

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Approved Regular Meeting Minutes: November 14, 2023
In-person and Zoom Hybrid Meeting

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Maddy Larson, Cherie Finazzo (via Zoom connection), Vice Chair Ashton McCartney (via Zoom connection) Melissa Cranmer (via Zoom connection) David Kleweno; Sam Castic; Meredith LaBonte; Janne Kaje, Lois Lee (via Zoom connection)

Staff and others present: Nick Holland, Senior Planner; Councilmember Bodi; Phillip Hill, City Administrator; Kristina Haworth, SCJ Consulting, Andrew Oliver, Leeland Consulting; David Fiske, Leeland Consulting; Sarah Phillips, Climate Action Committee

Members of the Public: n/a

Planning Commissioners absent: n/a

Call to order: Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Land Acknowledgement: Cmr. LaBonte read the land acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda

Cmr. Castic made a motion to approve the agenda, Cmr. Kleweno seconded, and the motion to approve the agenda was carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Cmr. Kaje made a motion to approve the October 10, 2023, meeting minutes as amended; Cmr. Castic seconded.

All voted to approve the October 10, 2023, minutes as amended the motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Dates:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023.

Citizen Comment

Sarah Phillips said that she is here to listen to the progress of the comprehensive plan update. She shared information about an upcoming urban forest project. She mentioned several grants that have been received for the project. She described a massive planting of vegetation and trees in three thousand square feet of urban area. She said that the event will be held on December 9th and there will be several volunteers. Chair Larson asked a question about the purpose of the name of the project and Ms. Phillips provided a response. She elaborated and spoke about how native plants and trees flourish in the appropriate environment. Councilmember Bodi commented and indicated that the funding for the project was as fast as she has ever seen for a project of this type. She asked which of the Yakima tribe elders would be represented at the project and Ms. Phillips provided the answer. Cmr. Kleweno said that the US government released its climate status report this week and provided some information on that report. Ms. Phillips spoke about some of the work that the Climate Action Committee was prioritizing. Various Commissioners provided their input on the issue of climate.

City Council Liaison Report

Councilmember Bodi said the reasonable use exception ordinance had a public hearing and it was adopted by the Council. She thanked the Commission for its recommendations. She said that the code changes came from a neighbor who opposed a reasonable use exception on a property adjacent to theirs. She spoke about

1 how the changes will improve construction on lots that have critical areas. Councilmember Bodi said the sign
2 ordinance and changes to that code will be considered by Council this year. City Administrator Hill provided
3 an update and said that the Council will need to adopt the ordinance. Councilmember Bodi said that
4 residential parking permits may be required for on street parking in certain areas of LFP. She said that an
5 updated budget has also been adopted. She said that funding of police officers and 911 services were a
6 priority for the mid-point budget adjustments. Councilmember Bodi said a Council dinner is occurring at the
7 local 104 restaurant tomorrow evening.

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9 Chair Larson said that the capacity of the planning department to keep pace with inspections for mitigation
10 projects that RUEs require may be challenging given the increase in development and land use policy.
11 Councilmember Bodi said that the Council's policy for staff funding is to have permit fees cover actual
12 department costs.

13 Old Business

14 ***Comprehensive Plan Update***

15 Cristina Haworth introduced the topics of discussion for tonight's old business. She spoke about the current
16 schedule as it has updated and about upcoming progress that should occur on the comprehensive plan
17 update. She said that the city received the grant that will fund middle housing research. She also said that the
18 climate planning grant has been submitted for consideration. She indicated that Cmr. Larson, Cranmer, and
19 Kleweno would represent the public engagement committee for the comprehensive plan update process. Ms.
20 Haworth continued to present the topics of discussion for the upcoming months. She opened the floor for
21 questions and indicated that Leeland would be presenting information this evening.

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24 Chair Larson asked where to go to find information on the comprehensive plan update. Senior Planner
25 Holland provided an update on where to find information for the comprehensive plan update. Chair Larson
26 asked if the Commission could prepare anything in advance for future meetings. Ms. Haworth responded
27 and said to review the current comprehensive plan chapter relative to the specific meeting discussion.

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29 David Fiske (Leeland Consulting) presented the slides that were in the commission packet for this meeting.
30 He talked about the land capacity analysis and the methods used to collect data. He also provided a housing
31 needs assessment and background information. He described how land capacity is calculated. He also talked
32 about guidance recently received from the Washington Department of Commerce on the topic. Mr. Fiske
33 provided some background information to supplement the packet for this week's meeting. Councilmember
34 Bodi asked how consideration of home ownership and rental gets compared. Mr. Fiske replied and indicated
35 that there is not a differentiation between those types of housing tenants. He said that affordable housing is
36 mostly found in the townhome type of unit, and not so much in the single-family type. Councilmember Bodi
37 said that rentals are more affordable than owning a home for a young family. Chair Larson said that the
38 balance between a variety of housing types and sizes would be appealing to investors. She said that she is
39 interested in the system that create investment opportunities within the community which tend to disrupt
40 equity in housing ownership. Andrew Oliver (Leeland Consulting) talked about how the housing analysis was
41 put together for LFP and said that it should carry over into the goals and policies that get developed for the
42 comprehensive plan. He said that tonight's focus will be mostly on housing types and income levels. Mr.
43 Fiske presented a slide on housing needs by income and provided explanations and information to support
44 and supplement the slide graphics. Mr. Oliver provided a slide that described the steps for the land capacity
45 analysis and provided explanations and information to support and supplement the slide graphics.
46 Councilmember Bodi asked specifically about steps three and four in the land capacity analysis. Mr. Oliver
47 provided an explanation and indicated that Commerce has been struggling to provide guidance on the topics.
48 He clarified that his study only looked at capacity and not unit count. Mr. Oliver presented a slide on the first
49 step of the analysis and provided explanations and information to support and supplement the slide graphics.
50 Mr. Oliver presented a map that illustrated the vacant and re-developable parcels in LFP and those parcels
51 that are encumbered by critical areas. Cmr. Kaje said that not all critical areas are the same, and the maps
52 provided in the Leeland study don't represent data at the parcel level. He said that after critical area

1 regulations are applied specifically, the landslide and steep slope critical areas have the biggest effect on the
2 map, yet in many cases they do not in fact limit development but simply require soil and slope analysis to
3 ensure that development does not destabilize the area. He provided some suggestions on how to apply
4 critical area regulations along with some policy options that the Council and public might have about
5 development. Chair Larson said that this map is a model, but that it illustrates a realistic look at what might
6 occur. Cmr. Kaje said that he has calculated the possibilities (on his own parcel) based on the information
7 provided by Leeland and said that the capacity might be underestimated based on the methodology used. Mr.
8 Oliver explained his reasoning used in the study and responded to Cmr. Kaje's comments. He said that the
9 maps should not be misconstrued as policy statements. Mr. Oliver presented a slide on assumed density by
10 zone and provided explanations and information to support and supplement the slide graphics. Mr. Oliver
11 presented a slide on additional middle housing capacity and provided explanations and information to
12 support and supplement the slide graphics. Cmr. Kaje said he struggled with step three and asked for
13 clarification on some of the math used to arrive at the numbers presented. Mr. Oliver said that the sales price
14 per unit is represented and that the calculations are contained on a separate spreadsheet that is fairly technical.
15 Mr. Fiske provided some explanations to supplement the statements made by Mr. Oliver. Cmr. Kaje provided
16 an example of a density calculation that could occur given current zoning rules and asked why there were not
17 more re-developable lots included in the calculation. Mr. Oliver provided an explanation. Discussion
18 continued about how capacity and middle housing numbers were calculated. Mr. Oliver presented a slide on
19 ADU capacity and provided explanations and information to support and supplement the slide graphics. He
20 indicated the numbers for potential ADUs are modest but were looked at from the capacity lens. Mr. Oliver
21 presented the slides for steps five and six in the analysis and provided explanations and information to
22 support and supplement the slide graphics. The Leeland team summarized the presentation to this point and
23 provided details on the key takeaways that should be considered given the information presented so far. Mr.
24 Oliver presented a slide on production trends and an analysis of barriers to building potential and provided
25 explanations and information to support and supplement the slide graphics. Mr. Fiske emphasized that
26 looking at historical trends sometimes isn't the best way to predict the future, but that it is the preferred
27 methodology of Commerce and the only real way to provide numbers for this purpose. Councilmember
28 Bodi said that the list of obstacles to development may not be the reality in LFP. She said that the multi-
29 family regulations are basic and that the LFP permit process is very fast. She elaborated on the development
30 barriers that were quoted by the Leeland study via Commerce guidance and indicated that they all exist on the
31 private side, not in LFP as an agency. She emphasized that the assumption is that development regulations
32 and process obstacles exist, but it really isn't the case. She said she is concerned that the perception of
33 needing change should not result in changes to the regulations. Mr. Fiske provided slides on next steps and
34 additional considerations and provided explanations and information to support and supplement the slide
35 graphics. Councilmember Bodi suggested policy that supports community land trust housing projects and
36 policy that supports non-profit type projects.

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38 Chair Larson asked for input from the Commission. Cmr. Cranmer said that she had no comment at this
39 point. Cmr. LaBonte said that the Growth Management Act (GMA) itself has created the problem of
40 housing. She provided an example of the Charolette area and its housing policy. She also provided another
41 resource in a paper from an academic source which explained that development regulations stifled
42 development which created a lack of supply and thus a lack of housing. She suggested not regulating
43 development so that supply will be created which the market would self-regulate. She asked for input on the
44 concept. Chair Larson said that it was an excellent comment. She said that the decrease in diversity of
45 housing types is a huge driver for housing costs and types. Cmr. LaBonte continued to talk about the
46 housing market and suggested expanding the urban growth boundaries. Cmr. Kleweno said that he would
47 want to look at the parameters and indicated that change to the GMA may not be possible. Cmr. LaBonte
48 said that the group should re-think the housing policy into a rural residential style of development. Mr.
49 Oliver said that there have been a lot of densifications occurring in the northwest region. He said that the
50 density results in more supply. He talked about some policy decisions that can influence housing types and
51 incentives. Cmr. Kaje said he appreciated Cmr. LaBonte's comments. He said that regionally it contributes
52 to protecting rural areas through his service with the King County. He said that there has been opposition to

1 breaking the single-family housing model and that changes to those neighborhoods are needed to create
2 housing diversity and affordability. Chair Larson said that the comments made by Cmr. Kaje are not
3 necessarily the feelings of the Commission as a whole. She said that it could be more complicated than what
4 he has explained here and that she hasn't seen any other examples of good housing policy. She said that
5 Shoreline has not dealt with growth in a climate conscious way, which is not a direction that LFP would like
6 to head.

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8 Chair Larson thanked Leeland Consulting for their presentation and participation in tonight's meeting. She
9 asked for more information on housing trust projects and more options on affordable housing. Cmr. Kaje
10 clarified his earlier statements and provided some additional perspective on housing. Mr. Fiske emphasized
11 that his team will be researching what has been suggested tonight. Councilmember Bodi provided her
12 perspective on affordable housing policy. Cmr. Lee asked if Leeland could tell us if there are zoning code
13 changes, LFP can make to accommodate affordable housing and innovative designs. Cmr. Cranmer said that
14 there seems to be a lot of competing ideas and suggested that a strategy needs to be employed to narrow
15 down priorities.

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17 **New Business**

18 None.

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20 **Reports and Announcements**

21 City Administrator Hill said that a new Assistant Planner has been hired. He said that there could be three
22 candidates for the Director position and that the tree inventory should be prepared soon for Council review.

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24 **Additional Citizen Comments:**

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27 **Agenda for Next Meeting:**

28 Additional comprehensive plan update topics. Cmr. Kaje suggested a discussion on HB 1110 and the
29 affordability condition within the bill.

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32 **Adjournment:**

33 Cmr. Kaje made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cmr. Castic seconded, and the motion was carried
34 unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.

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36 APPROVED:

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41 Maddy Larson, Planning Commission Chair
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