

City of Lynnwood
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
March 14, 2002

Commissioners present:

Dave Johnson, Chair
Brian Bigler
Patrick Decker
Cynthia Olson
Tia Peycheff
Jacqueline Powers

Staff present:

James Cutts, Community Development Director
Ron Hough, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Dennis Lewis, Senior Planner
Tim Fargo, Assistant Planner

SUMMARY OF THE MARCH 14, 2002, MEETING MINUTES

Development Regulations – Continued Discussion

Senior Planner Lewis gave a brief update on the Development Regulations process, outlining elements and deadlines in Phase One and Phase Two.

Neighborhood Planning – Beginning the Process

Planning Manager Hough explained the measurable goals and objects outlined in the Comprehensive Plan relating to neighborhood planning and how staff intends to proceed.

Environmental Element for the Comprehensive Plan – Introduction

Assistant Planner Fargo described the Environmental Element that will provide policy guidance for related regulations including the update of the Critical Areas Ordinance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Olson moved to approve the February 28, 2002, minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bigler, and carried unanimously.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER DISCLOSURES

Chair Johnson announced that he has contracted with the City of Lynnwood to teach cooking classes through the Recreation Center but felt that it would not affect his ability to make decisions on any items before the Commission this evening.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Community Development Director (CDD) Cutts reported on the following:

- Community Development Report – This report outlines events in the Community Development Department and will be provided to the Commissioners on a monthly basis.
- City Center Project – A newsletter was distributed to all City residents outlining the progress of the project. It will be published and distributed three or four times a year. CDD Cutts discussed the upcoming open houses and display at Alderwood Mall.
- North Gateway Annexation Court Case –The Court will announce its decision regarding this annexation on March 22. A decision made by the State Supreme Court (Grant County Fire

Protection District No. 5 v. City of Moses Lake) finding the petition system used in annexations to be invalid could have an impact on the decision for North Gateway.

Planning Manager Hough reported on the following:

- City Council
 - ✓ March 11 Work Session – Sr. Planner Lewis updated the Council on the Development Regulations Update process. Similar updates will be provided at the first Council work session of each month.
 - ✓ March 18 Work Session – Assoc. Planner Amrine will describe the Planning Commission’s progress with the Mobile Home Park Zoning project, including possible changes to City codes related to mobile home park development standards.
- Growth Management Act Timeline – A Bill has been passed extending the timeline; however, it will not affect the timeline staff and the Commission are working toward for consistency between regulations and plans. Plan/Zone consistency is an ongoing requirement.
- Tree Ordinance – Public Works is still working on the draft ordinance. They will present their work to the Parks Board on April 2. Interested members of the Planning Commission are invited to attend. The ordinance will eventually return to the Commission for a hearing.
- City of Lynnwood Community Profile – Demographic information prepared by Assistant Planner Fargo was distributed to the Commission. The profile will continue to develop as new Census data becomes available later this summer.

WORK SESSION

Development Regulations – Continued Discussion

Senior Planner Lewis advised the Commission on the progress of the Development Regulations Update Project (DRUP), outlining the elements and deadlines in Phase One and Phase Two. Mr. Lewis added the reception from the City Council meeting on March 4 was favorable. In addition to the monthly update, work sessions may be held for issues that require more discussion. The following are Mr. Lewis’ responses to questions from the Commissioners:

Advised Commissioner Decker that “secure community transition facilities” referred to housing for sexual predators. Also explained that “minimum residential density ‘bright-lines’” referred to density parameters that are not to exceed below or above, depending on the case; i.e., not below four-dwelling units per net acre. Planning Manager Hough added that ‘bright lines’ are not specifically stated in law, but resulted from appeals to the Growth Hearing Boards in cases that challenged cities or counties planning densities.

Explained for Commissioner Powers that the \$35,000 grant will offset salary costs in Community Development Department for staff’s work on the Development Regulations. CDD Cutts explained that this salary savings would be used toward the 2% budget cut required of all Departments.

Planning Manager Hough explained for Commissioner Olson that “early and continuous citizen involvement” is required by the GMA and accomplished through a combination of open meetings, workshops, neighborhood meetings, questionnaires, etc. Citizens have many opportunities to be involved but meetings on long-range planning and regulations are often poorly attended.

Neighborhood Planning – Beginning the Process

Planning Manager Hough briefly explained that there are measurable goals and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan relating to neighborhood planning. Specifically, Neighborhood Preservation (Housing Element) and Neighborhood Preservation and Renewal (Land Use Element). Mr. Hough then directed the Commission to the Tentative Schedule for the Neighborhood Planning Process included in their agenda packet.

The City's Nuisance Abatement Officer plans to update neighborhood/ housing condition information and provide that to staff to assist with the neighborhood planning process.

During discussion, Mr. Hough responded to the Commissioners with the following:

Specific neighborhoods will be defined throughout the city. At this time it is not known what criteria will be used to determine a neighborhood or how many neighborhoods will be identified through this process.

Referring to neighborhood planning, staff will develop methods to help neighborhoods organize themselves, with assistance and incentives from the City.

Development regulations will be used to deal with parking issues, maintenance, etc. in the neighborhoods.

Chair Johnson inquired about the preservation of the neighborhoods, as defined by City Council. CDD Cutts responded that Council's goal is that the neighborhoods have self-pride, which would lead to self-policing.

Commissioner Peycheff cautioned in the area of maintenance where neighbors may disagree with others' landscaping, decorating, etc.

At the suggestion of Commissioner Decker, staff will contact Mountlake Terrace for information about their neighborhood planning efforts.

Environmental Element for the Comprehensive Plan – Introduction

Assistant Planner Fargo provided the Commission with a brief overview of the draft Environmental Element that will provide policy guidance for related regulations including the Critical Areas Ordinance. Mr. Fargo added that the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan states that the Environmental Element be adopted by September 1, 2002. Work sessions will be held with the Planning Commission on April 25 and May 9, with a public hearing scheduled for May 23.

Commissioner Bigler added that the Critical Habitat Designation for Chinook will be rescinded soon. This will remove many of the protections from Swamp Creek and Scriber Creek.

At the conclusion of Mr. Fargo's presentation, Chair Johnson expressed his opinion on tree preservation and the definitions of the terms 'preservation' and 'vague.' Mr. Johnson suggested that precise and unambiguous words be used. Specifically, he disagreed with the statement, "Replacement of trees removed from a site is another common form of tree preservation." Replacement is not preserving. Johnson believes the statement makes the document vague and ambiguous. He would like that statement removed. He would be less uncomfortable about ambiguity if staff wanted to prepare a 'Tree Ordinance' rather than a 'Tree Preservation Ordinance.'

Commissioner Powers inquired about the terminology 'best available science' as covered by Mr. Fargo. Commissioner Bigler responded that defines the criteria used to establish the various ordinances; i.e., a sensible peer review process established by the tenants of science.

Commissioner Bigler recommended a policy that would read: Promote the Use of Innovative Conservation Measures, Such as Low-Impact Development Techniques. Mr. Bigler then explained that low-impact development is an upcoming science, including such things as pervious concrete. Commissioner Peycheff added that there are many green building techniques that are quite successful and there may be funds from different sources that would be advantageous to the City.

Commissioner Decker inquired about wildlife habitats and asked which ones are to be maintained and enhanced. He suggested being very specific about what species of wildlife and their habit should be encouraged to coexist in the city. Commissioner Bigler added that eventually the trees in Lynnwood will be considered old growth that will support eagles, marmots, spotted owls, etc., and these species will recover if the habitat is maintained and enhanced.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Johnson thanked Commissioner Peycheff for distributing copies of “About Growth” to the Commission. Mr. Johnson also announced that he might not be able to attend the next Planning Commission meeting due to surgery on March 21. Commissioner Olson will Chair the meeting if he is unable to attend.

INFORMATION ITEM

Planning Manager Hough announced that an informal public meeting on the College District Plan will be conducted at the next meeting, March 28, and is hoping for good attendance by those affected. Commissioner Decker offered to provide the name of a person involved with the college who is very interested in this plan and should be made aware of the informal public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bigler, seconded by Commissioner Powers, moved to adjourn. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Dave Johnson, Chair