

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

January 23, 2018

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

I. PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION

Members Present: Vice –Chair Corey Clayborne, Commissioners Genevieve Keller, Taneaia Dowell, Jody Lahendro, Kurt Keesecker, and John Santoski

Staff Present: Carolyn McCray, Missy Creasy, Matt Alfele, Zack Lofton, Bart Pfautz

Absent: Chair, Lisa Green

Call to Order: Corey Clayborne, Vice Chairman

AGENDA

Ms. Creasy said the most urgent decision is the meeting time for the open house we are having on March 7th. We have a draft of the fliers but we need to fill in the time for the meeting. Someone is working on getting the contacts together for all of the boards and commissions.

Commissioner Keller asked will that include the City Manager's Group from the neighborhoods that meet quarterly.

Commissioner Lahendro asked why we need 30 groups. He worries that the ones we really need to hear from are the ones who have housing issues as part of their charge. We want to make sure we hear them. That could get diluted by the fire department and dog catcher and it's wasting our time and their time.

Commissioner Keesecker said if we structure it like we did this summer, we can have a group presentation, then break into small groups facilitated by us at different tables and then come back and report out. There were a lot of good ideas that came out of that summer format and he thinks that there might be some good cross pollination.

Ms. Creasy: said we have got to get out the advertising so people will know to come to this meeting on March 7th from 3-5; and 6-8 at Carver Recreation Center. Three commissioners can come from 3-5pm and four commissioners at 6-8pm if two events are held on March 7th. The weather date is the 12th of March. The meetings for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week will be in the NDS conference room from 5:15pm to 7:15 pm.

Commissioner Keller: said it makes no difference to her; anytime is fine.

Commissioners Lahendro and Keesecker: said we met to diagram discussions held last week.

Commissioner Lahendro: said we are trying to take the goals the PC developed in September 5th, staff tasked us with goals based upon public engagement over the summer; and the recently completed report by staff and putting that information info into graphic form. It is not as easy as he had hoped because the goals are more aspirational than based upon what we had heard.

He said we had wanted to take those goals and bring them back to remind us what they were, and check where we had ended up and how they compare. We were going to try to diagram what those goals looked like and the public engagement information. We wanted to diagram it in such a way where it starts with places, connections, transitions, and how it ended up being transformed to the future land use plan. We started to look at different graphic ways of doing the future land use plan that are not so delineated by parcel, more of a heat map type, and that will take some talking with Zack and Bart.

Commission Keesecker: said this is kind of a re-visitation to what we heard in the summer and how we as a group filtered and understood what we heard. We turned those into some goals or principles that we wanted to bake into the land use chapters, land use maps, and try to describe what those goals were in a simpler format. One could look at the data, diagram, and the final product and see a relationship to how the ideas progressed during the summer input to draft the land use plan. If we jumped right to the land use plan, in all its potential complexity, ask people to distill it after it was present in the room, it would be harder to leap into the story, where we heard things, to how we interpreted what we heard or to what we did with what we heard.

Commissioner Lahendro: said it would be a mistake to come in with a proposed future land use plan, and say here it is and give the impression that it is done when we know it's not. We have to tie it back and show what we heard from the public engagement and how absolutely critical it was.

Commissioner Keesecker: said we were fired up, the book really helped but it has been awhile since we checked ourselves against it.

Commissioner Lahendro: said we have to really show what happened and how that happened. He said that was the underlining reason for coming up with this progression.

Commissioner Keesecker: said the question he throws out for tonight is something like that feasible to this group to base a conversation on March 7th to the city groups. In some ways we will be getting more information from them again. It seems like it would be a good trial run before we go out to the public. One meeting where it started to makes sense. We went forward and it was fun again.

Commissioner Lahendro: said it was a walk down memory lane and you could see the progression.

Ms. Creasy: said does it sound like we want to take these lists from the September 5th meeting and send that out to the group and have that be one of the discussion points for Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday.

Commissioner Keesecker: said it is worth relooking at the data book that Katie put together. There were words that showed up a lot, and it is pretty rich with information.

Commissioner Lahendro: said the diagrams for the second public engagement piece were harder to interpret because there were some base colors that were hard to determine. We had about 12 of them and maybe there is a way to consolidate them.

Commissioner Santoski: said in being clear, this is in preparation for us to meet next week and talk about this not necessarily laying out the program for the 7th of March.

Ms. Creasy: said staff is working on some data to send out by the end of the week that will help shape the conversations for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday meetings in preparation for March 7th. She said you really need to hit the ground running to get the majority of that together. She said the regular meeting date February 13th is a very heavy agenda – you all have your homework due, and letting us know which chapter champions you want on the 27th. The 27th will be the last hooray before the last detail on the March 7th and then the March 7th is here.

Discussion of the map with Bart Pfautz and Zack Lofton

Bart Pfautz presented an experiment he had performed on the Commission's most recent draft land use map. He described how he used a GIS tool to create a visual color gradient between the land use areas the Commission had delineated to date. Bart described the tool as a moving window, within which values from the land use areas on the map are averaged and the result applied to the area at the center of the window. The tool moves across the map and results in a gradient. He suggested the gradient helps to visualize the ideas of transition and intensity.

Discussion about the downtown: Chair Lisa Green was absent but her concerns about the transition areas noted that the differences on each side of the railroad tracks due to the topography would not make any sense. We want to set up that for conversation.

Commissioner Lahendro: both sides have frontage on the railroad.

Commissioner Santoski: depends on other factors.

Commissioner Keller: said industrial provides opportunities that don't exist in any other places. That might be the same with the rivers and other transportation linkages.

Commissioner Lahendro: said it shows more intensity

Commissioner Keesecker: asked what point is the intensity on one side to think about what is exactly happening?

Commissioner Keesecker: said since Lisa wanted to talk about the transition of the railroads, we'll talk about it on Monday and we will turn in our homework.

Commissioner Keller: said the information is generally the same. Kurt can read that one better. The definition of how intense that one is versus the other one that can come along as things go.

Commissioner Lahendro: said this will take a long time.

Commissioner Keesecker: said there is still a level of what the public will do for us. Arguing about through lines, definitive maps, and there are a few that are not fully formed in his mind.

Ms. Creasy: said potential discussion for next week is to send questions to think through for next weeks' meeting. Those questions may include:

- A Potential for combining chapter tables
- B What are the ultimate goals regarding the chapters?
- C What are we trying to get out of the conversations?
- D We have had the drafts out there since June 2017. The commission focus has been on the land use chapter,
- E An extensive review, updated all the maps texts, since the last one was approved.

She asked is there something else you want to add? We are still getting comments that those would come forward for a public discussion; allow folks to look at that. However we visually show a chopped version of a chapter is complicated. We could probably do something with the themes, and some chapters are easier than others, such as community facilities. We have new fire chief, changes in the police; we've got a lot of goals and objectives that we were focused on before. There are new materials and we have all of these changes in the community that put forth goals and in the sustainability chapter there have been programs that are actually completed and working toward new goals in some areas. She said she didn't think reading the chapter would not be fulfilling for an audience.

Commissioner Santoski: said let's try to hit the fine points and open it up to discussion.

Ms. Creasy: said you can have it set up generally like the kick offs:

- a. Come in welcome
- b. A presentation
- c. specifics to the map
- d. Break outs tables – combining the chapters or individually
- e. There hasn't been too much discussion as to what the report would look like but typically there is some type of report out there and closure to things.
- f. These are elements we have talked about before so by next Wednesday we need to have a pretty good skeleton report on things.
- g. Look at the list of boards and commissions, tailor the meeting for getting feedback from that group.

Commission Lahendro: said there will be a presentation at the tables first as to what changes were made. We can have a five minute bullet summary of the changes that we proposed and then discussion.

Ms. Creasy: said we have been brainstorming having displays and handouts of the different chapters and the proposed changes. Also simple displays for the people waiting to view prior to the meeting start.

Mr. Alfele: said you can look at the list of boards and commissions and get an idea of what chapters may be of interest to them. The public is going to be there because it is a public meeting but you are gearing this to getting feedback from that group before you take the draft material out.

Commissioner Dowell: said she's playing devil's advocate because she feels the public should not talk at this open house for the boards and commissions and she said if we are having these extra meetings to reach out to the boards and commissions, she wants to hear what they have to say. We definitely need to identify who is on these boards and commissions and what board and commission they represent; this meeting needs to be about the boards and commissions and not everybody because if that is the case then why are we having an additional meeting for them and not just have a regular meeting for everybody.

Commissioner Keller: asked do you think they should not speak?

Commissioner Dowell: said she doesn't know how to work out the logistics but saying everybody come and have a part defeats the purpose. Just like this meeting, they are here but not commenting during our meeting.

Commissioner Dowell: commented that if we are having a special meeting knowing it is public as well, there should be some process to know who the boards and commissioners are. She asked do we know if we are getting their input or not just the general public (she said their input is important as well) but if that is the case then we should not be having this meeting. It should be a process for the boards and commissions.

Ms. Creasy: said it is a public meeting and we are asking for an RSVP. That is more so we can understand the number of people interested in different topics. As part of that we can record what group they are coming from and which of the time frames they are coming to so that should help. We may be able to do some of the identifying there.

Commissioner Clayborne: said he felt that this is a very valid point that this could be a part of the registration process where there is a vehicle we could use for that, where you can solicit input during registration. Frame two or three questions to help give us some insight to what we are about to walk into, so we could shape that conversation to be more customized for the boards and commissions. He said we have this unique opportunity where we have these 25 different boards, and as a group we have to figure it out. What is so unique about this group where you want specific information from them?

Commissioner Santoski: said maybe we have to make the assumption to work from the point that we are really gearing it for the boards and commissions, so that when we are sitting at those tables asking how

does this fit in with what we are doing with the Comp Plan. We want to make sure the questions that we are asking are getting the responses to make sure that we are trying to elicit that at this point with boards and commissions to know what we are doing, and adding the general public to work with us on this.

Commissioner Lahendro: said Allison could clear this up by asking in the beginning how many people represent boards and commissions and how many are from the general public. The objectives for this meeting is mostly for the boards and commissions and the general public is here to listen, be observant of the process and to learn from it and come back at one of the general public meetings.

Commissioner Dowell: said we don't really need Allison, the public knows this meeting is for boards and commissions. She said she thought the reason we were inviting these boards and commissions were because they have some background knowledge or special knowledge that the regular general public would not have or the chapters we want them to address. She like the idea Corey had. (She asked Mr. Lahendro could she finish her point after several interruptions) She said if we are just having another free for all public meeting, than let's just have a public meeting.

Ms. Creasy: said we have the time frames and the RSVP and the technical setup. 1) Which of the topics the people are interested in; we should have this in really good shape by Monday.

Public Comments

Travis Pietila: The Southern Environmental Law Center, asked (regarding the boards and commissions) is it limited to chairs or presidents.

Commissioner Dowell: said anybody that RSVPs.

Ms. Creasy: said or not; and we probably will have refreshments.

Chris Henry: You have really good concepts here and including transition zones in the comprehensive plan land use map is a good idea. Looking at this from a development prospective there are some issues. The more high-density mixed-use areas the better we can accommodate growth – which are represented by the color purple. Zooming in on the proposed comprehensive plan land use map, you've actually got a lot of highway interchanges, and an old junk yard with some environmental problems, a couple of existing shopping malls, and a flood plain along the Rivanna River color-coded as high density mixed-use. Is the planning commission saying they want those to be our primary development areas with the highest intensity mixed use? It seems like that might want to be re-thought a little bit in terms of where we want to actually push our highest intensity uses, and tie it to some planning metrics and public outreach that was done in terms of how the public said they would like to see new development guided in the Comp Plan. This is a once in a five year opportunity to try to set these things up right. This will guide growth and it will impact the zoning that will get revised. Think about those areas, as you are looking at color coding the map, refining this and thinking about where we want to guide growth. Also, think about how we are going to tie it to transportation that we have and multi-modal opportunity in terms of public transportation, biking, walking, and those things. Is it really feasible trying to get these major development

nodes on the out skirts of the city on sites that probably won't re-develop in the next 5 to 20 years? Maybe the Planning Commission should focus on the downtown core that we already have, building that up and incentivize people living and working in the same places. The land use map should also tie into the Economic Development plan that is also a component of the Comp Plan. It is great that Planning Commission is discussing illustrating changes from the existing chapters in the Comp Plan and what is being proposed for the new plan as well. It will be really helpful for the public and practitioners to look at the proposed land use map versus the existing land use map and what the proposed changes are. It's just as important as any of the chapters.

Valerie Long: from William Mullins, asked if you could make a copy of the map available electronically with a digital copy where you can zoom in so you can share it with people who are interested in it. Regarding your open house for boards and commissions she completely appreciates and understands your desire to really get input specifically from those members, but at the same time in light of your commitment to community engagement, not that you are trying to exclude the public, but provide any and all opportunities for the public to participate. It's probably going to be a fairly small number of people that might actually show up. She said to welcome that and make sure they know what the intentional goal is. Welcome their input there because they might not be able to attend future public open houses. Some of us are very interested and are here all the time and will be as interested as anybody from the neighborhoods, boards, and commissions; and can appreciate and respect your desires for specific feedback and not to dominate the conversation that night.

Commissioner Santoski motioned to adjourn at 6:50pm.