

CITY OF LYNNWOOD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
March 23, 2000

ACTING CHAIR JOHNSON
COMMISSIONER FERGUSON
COMMISSIONER HUDSON
COMMISSIONER NELSON
COMMISSIONER POWERS
COMMISSIONER TEMPLES

PLANNING MANAGER HOUGH
SENIOR PLANNER LEWIS
SENIOR PLANNER EASTIN
ASSOCIATE PLANNER AMRINE
COUNCILMEMBER UTTER - PLANNING
COMMISSION LIAISON

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 23, 2000, MEETING

Public Meeting - Let's Talk About Housing

Associate Planner Amrine gave a presentation on alternatives for housing types. A number of citizens testified about their visions and concerns for housing issues in Lynnwood.

Signs Code Amendment - Public Hearing

Senior Planner Eastin reintroduced this code amendment and highlighted those issues returned by the Council. Two representatives of the Real Estate industry offered comments, and commended staff and the Commission for sticking with the amendment process. The Commission forwarded the proposed amendments to the Council with a recommendation for approval.

Progress Report on Sector B Study Area

Senior Planner Lewis talked about the progress of the Sector Study and described the five sectors. He reported that limited citizen input has been received to date, but additional opportunities will be provided at upcoming neighborhood public meetings and public hearings which are scheduled to begin in June.

Subregional Center and the CBD

Planning Manager Hough talked about the history of Lynnwood's subregional center, its' relationship to the Puget Sound Regional Council's "centers" program, and how plans for Lynnwood's future Central Business District will dovetail with the goals of our subregional center and PSRC's Vision 2020.

Introduction to Environmental Resources Element

A new "Environmental Resources Element" is proposed to be added to the Comprehensive Plan and staff had intended to give an introductory report to the Commission as a preview. At the request of the Public Works Department, this item was pulled from the agenda to provide more time for their review.

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

B. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2000, MEETING MINUTES

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

C. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

D. PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER DISCLOSURES

None.

1 **E. PUBLIC MEETING**

2 ITEM E-1: LET'S TALK ABOUT HOUSING

3 Associate Planner Amrine reminded the Commission and citizen attendees of the questions posed in the
4 hearing notice, and invited those present to pose additional questions as they saw fit, indicating that the
5 list presented was only a starting point. He gave a presentation on some current and potential housing
6 types the City can employ. Among the housing options he introduced were large and small lot single
7 family, Planned Residential Developments, townhomes and condominiums, mobile homes, and cluster
8 developments. Amrine introduced the concept of 'infill development,' where a lot with an older home is
9 subdivided into two to four lots with new homes. These smaller lots can help fight the high cost of new
10 homes.

11
12 Acting Chair Johnson opened the public meeting and invited comments from those in attendance.

- 13
14 1. Mike Pattison, Snohomish County Realtors Association. 321 Broadway, Everett. Mr. Pattison
15 thanked staff for the work they had done on the Housing Element, and reported that the cost of
16 housing was increasing at about three times the rate of family incomes in Snohomish County. He
17 agreed that it was getting harder for younger families to get into homes. He felt cluster
18 developments and other housing options were going to be necessary to: 1) create affordable
19 housing for limited income home buyers, 2) preserve open space and critical habitat areas; and 3)
20 protect rural areas.
- 21 2. Nora Bankston, 5403 - 166th Place SW, Lynnwood. Ms. Bankston noted that while some
22 individuals worked very hard on the comprehensive plan, and citizens came and offered their
23 comments, she wondered if anyone took these decisions and issues to the next level,
24 communicating them to developers and contractors. She had not seen this, and felt a two-way
25 street was needed to communicate citizen concerns to developers. In addition, better information
26 systems were needed so developers could see some of the creative housing options they could
27 use. She asked if there was a design or architectural review board within the City that could
28 monitor the types of housing being developed. Planning Manager Hough responded that the
29 Planning Department's main function is to ensure that proposed developments conformed to the
30 City's Zoning and other applicable development codes. Those codes contain the minimum
31 requirements adopted by the City. Developers then design their projects to comply with our
32 codes while meeting the needs of the housing market. They build what they know will sell.
- 33 3. John Bankston, 5403 - 166th Place SW, Lynnwood. Mr. Bankston asked if the Planning
34 Commission had the authority to create a review board. Commissioner Temples responded that
35 only the City Council had the authority to create such a review board, and that he was aware of
36 other cities in the Northwest with architectural or design review boards. Edmonds and Mercer
37 Island were two that did. Bankston felt the Comp Plan was an opportune place to establish the
38 kind of housing goals the City was trying to meet, including housing type. He asked if he could
39 go to the Mayor and request a methodology to review applications. Commissioner Powers added
40 that in cities where review boards were in place, design standards could be very specific,
41 including colors, roof pitch and percentages of impervious surfaces. Chair Johnson suggested
42 Bankston could go to the Council and request a review board be developed. Commissioner
43 Temples suggested that letters and written petitions were an excellent way to communicate
44 concerns to the Council, since these became part of the record.
- 45 4. Nora Bankston, address cited above, reiterated that someone had to step up and tell those doing
46 the building in the City exactly what we needed and wanted for housing types and styles. She
47 asked if anyone was willing to do this, and offered to contact Amrine or Hough to convey the
48 type of development she considered beneficial to the City.
- 49 5. Sheryl Hall, 1908 Hewitt Avenue, Everett. Ms. Hall introduced her organization, Housing
50 Partners, and highlighted some of the affordable housing projects they had organized with the

1 help of surrounding cities. At the request of the Commission, she explained that she promoted
2 affordable housing, townhomes or cluster developments. She also stressed that affordable
3 housing in Lynnwood, in her experience, was not attractive housing, and that this should be
4 addressed in future planning. She also agreed that sensitive areas should be protected whenever
5 possible through careful development. Commissioner Hudson suggested that Ms. Hall get on the
6 Comp Plan Update Mailing list, and whenever appropriate, that she provide comments to staff on
7 her particular area of expertise. She agreed to do this.

- 8 6. Kathryn Ward, 20223 - 68th Avenue West, Lynnwood. Ms. Ward asked if the City or Snohomish
9 County offered builders incentives to build affordable housing. Planning Manager Hough replied
10 that he was not aware of any incentive program, and Acting Chair Johnson replied that he thought
11 the Housing Authority might. Associate Planner Amrine reported that some property owners
12 were selling land at a reasonable price to entities like the Housing Authority which, in turn, are
13 able to build lower-cost housing. In any case, a developer in Lynnwood is not prevented from
14 providing affordable housing and the planned unit development process could improve the
15 economic feasibility. Hough pointed out that developers are not voluntarily building housing that
16 is affordable to lower-income purchasers because they don't need to in today's market.
17

18 Acting Chair Johnson asked if the Comprehensive Plan wouldn't be a good place to include a goal
19 directed at affordable housing, or that a statement from the Planning Commission that supports affordable
20 housing should be included in the update process. The discussion turned to cluster developments, and
21 John and Nora Bankston reported that they had seen a cluster development in an environment similar to
22 Lynnwood that was very successful and creatively designed.
23

- 24 7. Paul Chrysler, of John L. Scott Real Estate, suggested the problem with affordable housing lies
25 with housing stock – the availability of land to develop. He cautioned that restricting the land by
26 mandating standards to developers will eliminate that land from development. He stated,
27 regretfully, that the needs of the poor cannot be met by developers: that those who have worked
28 hard to acquire a home demand the developer's attention. Today's homebuyers want homes with
29 lots of square footage, and developers are responding to this demand. Mandating what can be
30 built, in Mr. Chrysler's opinion, would simply drive developers away, instead of providing
31 affordable housing.
32

33 Mr. Chrysler added the only way to provide additional housing at more reasonable prices, was to
34 encourage higher densities. Large lot size requirements drive up housing prices. He did not favor
35 additional multi-family, because he felt that rental unit dwellers tended to identify less with their
36 City, and that the City had enough of this type of housing already. Increasing the allowed density
37 of single-family developments was the only way he saw that the City could increase affordability.
38

39 Acting Chair Johnson closed the public meeting, and the Commission took a five-minute recess and
40 reconvened at 9:04.
41

42 **F. PUBLIC HEARING**

43 **ITEM F-1: SIGNS CODE AMENDMENT**

44 Senior Planner Eastin gave those in attendance a brief overview of the Signs Code Amendment and the
45 four issues the Council has asked the Commission to review. Those four items are:
46

- 47 • portable open house, directional real estate signs and political signs in public right-of-way
- 48 • commercial real estate signs
- 49 • maximum height of free-standing signs
- 50 • effective date of the sign code amendment ordinance

1
2 The Planning Commission was to review staff's suggestions, and make recommendations to the City
3 Council. Eastin highlighted new language staff to deal with potential conflicts between regulations on
4 freestanding signs on City streets, but in proximity to freeways or other right of ways, and residential
5 areas.

6
7 **Public Testimony:**

- 8
9 1. Mike Pattison, Snohomish County Realtors Association. 321 Broadway, Everett. Mr. Pattison stated
10 that he and the industry supported the amendments as presented, and urged the Commission to pass
11 the ordinance along to Council with a recommendation for approval.
12 2. Paul Chrysler, John L. Scott Real Estate. Mr. Chrysler concurred with Pattison's testimony.

13
14 Acting Chair Johnson closed the public hearing, and asked the Commission for comments.
15 Commissioner Hudson made a motion to recommend to the Council approval of the Signs Code
16 Amendments, with the modifications that staff had incorporated for this evening's hearing. Seconded by
17 Commissioner Ferguson, the motion carried.

18
19 **G. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

20 Planning Manager Hough reported that the Council had not dealt with any Commission recommendations
21 since the last meeting. The Council was still addressing their Mission and Vision Statements and had
22 informed staff that this was not a rehashing of the Comp Plan vision statements. The Council's visions
23 would be much broader than those of the Comprehensive Plan and provide an "umbrella" vision.

24
25 Hough reported invitations for the volunteer recognition event had been mailed and that attendees were
26 invited to bring a spouse or guest.

27
28 **H. WORK SESSION**

29 **ITEM H-1: PROGRESS REPORT ON SECTOR B STUDY AREA**

30 Senior Planner Lewis introduced the new maps for the sector study, and briefly highlighted some analyses
31 that staff had been conducting on the mapping areas. He reported that there were ten study areas in Sector
32 B that staff anticipated studying further, and that these areas might be opportunities to deal with multi-
33 family to single-family conversion or other types of conversion, as determined appropriate. More
34 alternatives will be presented after staff has spent more time studying each of the areas and the City
35 Council's intentions with regard to housing.

36
37 Acting Chair Johnson asked when this study might be presented to developers, citizens, and the general
38 public. Lewis reported that two neighborhood meetings had been held in Sector A already, and one was
39 scheduled to be held in Sector B very soon. He added that attendance had been limited. Planning
40 Manager Hough reported that the first public hearing is scheduled for June 8, 2000, and this would be
41 another opportunity to present the Sector Maps and study areas to the public. Lewis added that by that
42 date, staff will have prepared alternatives for consideration for each of the five study areas. Associate
43 Planner Amrine reported that he included the Master Builders Association in mailings on the Comp. Plan
44 and particularly the Land Use Element. Commissioner Temples thanked staff for the maps, adding that
45 they were surprisingly readable.

46
47 **ITEM H-2: SUBREGIONAL CENTER AND THE CBD**

48 Planning Manager Hough reported that the idea of a subregional center started with the adoption in 1990
49 of Vision 2020 by the Puget Sound Council of Governments (later to become the Puget Sound Regional
50 Council). Vision 2020 designated 20 potential urban centers throughout the Puget Sound region. The

1 Centers were to be designed and developed by the local jurisdictions, and intended to concentrate high
2 intensity community development around major transit stations. Lynnwood was one of three Snohomish
3 County centers, along with Everett and Bothell. The Lynnwood Subregional Center has not functioned as
4 intended and was the only one of the original centers that had lost population since the passage of Vision
5 2020. Rather than increasing the residential component of our center, we're losing ground.

6
7 The types of development proposed for the center included a mix of uses, including a high-density
8 residential area, landscaping and buffers where appropriate, a mix of retail and office spaces, and transit
9 linkages. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on a mix of retail and commercial for the subregional center,
10 and this will need to be addressed in the Plan update to promote higher density and mixed use options.
11 The Lynnwood Triangle project will better address these issues and help to increase our population
12 densities to make our regional center stronger.

13
14 Commissioner Temples asked where the Chamber of Commerce's Central Business District study was in
15 its planning process. Hough responded that they were almost finished raising funds for their share of the
16 CBD consultant's visioning process and conceptual study. He hoped to have more information to share
17 with the Commission in upcoming meetings.

18
19 **ITEM H-3: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ELEMENT**
20 Removed from the agenda. Expected to return at the April 13th meeting.

21
22 **I. NEW BUSINESS**

23 **ITEM I-1: ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS**

24 Commission Hudson moved to elect Commissioner Johnson to Chair of the Commission, following the
25 resignation of Chair Hanson. Seconded by Commissioner Ferguson. (Commissioner Johnson abstained
26 from voting.) Commissioner Hudson then moved to elect Commissioner Temples to First Vice Chair,
27 seconded by Chair Johnson. Both motions carried.

28
29 **ITEM I-2: RESOLUTION NO. 2000-1**

30 Resolution No. 2000-1 recognized former Chair Hanson's service to the Planning Commission and the
31 City. Commissioner Hudson asked if the resolution could include mention of Hanson's involvement in
32 the North Gateway Annexation and his term as Vice Chair. Staff agreed to add these items. Staff also
33 agreed to add signature lines for all Commissioners. Planning Manager Hough was directed to invite
34 Hanson to the next meeting for presentation of the resolution.

35
36 **J. OLD BUSINESS**

37 None.

38
39 **K. INFORMATION ITEMS**

40 **ITEM K-1: UPCOMING PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**

41 Planning Manager Hough reported that the April 13th Meeting was getting crowded. Potentially
42 significant items on the agenda were the Adult Uses Code Amendment Public Hearing, the return of the
43 Environmental Element, the Study List of the Comp Plan Amendments, and continued discussion of the
44 Land Use and Transportation Elements. The Urban Growth Planning Area (MUGA) report may not be
45 ready since the Snohomish County Tomorrow Steering Committee had returned the proposed process to
46 the technical staff for additional study. The Economic Development Element discussion is an
47 introductory concept discussion, and Vic Ericson, the City's Economic Development Manager will give a
48 presentation as well. Hough commented that trying to bring items to the Commission in small pieces
49 appeared to be taking too much of the Commission's time, and perhaps staff will consider presenting
50 entire drafts at one time in the future. The Commission generally agreed that a draft of a full element
51 might be easier to understand and digest than smaller pieces. The introductory reports on each element

1 will be kept in the schedule. They provide good previews of things to come and also give staff an idea of
2 the Commission's early reactions and input prior to the final reports.

3
4 Hough is working with consultant William Kreuger to design a presentation on innovative housing
5 alternatives for Lynnwood. That presentation has been tentatively scheduled for May 23. Also, the joint
6 meeting of the Commission and City Council is scheduled for April 19. A Sound Transit presentation
7 will be first on that agenda.

8
9 **L. ADJOURNMENT**

10 Commissioner Nelson moved for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Hudson. Motion carried, and
11 the meeting adjourned at 9:24 PM.

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16 _____
17 Dave Johnson, Chair