



Minutes

DESCHUTES COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
DESCHUTES SERVICES CENTER  
1300 NW WALL STREET, BEND, OREGON, 97703  
FEBRUARY 8, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.

THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN PERSON, ELECTRONICALLY, AND BY PHONE. IT WAS AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDED AND CAN BE ACCESSED AT THE DESCHUTES COUNTY MEETING PORTAL WEBSITE [WWW.DESCHUTES.ORG/MEETINGS](http://WWW.DESCHUTES.ORG/MEETINGS)

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Kieras called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Planning Commissioners present in-person: Matthew Cyrus, Susan Altman, Kelsey Kelley, Nathan Hovekamp.

Staff present: Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Department (CDD) Director; Will Groves, Planning Manager; Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner.

II. Approval of Minutes – January 25, 2024

Commissioner Altman motioned to approve minutes; Commissioner Kelley seconded. Unanimous vote to approve minutes.

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Action Items

1. **Deliberations: Deschutes County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update (Nicole Mardell, Senior Planner)**

- Nicole presented an overview of status and deliberation options of Module 2, natural resources and natural hazards.
- Vice Chair Kieras began discussion of matrix items:
  - 1) Should policy language be added to require water conservation / monitoring measures?  
**Discussion:** Commissioner Altman in favor of policy option A - adding language encouraging state agencies to identify local areas of concern for water availability and explore additional regulations or requirements to ensure water capacity is not negatively impacted by development.  
**Motion:** Commissioner Hovekamp moved to recommend option A in decision matrix, Commissioner Altman seconded. Vote: Yes – Commissioners Cyrus, Altman, Kelley, Hovekamp, No – Vice Chair Kieras.
  - 2) Should additional policy language be added to address coordinate with state agencies on water related issues?  
**Discussion:** No changes needed.  
**Motion:** None made.
  - 3) Should policy language related to tribal governments be amended?  
**Discussion:** No changes needed.  
**Motion:** None made.
  - 4) Should additional references to wild and scenic waterways be added to the Plan?  
**Discussion:** Vice Chair Kieras agrees with staff recommendation option A

- Motion:** Commissioner Kieras moved to recommend Option A, Commissioner Kelley seconded. Vote: Yes – Commissioners Cyrus, Altman, Kelley, Kieras, No – Commissioner Hovekamp.
- 5) Should policy language be amended to ensure county participation in Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative?  
**Discussion:** No changes needed.  
**Motion:** None made.
- 6) Should policy language related to dark skies be strengthened?  
**Discussion:** no changes needed.  
**Motion:** None made.
- 7) Should the county add new policies to address climate and air quality issues from human development?  
**Discussion:** Commissioner Kelley asked about a hybrid option between existing language and Option A, and role of climate action plans.  
**Motion:** Commissioner Cyrus moved to adopt proposed language in Option A. Commissioner Altman seconded. Vote: Yes – Commissioner Cyrus, No – Commissioners Altman and Hovekamp. **Motion:** Commissioner Kelley moved to include a hybrid option of the existing language and Option A, “Develop and implement a climate action plan to address the potential future impacts of climate change on Deschutes County through incentives and or regulations. Commissioner Hovekamp seconded. Vote: Yes – Commissioners Altman, Kelley, Hovekamp, Kieras, Abstained: Commissioner Cyrus.
- 8) Should the County update wildlife inventories regularly and expand protection for wildlife species? Should state and federal recommendations be explicitly incorporated into these inventories or protections?  
**Discussion:** Existing language is appropriate.  
**Motion:** None made.
- 9) Should policy language be amended to better balance protection of property rights and protection of wildlife resources through use of incentives instead of regulations?  
**Discussion:** Discussion from group on existing incentive programs, and benefits of incentive based versus regulatory program. Group noted clear consensus to emphasize use of incentives as a first line approach to addressing issues and asked staff to note this to the Board.  
**Motion:** Commissioner Cyrus moved to adopt proposed language. No second. Group consensus to retain existing draft language and emphasize use of incentives to Board.
- 10) Should additional detail on the 2021-2023 wildlife inventory be added to the chapter 5 narrative?  
**Discussion:** Group discussed extensive community participation and felt it was appropriate to add a brief sentence on the process and perhaps a link to the story map if possible.  
**Motion:** Group consensus to add a sentence to chapter 5 noting there was a process to review and update Deschutes County’s mule deer inventory from 2021-2023, which included extensive community engagement and public record, although ultimately the decision was made not to update.
- 11) Should a limitation be placed on housing and development in high wildfire risk areas?  
**Discussion:** Will Groves provided clarification on the language and potential forthcoming code changes resulting from SB 80. Four commissioners want language to remain unchanged, one undecided.  
**Motion:** None made
- 12) Should additional policy be added to require more than one access/egress route for development in wildfire prone areas?  
**Discussion:** Will Groves noted that this item will be addressed through a separate project, this code provision is currently discretionary and will be required to be fixed through the County’s clear and object process.  
**Motion:** None made.
- 13) Should an additional policy be added to address availability of affordable fire insurance?  
**Discussion:** No changes.

**Motion:** None made.

14) Should the county integrate Central Oregon LandWatch’s recommended edits to the narrative summary of wildfire in Chapter 7.

**Discussion:** Several commissioners noted that a hybrid approach would be best fit – include information on causes of wildfire related to wildfire management practices as well as warmer and drier conditions,

**Motion:** Group consensus to direct staff to rewrite the narrative summary to note several causes of increased frequency and occurrence of wildfire events related to forest management practices as well as warmer and drier conditions.

Matrix discussion concluded. Peter asked if modules 3 & 4 could be available for next meeting. Nicole asked about the level of detail commissioners are looking for, what are priority items. Will suggested that more material could be teed up. Vice Chair Kiera suggested commissioners go through letters, identify items important to them for discussion, and send to Nicole for inclusion in the next packet.

**V. Planning Commission and Staff Comments**

Will Groves gone for next meeting. Continuing work on 2040 Comprehensive Plan; clear and objective standards review; Mini-storage units in MUA10; 2024 legislative short session; ADU’s in EFU

Peter discussed Planning Commission recruitment closes 2/9/24, will have an update in two weeks. Interviews mid-March, new planning commissioner on board by end March. 2024/25 Work Plan work session March 14<sup>th</sup>, hearing March 28<sup>th</sup>. Short Term Rental conversation update; due to two applicant initiated amendments, will be postponing scoping of Newberry Country Plan. Board of County Commissioners meeting with Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on February 7<sup>th</sup> regarding DEQ letter regarding aquifer loading.

All commissioners expressed gratitude for the thorough process of the deliberations.

**VI. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tracy Griffin

All materials including (but not limited to) video, presentations, written material and submittals are subject to the County Retention Policy.