plan to designate a new route for Ranch Road 12, TxDOT has proposed turning over ownership and maintenance responsibility for Ranch Road 12 to the City from FM 3237 to FM 2325. Assuming control and responsibility for the referenced section of Ranch Road 12 would help the City ensure that the corridor serves the walkability desires that the stakeholders have expressed for the future of Central Wimberley. At minimum, the City would require TxDOT to overlay the subject portion of Ranch Road 12 prior to turning it over to the City to minimize maintenance costs over a ten (10) year period. Reference Master Plan pages 39, 55, and 76-77.

- **Community concern:** *“Roads will eliminate trees.”*
 - The developed portions of the Study Area are already without tree canopy as depicted in the existing conditions. The Central Wimberley Master Plan attempts to rectify that by recommending “green streets” for all roadways that protect (and enhance) the cherished tree canopy of the community. Tree-lined green streets encourage people to park once and walk to destinations such as shops, restaurants and parks. Green streets occur in the public right of way or along access easements. Reference Master Plan pages 38-39, 43, 51, 55, 100, and 108.

- **Community concern:** *“Landscaping in the plan requires water resources.”*
 - The challenge of landscaping is the on-going maintenance required to keep it attractive, as well as water usage. Landscaping design strategies and recommended plant species were specially selected for Wimberley’s unique ecosystem. The plan specifies that low water landscaping should be utilized to ensure minimal water use and lower maintenance for landscape features. Reference Master Plan pages 61-63.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Crossings

- **Community concern:** *“Land needed for streets and sidewalks is excessive.”*
 - The City of Wimberley adopted a mobility plan in November 2003, which cites the need to create a walkable community that is not dominated by roads and parking. The plan illustrates a desire by community stakeholders for expanded sidewalk coverage and riverside trails and access, which eventually covers all streets, with priority being given to bridges, central shopping streets and residential areas. The Central Wimberley Master Plan builds upon the recommendation of the Mobility Plan by providing character visuals of continuous sidewalks along the public right of way. The study area includes 2,672 linear feet of sidewalks today (located immediately surrounding Wimberley Square). The Central Wimberley Master Plan provides the OPPORTUNITY for new sidewalks along both sides of roadways, increasing the linear feet of sidewalks to 44,192. It is assumed that streets will be implemented either with the planned wastewater improvements or when adjacent properties develop. It may take decades for this much sidewalk coverage to be implemented. Reference Master Plan pages 61-63.
 - Streetscape improvements for major and local roadways include pedestrian areas strengthened through sidewalks, wayfinding signage, landscaping and clear crossing areas for pedestrians along Ranch Road 12 at the Wimberley Square, Old Kyle Road and FM 3237. Residential streets feature bulb-outs and continuous sidewalks that promote pedestrian safety. Reference: City of Wimberley Mobility Plan (2003), Central Wimberley Master Plan pages 55-56.

Trails

- **Community concern:** *“The planned loop trail may impact private property.”*
 - A continuous trail joins all areas within Central Wimberley and maximizes walkability between destinations. Trail facilities (3,600 linear feet) connecting Blue Hole Regional Park with Wimberley Square are largely existing. Future improvements could expand this trail to connect Blue Hole Regional Park to the Blanco River Bridge at Ranch Road 12, Wimberley Square and residential areas to a nature center near Deer Creek to create a “loop” system towards Blue Hole Regional Park (adding approximately 7,200 linear feet of existing trails). All graphic representations are describing a vision for the future. If trails are implemented at a later date, exact locations of improvements shall be dependent on property owner participation and more detailed information such as surveyed property lines, topographic and tree surveys, geotechnical information and other detailed existing conditions information. Reference Master Plan page: 50-52 and 77-78.

Safety and Security

- **Community concern:** *“Parking areas, sidewalks and trails will increase the risk of crime within the community.”*

- “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design” is a 50-year movement to improve built conditions and security. To learn more about this movement, please see this website:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime_prevention_through_environmental_design
The recommended green streets promote walking, active streets and eyes on parking areas (reference Master Plan page 39). Landscaping standards are provided for all roads (reference Master Plan pages 61-62). Lighting standards are provided for parking areas (reference Master Plan page 64).

Private Property

- **Community concern:** *“You can’t show roads, trails and parking on private property.”*
 - The already adopted City of Wimberley Transportation Master Plan includes these recommendations. The Central Wimberley Master Plan simply shows the character and design of these. All graphic representations are describing a vision for the future. If projects are implemented later, exact locations of streets and other improvements shall be dependent property owner participation and more detailed information such as surveyed property lines, topographic and tree surveys, geotechnical information and other detailed existing conditions information. Reference Master Plan page: 7
- **Community concern:** *“The Master Plan will have negative effects on property values. “*
 - Recommendations regarding land use and density are believed to have a net positive impact on property values. The Central Wimberley Master Plan strengthens ongoing initiatives to manage growth and recommends changes to existing polices (Village Center Overlay, Entrance Corridor, Rural Retreat, etc.). Buildings style, scale, massing, architectural color and materials, and landscaping guidelines are provided in order to ensure a development pattern that is aligned with the established aesthetic and vision of the community. This document does not suggest that the implementation recommendations will remain fixed, yet instead, may evolve into a more refined framework for implementation from which City Council, City staff, Planning and Zoning Commission members and other community leaders will bring forth for action over many years.
- **Community concern:** *“The Master Plan calls for the use of eminent domain to accomplish the various improvements (streets, parking lots, trails, etc.) set forth in the Plan. “*
 - The Master Plan outlines various recommendations the community may pursue in maintaining and improving central Wimberley over the next twenty (20) years, building from the vision developed during the charrette. It is envisioned that many of the capital improvements set forth in the Master Plan, including, but not limited to, new streets, trails and parking lots, will be located and developed in partnership with property owners and those desiring to develop in the subject area. The location of such improvements as shown in the Master Plan is intended to reflect the need for connectivity and not the final location of any future improvement. It does not anticipate the use of eminent domain by the City to acquire property needed for such improvements. To address such concerns, the following language could be added to the Master Plan: “It is not the City’s intent to

acquire roads or other public improvements depicted in this document through the exercise of eminent domain, and nothing in this document should be construed to require the City to use its power of eminent domain.”

- **Community concern:** *“The Master Plan should have been properly vetted with the owners of property involved prior to its release.”*
 - The Master Plan was developed with input gathered from residents, business owners and property owners who participated in a six (6) month public involvement process. Highlighting the community outreach program was a three (3) day vision charrette that included five (5) focus group meetings with stakeholders, two (2) community meetings and multiple design studios. Along with the charrette, there have been three (3) public meetings, two (2) special meetings with neighborhood groups and numerous individual meetings with affected business and property owners. In all, more than 250 residents, property owners and business owners participated in the master planning process that was publicized in the local newspaper, on the City’s website, through focus group invitation mailings, newspaper and website announcements, public meeting notices and event reminders shared through the City’s Community Information Phone System. Reference Master Plan pages 29-34.

Miscellaneous

- **Community concern:** *“Can the document be called something other than a Master Plan?”*
 - Nothing requires that the document be called a Master Plan. Some have suggested referring to the document as a *Central Wimberley Vision*.
- **Community concern:** *“The Master Plan is based on what other communities have done and is not geared towards preserving the unique character of central Wimberley.”*
 - The Master Plan represents a vision for the future of central Wimberley that was developed based on input from Wimberley residents, business owners and property owners. It includes detailed recommendations intended to preserve the unique character of the subject area as it grows in the future. While the document does include photographs from other communities, the photographs are intended only to illustrate the different examples of how a community can handle issues such as streetscape design and pedestrian access. The document is not recommending the approach or appearance shown in the photographs from other communities. Reference Master Plan pages 37-73 and pages 74-76.