CITY OF LYNNWOOD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
December 19, 2013 Meeting

Commissioners Present: Staff Present:
Richard Wright, Chair Corbitt Loch, Dep. Director Comm. Dev.
Robert Larsen, First Vice Chair Gloria Rivera, Senior Planner
Chad Braithwaite, Second Vice Chair Shay Davidson, Administrative Asst.
Doug Jones
Michael Wojack
Ian Cotton

Commissioners Absent: Other:
Maria Ambalada Councilmember Van AuBuchon

A. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chair Wright at 7:00 p.m.

B. Approval of Meeting Minutes - None

C. Public Comments - None

D. Public Hearings – None

E. Work Session

Deputy Director Loch explained that the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update is required by the Growth Management Act. The City must confirm that the Comprehensive Plan and all of the City’s Development Regulations comply with the latest iteration of the Growth Management Act and all of the related policies and plans adopted pursuant to it. Staff has been diligently working on this item which is why the Planning Commission hasn’t had very many meetings in 2013. The work on the Comprehensive Plan will be a major part of the Planning Commission’s work program in 2014 as it needs to be completed by June 30, 2015.

Deputy Director Loch referred to the various elements and generally commented on each one. One substantive item with Land Use is ensuring that the City plans for accommodating the 20-year Growth Forecast which has been established by Snohomish County. This will be a challenge because the growth targets approved last year increased Lynnwood’s future residential population by 10,000.
The issue is what land use designations will need to change to accommodate 10,000 additional residents.

Right now the Parks Department is producing a Comprehensive Parks Plan. Deputy Director Loch recommended that that Parks Plan have the major part of the information regarding Parks for Lynnwood. Then what would remain in the Comprehensive Plan for Parks would just be some overarching policies that establish the community vision such as ample number of parks, clean parks, level of service, etc.

The Transportation Element will be largely influenced by the City’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan which is done by the Public Works Department. The Planning Commission will need to decide how much information they want to retain in the Comprehensive Plan and how much to defer to the Transportation Plan. Commissioner Larsen asked if there is a separate body that looks at the Transportation Plan. Deputy Director Loch said that there is not. It is expected that the Planning Commission would review that.

The Housing Element will largely be driven by the countywide planning policies as they have instruction for all the Snohomish Country jurisdictions about how to plan for Lynnwood’s fair share or need-based number of affordable housing units. A new interjurisdictional entity called AHA (Alliance for Housing Affordability) created this year will help the City with this by providing some technical assistance.

The Economic Development Element will be retooled to see what strategies in the 2001 Economic Development Plan need to be updated.

Senior Planner Gloria Rivera referred to the Historical and Cultural Resources Element and commented that there appears to be some duplication since the Parks Department has renamed itself. This Element will probably just focus on Historical areas of concern.

Environmental Resources Element will contain technical amendments related to laws and mandates regarding critical areas, wetlands, stormwater, air quality, etc.

Capital Facilities Element will also reflect technical amendments addressing the facilities needed in the community to accommodate anticipated future growth and strategies for achieving that over the 20-year period.

Staff will recommend that the Energy and Sustainability Element be folded into Environmental Element and not be a standalone element because there is some overlap in issues. If the Planning Commission concurs, there would be one less chapter in the Comprehensive Plan.
The Implementation Element is more of a housekeeping element about the mechanics of the Comprehensive Plan and is expected to be the easiest one to update.

Deputy Director Loch explained that the draft schedule on item E2 would bring the various parts of the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission. Staff will be asking the Planning Commission in January what kind of public participation process they would like to have for this. Commissioner Larsen asked when the public hearings might occur. Deputy Director Loch stated that those will be built into the schedule based on the Planning Commission’s instructions in January.

Commissioner Wojack referred to the additional 10,000 residents and asked if the county’s directives can force the City to change zoning to make room for more housing. Deputy Director Loch replied that the Growth Management Hearings Board or a judge could instruct the City to accommodate the growth, but they wouldn’t tell the City how to do it as this is a local decision.

2. Discussion – 2014 Work Plan

Deputy Director Loch referred to the proposed schedule for 2014. He commented that it is very hard to predict with accuracy how much of the Comprehensive Plan Update will be accomplished in 2014. This is a tentative schedule that is expected to change. The important thing to recognize is that once the Planning Commission is done with its work, the Comprehensive Plan Update will still have to go through the Council review process. It is unknown how long that part of the process will take so staff’s goal is to be able to deliver something to the Council by the end of 2014. This would give them plenty of time during the first half of 2015 to complete it. He pointed out that there is also the issue of Development Regulations, Zoning Code, Critical Areas Code, and Sign Code. If amendments to those need to be made based on the Comprehensive Code changes or policy decisions then it’s incumbent on staff to put those together too. He summarized that 2014 will probably be busier for the Planning Commission that 2013.

Deputy Director Loch noted that there are some code amendments that are on staff’s radar from Council so those are on the work plan list also. One of those items is the Outdoor Lighting regulations. Another item is regulations for marijuana operations and businesses because of changes in state law.

He pointed out that the City will have a new Mayor beginning January 1. There is always the possibility that this individual may have additional projects for staff or the commission to work on. There will also be a change in the City Council makeup which could result in further instructions for the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Larsen stated that each one of these elements is a major subject. The Staff and Planning Commission will have to be organized and efficient in
order to keep this process moving. He then referred to the Draft College District
Subarea Plan and asked Deputy Director Loch if this will be a big discussion.
Deputy Director Loch said they are not sure yet how big this will be. He noted
that it is not an amendment that is required by the Growth Management Act so if
it needs its own schedule they can do that. Senior Planner Rivera stated that
staff has been in contact with the college. They are updating their plans right now
so staff will be working closely with them as well as with some of the
stakeholders, especially property owners around the college. Commissioner
Larsen commented that there seems to be a shift of interest to community
colleges as a result of the increases in four-year college tuitions. The area
around Everett Community College has really exploded, and he thinks this will
happen here too. Deputy Director Loch concurred.

Commissioner Wojack said he had seen in the paper that the City Council had
put a moratorium on the marijuana issue for six months. He asked if this was
intended to give the Planning Commission time to go through this item. Deputy
Director Loch indicated it was.

Commissioner Jones asked if there has been a lot of interest in marijuana
businesses in Lynnwood. Deputy Director Loch said the application window
closes tomorrow at the Washington State Liquor Control Board. After it’s closed
the City will know the number that will be proposed in Lynnwood. Already, there
are three applications for retail operations. The Liquor Board will approve a
maximum of two. There is no limit to the number of production or processing
operations per jurisdictions. There is one application right now that staff is aware
of.

F. Other Business

1. Appreciation of Ian Cotton

The Planning Commission expressed their appreciation and congratulated Ian
Cotton on becoming a new Councilmember. Commissioner Cotton commented
that it has been a pleasure working with the Planning Commission.

G. Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Van AuBuchon thanked the Planning Commission for their
service to the City noting that it was essential to the functioning of the City. He
noted that the Council is facing some very challenging issues right now. One of
these is the marijuana issue. He explained that approving marijuana businesses
would violate their oath of office because of the conflict with federal regulations.

He commented on the leadership changes in the city with the new Mayor and
new makeup of the Council. He hopes that this year the Council will meet and
take a formal presentation from the Planning Commission as is required to be
done annually by the Lynnwood Municipal Code. He noted that the LMC also allows for joint meetings with the Planning Commission and the Council in order to use time most efficiently. He thinks the marijuana issue would be an ideal subject for this type of meeting. He referred to the Comprehensive Plan Update Work Plan and noted that the Planning Commission has their work cut out for them this year.

H. Director’s Report

Deputy Director Loch reported the following:

- There will be a vacancy in the Planning Commission once again with the departure of Ian Cotton. Staff will be accepting applications from citizens. He encouraged the commissioners to encourage people to apply. The *Inside Lynnwood* newsletter will also contain an announcement in January.
- Mayor Gough has scheduled a community meeting on December 30 regarding the one marijuana application to the Liquor Control Board for production and processing. The way the rules work is the Liquor Control Board gives the local jurisdictions 20 days to provide any comments about applications.
- He encouraged the Planning Commission to be involved in the work on the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan. This will be a great opportunity for citizens to participate individually. It will also come before the Planning Commission in 2014.
- He thanked the Planning Commission for their service to the City. He stated that staff appreciates what the Planning Commission does for the City.

I. Commissioners’ Comments

Commissioner Jones thanked Councilmember AuBuchon for his comments about joint meetings. He is also interested in seeing this happen.

Commissioner Wojack said he is glad to see the Outdoor Lighting Code coming up again. As he has been driving at night a lot lately he has noticed some cities are very dark, but Lynnwood has the glow of Alderwood Mall which can be seen from miles away. He stated that this is a waste of energy and contributes to light pollution. He thinks it really needs to get addressed.

Commissioner Jones asked when Lynnwood University is typically held. Staff indicated it was held annually from September through November. Commissioner Jones asked staff if there are plans to move the Planning Commission toward more of a paperless process. Ms. Davidson explained that staff was supportive of this idea, but one of the commissioners did not have access to a computer.
Commissioner Larsen spoke in support of attending the Lynnwood Police Academy. He noted that they can request to ride with an officer for a shift which is quite an experience and one he fully recommends. He commented that Lynnwood really has a great Police Department.

Commissioner Cotton thanked staff and the other commissioners for a great year. He expressed appreciation for all of their wisdom, patience, and guidance.

Commissioner Larsen praised Commissioner Cotton for his great questions and a good mind. He advised him to never say that he doesn’t know what he’s talking about because he has a lot of great thoughts and ideas.

J. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

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Richard Wright, Chair