

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Approved Special Meeting Minutes: November 15, 2022
In-person and Zoom Hybrid Meeting

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Maddy Larson, Vice Chair Lois Lee, Melissa Cranmer, Meredith LaBonte, Walter Hicks, David Kleweno, Ira Gross,

Staff and others present: Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Nick Holland, Senior Planner; Councilmember Lorri Bodi

Members of the Public: none

Planning Commissioners absent: Ashton Alvarez

Call to order: Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Land Acknowledgement: Chair Larson read the land acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda

Cmr. Gross made a motion to approve the agenda, Vice Chair Lee seconded, and the motion to approve the agenda carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Cmr. Gross made a motion to approve the October 18, 2022 meeting minutes. Cmr. LaBonte seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Dates:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2022

Citizen Comment

None.

Report from City Council Liaison

Councilmember Bodi said that the Council is in budget processing, but that they know about the comprehensive plan update process. She said that they are ready to discuss the updates to the sign code and the RUE code amendments. She provided an update on the Sound Transit ST3 project which is being actively debated. She said that the sixty percent plans don't show a lot of detail, but that Sound Transit could have a community meeting sometime in early 2023. She said that Council may elect to request that Sound Transit postpone the widening of 522 to a later date. She provided an update on how some property acquisitions are occurring and indicated that she may attend a Sound Transit board meeting in the future. Cmr. Larson asked about the long-term status of the parking garage and what would occur if the selected town center parcel gets re-developed. Councilmember Bodi responded and indicated that Sound Transit hasn't decided to spend funds on the parking garage as of now.

Chair Larson asked when the budget will be finished and Councilmember Bodi replied and said it should be finished within the next two weeks. She said a public hearing was held on the budget and that two citizens provided comment.

Old Business

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Update and review of 2015 Comprehensive Plan

Director Bennett provided a summary of the planning framework section. He said that the Legacy Plan hasn't been updated but work on the Town Center regulations has contributed to a somewhat different vision. Chair Larson asked about the Healthy Creeks plan and where she could access it. Director Bennett replied that he has not been able to find a Healthy Creeks planning document, but would look around to see what is available that could be sent out.

Councilmember Bodi encouraged everyone to review the Legacy Plan. Chair Larson asked about how the critical area code factors into the comprehensive plan process. Director Bennett responded that the critical areas regulations were updated as a separate process and he explained that typically the comprehensive plan policies are adopted and then the regulations are written under support and guidance from the comprehensive plan. Chair Larson then asked about the climate action portion of the update and Director Bennett responded that there are some mandates related to climate change and housing affordability. He said that the state is still in the process of preparing guidance for these issues. He then introduced the vision statement and said it appears to be consistent with what he hears from Commissioners, but that there's certainly room for improvement. He described how the 2015 vision statement was developed. Discussion ensued on the vision statement and whether it needed to be changed. In response to a question, Director Bennett explained the difference between a strategic plan and a comprehensive plan. Chair Larson provided some guidance on the comprehensive plan process and how it relates to Commission decision making. Cmr. Cranmer asked if there is a tracking system to gauge the progress of implementing comprehensive plan policies. Director Bennett responded that formal tracking hasn't really occurred other than during the comprehensive plan update process. He noted that the comprehensive plan demonstrates that the City is planning in a manner consistent with state and regional land use policy while also establishing goals and policies that are important to the community. Chair Larson said that a community report card would be a good idea and that it would be worth further discussion.

Director Bennett gave a summary of what is in the land use element. He noted that the land use designation is very similar to a zoning district designation and that the land use element is one that is required by the Growth Management Act (GMA). He then highlighted various policies within the land use element.

Director Bennett summarized the environmental quality element. He talked about the supporting regulations and plans that reflect the policies in this element and described how the different policies within the element serve to create standards for environmental protection and stewardship. He talked about how the shoreline master program is implemented and he said that with each shoreline development, the shoreline area is ideally getting more natural. Councilmember Bodi talked about the budget and some requirements from the state such as a stormwater master plan, which are being planned for and for which budget funds are being allocated. She mentioned that these plans and programs reflect an effort to maintain environmental quality. A discussion occurred about when the City may have a comprehensive stormwater plan and Councilmember Bodi said a single staff person is assigned to the stormwater permit. Cmr. Gross asked how often comprehensive plan updates occur and Director Bennett responded that periodic updates are now required every 10 years.

Director Bennett provided an explanation of the housing element and said that it is probably the most detailed of the comprehensive plan elements. He pointed out the housing unit targets which indicate the level of housing capacity the City's zoning regulations need to accommodate. He said that a change in a land use designation could be a possibility if a housing study indicated a need to accommodate additional density.

Councilmember Bodi said that the housing element is an issue that is important to mostly residential communities like LFP because of state mandates to create affordable housing do not come with funding to

1 implement them. She described a 1% cap on property tax increase. She talked about affordable housing and
2 how the housing market often generates non-affordable housing options. She described the effort at the state
3 level to eliminate single family zoning and talked about the need to balance housing density with
4 environmental protection. She said the ADU regulations were very effective in creating affordable housing
5 options. Discussion continued regarding how to develop affordable housing.
6

7 Councilmember Bodi asked how a comprehensive plan update could be appealed and Director Bennett
8 provided an explanation of how an appeal could occur. Vice Chair Lee suggested discussing a scope of work
9 for the comprehensive plan updates. Director Bennett replied that he had planned to provide background on
10 the rest of the comprehensive plan elements, so that the Commission can determine what portions are out of
11 date and need to be updated. He added that the City's yet-to-be-selected consultant will help fine tune the
12 scope of the update as it relates to the housing study and other state mandates for the comprehensive plan
13 updates. Councilmember Bodi asked if budget funds are allocated for the public involvement process of the
14 comprehensive plan updates and Director Bennett replied and described some of the funding sources for the
15 update. Councilmember Bodi asked about the timing of when public engagement may occur, Director
16 Bennett replied and indicated that it should occur within the next few months, after a consultant is hired.
17

18 Director Bennett provided an explanation of the economic development element. He said that the Town
19 Center contains the bulk of the revenue generating land uses in the city and described the history of the
20 element.
21

22 Director Bennett summarized the community service and public safety element. He described the intent of
23 the element and its goals.
24

25 Director Bennett provided an explanation of the capital facilities element and described how it relates to land
26 use and development. He explained the idea of concurrency of infrastructure and how development should
27 only occur when infrastructure to support it is in place. He noted specific goals and policies and said that the
28 community depends on special purpose districts to provide some services, such as fire and water.
29

30 Director Bennett summarized the parks, trails, and open space element. He described the need for updates in
31 this section and said that the the subsequently adopted PROST (parks, recreation, open space, and trails) plan
32 has several items in it relating to this element. Councilmember Bodi noted that a parks master plan was in the
33 works for the waterfront park.
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35 Director Bennett provided an explanation of the utilities element and noted again that outside entities provide
36 various utility services to LFP citizens.
37

38 Director Bennett moved on to the transportation element and explained how concurrency for transportation
39 facilities works in the comp plan. Councilmember Bodi said that the Council is exploring reducing speed
40 limits in some areas of the city and other ways to make the city more pedestrian friendly. Discussion
41 continued about areas where speeding occurs in the city and a need for reduced speed limits.
42

43 Chair Larson suggested moving on to the next topic. Director Bennett mentioned that previous
44 Commissioners were being invited to the next meeting to share their experiences regarding the last
45 comprehensive plan update. Chair Larson asked if Council is budgeting for support by a consultant. Director
46 Bennett replied and said that he has requested funding for consulting service in the planning department
47 budget. Chair Larson described how the Commission could engage the public separately from any spending
48 allocated for that purpose. Vice Chair Lee suggested using a survey to begin outreach to the public. Chair
49 Larson asked when a consultant would be hired for the update and Director Bennett replied that he hoped to
50 have a consultant contract approved by Council by the end of the first quarter in 2023. Chair Larson
51 described a document on the state Department of Commerce website that could be a guide the
52 comprehensive plan update process. Director Bennett offered to send out the Commerce checklist and added

1 that it is an overwhelming document that could be confusing to Commissioners and suggested instead
2 focusing on the elements of the 2015 comp plan that may be out of date because of subsequent planning
3 efforts. He alluded to the fact that guidance with respect to housing and climate change is a moving target
4 and suggested that the Commission spend time determining what is important to update related to local
5 planning documents while the state and county finalize their guidance materials. He suggested that the
6 Commission focus on the planning documents associated with Big Five projects. Vice Chair Lee said that the
7 exiting plan reflects LFP's values but that it needs some material updates to comprehensively reflect current
8 values. Chair Larson and Cmr. Gross shared their understanding of what the Commission's role is in the
9 process. Director Bennett suggested that Commissions could attending some Climate Action Committee and
10 Parks Board meetings to facilitate a dialogue between the City's advisory committees. Chair Larson suggested
11 establishing a plan to prioritize the work on the comprehensive plan update. Councilmember Bodi described
12 how consistency with the Town Center and new ADU regulations are very important and should not be
13 overlooked.

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15 **New Business**

16 n/a

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18 **Reports and Announcements**

19 Director Bennett said that an offer could be extended to a new city arborist. He also confirmed that a new
20 Assistant Planner has been hired in response to a question about the status of that position.

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22 **Additional Citizen Comments:**

23 None.

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25 **Agenda for Next Meeting:**

26 Additional comprehensive plan business and exploration of state mandates. Chair Larson noted that the
27 missing middle group could be ready for a presentation at the next meeting and previous planning
28 commission members are being asked to attend to discuss their experience on the last comprehensive plan
29 update.

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31 **Adjournment:**

32 Cmr. Hicks made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice Chair Lee seconded, and the motion carried
33 unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 pm.

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35 APPROVED:

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39 Lois Lee, Planning Commission Vice Chair