

CITY OF LYNNWOOD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
February 24, 2000

CHAIR HUDSON
COMMISSIONER FERGUSON (absent)
COMMISSIONER HANSON
COMMISSIONER JOHNSON
COMMISSIONER NELSON
COMMISSIONER POWERS
COMMISSIONER TEMPLES

PLANNING MANAGER HOUGH
SENIOR PLANNER LEWIS
ASSOCIATE PLANNER AMRINE
ENG. SERVICES MANAGER DAHM
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER ADAMS

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2000, MEETING

Public Meeting

Planning Manager Hough reiterated the goals of the housing & land use public meeting, and the floor was opened for public comments. Several individuals expressed their concerns and comments.

Housing Element - Comp Plan Update

Staff asked for the Commission's comments in follow up to the public meeting. A breakdown of multi-family housing types and visuals of these types were requested by the Commission.

Planning in the Urban Growth Area

Staff and the Commission looked at the County's Urban Growth Area and discussed cooperation with other municipalities on planning for annexations within the UGA.

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M.

B. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 10, 2000, MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Johnson asked for a notation that indicated he dissented from the opinion that rental of single family houses was an issue that should be addressed in the Comp Plan update. Commissioner Temples asked that the wording of his disclosure be changed, and Commissioner Hudson asked for some content changes to comments he had made on transit in the City. Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Nelson. Motion carried.

C. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

D. PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER DISCLOSURES

None.

E. PUBLIC MEETING

ITEM E-1: LET'S TALK ABOUT LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Planning Manager Hough gave the Commission an overview of the goals of this public meeting. He reported that staff had received a number of good comments at earlier meetings and from emails from citizens. Hough reviewed some of the specific questions staff wanted to have

answered by the public. Chair Hanson opened the meeting, and the following individuals offered these comments:

1. Nora Bankston

Mrs. Bankston's primary concern this evening was the rapid increase in multi-family rental housing. She felt that multi-family housing caused an unnecessary burden on the City's already stressed traffic situation. She felt the City had outdistanced other municipalities in providing multi-family housing, and asked that the City consider a moratorium on issuing permits for more. She felt that schools were overcrowded and the environment was suffering as all the green areas were paved over for new rental housing. She felt that multi-family housing residents tended to care less about the community, and that this was a quality of life issue. Mrs. Bankston stated that she supported a downtown center, but not with multifamily rental housing. She did support condominiums, since these were homeowners who, in general, cared more for the community than renters, as stated earlier. She strongly opposed more permits for multi-family rental housing.

2. Sue Goans

Mrs. Goans also was concerned about traffic. On her street corner, at 194th and 52nd, she has seen an increase in traffic and traffic speed, and she was afraid that an accident on the corner was imminent. This was a serious condition, and she wanted either "local access only" signs or traffic speed enforcement. She felt that the neighborhood character was being lost, as more multi-family housing moved in, and the safety of residents was put at risk.

Engineering Services Manager Dahm responded to Mrs. Goans, and agreed that her street was becoming an arterial, and that he recognized there were single family houses on this street. He reported that he kept in monthly contact with police about accident and problem traffic areas. He invited Mrs. Goans to get in touch with him directly to go on record with her concerns, and gave her his card.

3. Brent Russell and Joe Hebert

These representatives of Community Transit's Planning Department invited the Commission to ask them any questions they had about the transit plans and/or options for the City. Mr. Russell reported that CT had experienced a staff reduction in response to I-695, amounting to approximately 30% of its budget. Some weekend service was reduced, and another set of cuts will be implemented over, and into, the next year. Joe Hebert reported that all weekend service has been eliminated, and about 25% of all service has been cancelled. All of these cuts came from local services, as opposed to commuter routes. Commuter routes may be cut as much as 10% next year if needed.

Commissioner Hudson stated that he felt that local services were an amenity and shouldn't be programmed into the transportation plan, since local ridership is low. He invited CT to disprove this information via a report on local ridership. Hebert reported that a monthly report could be made available to the Commission. In addition, he added that ridership, locally, has increased by approximately 55%, while costs have decreased by about 10%. He indicated he would provide this information to the Commission.

4. John Bankston

Mr. Bankston reported that he had attended a City Council meeting last October, and that he had asked what the percentage was of single- vs. multi-family residences. He was under the impression the City had an agreement with the State to plan the community based on these percentages. Commissioner Johnson gave Mr. Bankston the 1999 figures, as presented in the staff report for the meeting (49% single family, 46% multifamily, mobile homes, 5%). Mr.

Bankston asked what the mandated percentages were, to which staff replied there was no state mandate. Mr. Bankston asked if that meant that 1000's of multi-family housing could go up at any time. Staff replied that there wasn't enough multi-family zoning in the City to allow that, and that the City Council had the ultimate say-so on how much multi-family housing was allowed. Mr. Bankston said the price of more multi-family development was too high, and wanted it stopped.

Commissioner Johnson asked if Mr. Bankston was concerned about the various assisted living and senior housing projects in the multi-family category. Bankston replied that he was not concerned with senior housing, only apartments, which overloaded schools and necessitated busing local kids.

5. Judy Martin

Ms. Martin reported that she had lived in her home for 25 years, and that she had been attending these meetings over those past 25 years. She concurred with Mrs. Bankston that the turnout at tonight's meeting was low, and suggested that this might be so because the same issues were discussed at each meeting, and nothing was ever done in follow up to those meetings. She cited an example of a meeting she had attended at Meadowdale High School when the Comp Plan was first being developed. The points that citizens had identified as their concerns were traffic problems, more open space, and housing density, among other things. She was concerned that 10 years later, the City was discussing the same things, and nothing had been done. She felt that citizens developed apathy because their comments were ignored.

Ms. Martin was concerned that since the City was running out of locations to build multi-family housing, these developments were encroaching on the single-family neighborhoods. Along with this encroachment was the destruction of natural buffers and environmental areas. This was fragmenting neighborhoods. She was concerned about excessive speed of traffic through residential neighborhoods. She said it was impossible to drive 25 mph without being almost run over by other drivers. In her neighborhood, several drivers took pleasure in 'catching air' at the hill on her street, despite deaf child signs and the posted speed limit. She asked for additional police protection to reduce traffic speeds. Chair Hanson suggested she and her neighbors formally request additional police presence in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Johnson requested that the minutes of this meeting and Ms. Martin's problems are directed to the police department. Planning Manager Hough reported that he did meet with division staff on a regular basis to discuss citizen comments that could be dealt with on a more immediate basis. Eng. Svcs. Manager Dahm added that he met on a regular basis with the police department to address these site-specific issues. He added that every study in the City, on every street, showed speeding on City streets.

6. Marie Little

Ms. Little wanted to address the whole community, including businesses. She was tired of seeing strip malls, where offices sat open for months until another business moved in. She was inspired by a number of Seattle areas where business owners and other residents lived above businesses, and she wanted to see opportunities for multiple residences above business in the new downtown. In such a situation, residents may not even need a car if amenities and transit were handy.

Other Comments:

There was some discussion about what constituted multiple family housing. Mrs. Bankston suggested that the City break out the various housing styles under multi-family for ease in understanding the classifications. She was concerned that the actual number of multi-family units

cited by the City was not accurate, and that there were, in actuality, many more units. The difficulty in finding single-family, affordable housing was also discussed, and Chair Hanson reported that this was one of the issues proposed to be dealt with in the Comp Plan update.

The Commission took a 10-minute recess, and reconvened at 8:52.

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Planning Manager Hough reported that the City Council had received a presentation and update on the Endangered Species Act and the 4(d) Rule Draft. Senior Planner Lewis reported that the purpose of the session with the Council was to get authority to make comments on that draft rule. It is too early in the process to know what the impacts of the 4(d) rule will be at this time. The focus of the rule, he reported, was on protection and repair of riparian habitats. This could impact parking requirements and other impervious surface impacts. All communities would feel these potential impacts.

On February 22nd, the City Council submitted a new resolution and two new ordinances that concern performance measurements and budgeting. A City Council work session will be held on Wednesday, March 1st, to talk about visioning. Staff is interested in this because the visioning process for the Comp Plan had been presented last month. It was unclear how the Council's visions will mesh with the visions forwarded by the Planning Commission. The meeting on March 1st will be a three-hour discussion on the City's Vision, and staff will follow it closely.

Hough reported that a few items on the original sign code amendment that had been before the Commission in the past would be back shortly. These should be before the Commission on March 9th.

Commissioner Hudson asked if the Council had any awareness of the additional workload the new ordinances would bring on staff. Staff did not know if the workload was considered.

G. WORK SESSION

ITEM G-1: HOUSING ELEMENT - CONTINUED DISCUSSION

Associate Planner Amrine reported that staff had no new information to add to this discussion. He asked the Commission for direction on where they thought staff should take this issue next, and offered to answer any questions that may have come up since the public discussions.

Commissioner Hudson asked if staff knew Lynnwood's median household income, and how much of Lynnwood's population commuted to other jurisdictions regularly for work. He also asked if staff could determine what the median salary or income level was being paid by the various commercial interests in the City. He wanted to know if people who were earning their living in the City were making enough to live in the City. Senior Planner Lewis reported that some of the data may be available through the State, and he would investigate other options for data sources.

Commissioner Temples reported that he is aware that business and commercial interests contribute 60% of the City's revenue base. His concern is with affordable housing, and if the City is supposed to be supporting and providing affordable housing with income levels that are lower than those in Snohomish County, we were looking at a population that can't afford to buy a house in the City.

Commissioner Hudson said that it would be interesting to know what the median household income and value of a house in Edmonds was, since the City kept getting compared to Edmonds.

Hough reported that accurate data is difficult to obtain, since we were so far from the date of the last census. More accurate data would be available when the 2000 Census is complete. Amrine reported that in the 1990 Census, the median income in Edmonds was about \$10,000 more per year than Lynnwood.

Commissioner Powers commented that she felt a lot of what she was hearing from citizens was that they were upset with 'what had come before.' Many of the comments regarding traffic and housing were about corrections of things that had already happened, perhaps less about a vision of the future than about what we don't like about the past. Chair Hanson suggested that drawings or other visual representations of multi-family dwellings would be useful in future discussions. Included in that would be rental housing, town homes, condos, etc. These visual aids will help educate citizens about the various multi-family options. This discussion led Planning Manager Hough to propose that he pursue, at the Commission's direction, a presentation by Bill Krueger called "Honey, I shrunk the lots." This might be held on the March 23rd, if Mr. Krueger is available. Commissioner Hudson suggested that if the presentation is pursued, it should include the City Council. The Commission directed Hough to try schedule the presentation, and if possible, to hold it at a special meeting on Tuesday, March 21st, between 7 and 9 PM.

ITEM G-2: PLANNING IN THE URBAN GROWTH AREAS

Planning Manager Hough talked briefly about the issue of population growth in the Urban Growth Area (UGA), and suggested that at some point, an inventory of the UGA land and where the City would prefer growth to occur within the UGA. He indicated areas that staff were watching as well as current proposed and approved annexations. Staff felt it was important to monitor how the County was allowing development within the UGA. There were a lot of Planned Residential Developments being built or in the planning stage, and the City would need to give some thought to how much of this development it wants to assume through annexations. Staff confirmed that they were participating in an effort with other Cities within our UGA to determine how to divide up the UGA between each City.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

I. OLD BUSINESS

None.

J. INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM J-1: URBAN SPRAWL REPORT CARD

Planning Manager Hough answered questions from the Commission regarding the report card prepared by 1000 Friends of Washington. Hough noted that according to the report card, the City was not doing the following: ensuring that a significant portion of single-family zoning is devoted to small lots of 5,000 S.F. or less; permit both attached and detached accessory dwelling units, since our current policies discouraged accessory dwelling units; update parking requirements and consider maximum parking ratios; and encourage transit-oriented development, which is a minimum of 8 dwelling units per acre, or a maximum lot size of 5,445 per unit. Finally, it was noted that the downtown area, or a redeveloped downtown core, should be pedestrian friendly. In general, 1000 Friends of Washington did not give Lynnwood a good score on this report card.

ITEM J-2 UPCOMING PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Planning Manager Hough reminded the Commission that the sign code would be back on March 9th for a work session, with a public hearing on March 23rd, but staff did not expect a lot of public

testimony. He noted that the Council's April 1st deadline for adopting new goals for the Comp Plan may require a public hearing on March 23rd as well, however, there were some advertisement and 25-day notice requirements that staff might not be able to meet, given the Council's schedule.

ITEM J-3: COMMENTS FROM NW SECTOR NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Senior Planner Lewis reported that attendance at the two public meetings was low to none. Staff did have a discussion with Councilmember Hikel about buffers. Staff did not want to view the low turnout as a failure, but instead that they had offered citizens the opportunity to comment. Staff would rethink the notice process for the next round of public meetings, and determine if there was something they could do differently to draw more citizens. Lewis reported that holding the meetings at City Hall or prior to Commission meetings seemed to draw more attendees.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Johnson moved for adjournment. The motion was by Commissioner Nelson, and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Dave Johnson, Acting Chair