

City of Lynnwood
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
May 26, 2005

Commissioners present:

Patrick Decker, Chair
Brian Bigler
Elisa Elliott
Marina Georgiev
Dave Johnson

Staff present:

Ron Hough, Planning Manager
Jeff Elekes, Asst. Public Work Director
Carol Thompson, Transportation Planner
Laurie Cowan, Parks Planner

Commissioners absent:

Tia Psycheff
Donna Walther

Others Present:

Ted Hikel, City Council Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Decker called this meeting to order at 7:00 pm. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The April 28, 2005 meeting minutes were approved as written.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

City Council member Ted Hikel reported on recent Council activities, including approval of a travel request for Planning Manager Garrett to attend the Congress for the New Urbanism in California. When asked if it was normal practice for the Council to approve staff attendance at conferences, Hikel explained the process for approving out-of-state travel. He also noted that the Council wants to include some educational funds in the City's budget so that members of City commissions will also have training opportunities.

Hikel reported that the Council approved the "Proposed Amendments List" for the Comprehensive Plan, a \$35,000 contract for street planning in the City Center, \$3,500 to help fund the upcoming volunteer dinner, and a resolution reprimanding Mayor McKinnon for multiple violations of the City's Ethics Code.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Planning Manager Hough advised the Commission that a letter from Good Shepherd Church was distributed earlier. The church is an applicant for a Comprehensive Plan amendment, but is not on tonight's agenda. It will be scheduled for a future work session. There were no citizen comments.

COMMISSION MEMBER DISCLOSURES

None

PUBLIC HEARING

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

Chair Decker announced the subject, opened the public hearing and asked for the staff report.

Transportation Planner Carol Thompson briefed explained the nature of the proposals and noted that the red dots on the map were locations of signal or other intersection improvements. She then asked for questions or comments from the Commission. The Commissioners discussed the matter and directed questions regarding the TIP proposals, funding, etc., to Ms. Thompson and Mr. Elekes.

Following staff response to the Commissioners' questions, Chair Decker opened the hearing to public testimony. No testimony was offered and the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Johnson moved to forward the TIP to the City Council with a recommendation to approve. The motion was seconded by Decker and passed 5-0.

WORK SESSION

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Proposal "A": Timing of Plan Amendments

Planning Manager Ron Hough described past difficulties in scheduling City Council work sessions in the fall months. The Council is often dealing with the budget and other important end-of-year matters and there are several holidays to work around. The proposal is to move the process back three months so that the deadline for applications will be January 1 and processing can be completed in July.

The Commission had no objections to the proposal. Hough advised them that it will return later, along with the rest of the amendments package, for a public hearing and recommendations. That hearing is currently scheduled for July 28.

Proposal "C": Parks & Recreation Element Update

Parks Planner Laurie Cowan described the proposed changes to this element of the Comprehensive Plan. A revised parks map was distributed to the Commissioners. The map had been amended to include Tutmark Hill Park, east of Interstate 5. A revised p. 2 of the element was also distributed and the change described.

Ms. Cowan explained that the level of service (LOS) for the City Center will be 5 acres per 1,000 population, as opposed to the 10 acres per 1,000 citywide. She also described the acquisition of wetland property near the headwaters of Lund's Gulch and explained how volunteers were used for construction of trails, park maintenance and other tasks. Commissioner Bigler suggested that she use the City's website to post a list of projects or other opportunities for volunteers.

Ms. Cowan responded to various questions, including the status of the proposed community center, resident vs. non-resident user fees, the 33rd Avenue park site, Scriber Lake trails and others. Staff mentioned that Snohomish County is considering changing its Comprehensive Plan to high-density residential in the vicinity of the Scriber Creek wetlands south of 204th Street and east of 44th Avenue and that there is a high level of

interest in developing lands around the wetland. The Commission asked if there is any chance the City might annex this area. Planning Manager Hough described the 204th Street Annexation proposal of several years ago. It included the entire wetland area south to 212th Street. The City Council was concerned about flooding and other liability issues involving the wetlands and removed them from the annexation area. Council Member Hikel was asked about that decision and he confirmed the Council's concerns. Ms. Cowan added that the City still owns parkland near the north side of the wetlands, along 204th Street, and the intent was to work with Snohomish County to develop a plan for the area, including parks and trails.

Ms. Cowan pointed out that the proposal includes Plan and Zoning Map changes for the new proposed park on 33rd Avenue. The property is in City ownership, the park is designed, and the Plan designation needs to be changed from residential to PRO (Parks and Open Space). The zoning would also be changed from RS-8 to P-1.

BUSINESS

Initiate a Code Amendment – Signs

Planning Manager Hough reminded the Commission that planner Darryl Eastin had discussed a list of possible refinements of the Sign Code at a Commission work session and had intended to follow through with those proposals. However, Mr. Eastin no longer works for the City and, consequently, there has been no progress toward those changes. In the meantime, the City's Code Enforcement Officer has had to deal with certain types of signs that are illegal by our code, which itself may not be enforceable, based on recent court cases. Staff was directed to hold back on enforcement activities until the City Council could review those types of signs and make the needed changes. Staff is now asking the Commission to initiate a review and possible changes to the Sign Code so they can move ahead. This review will not cover all sign concerns. It will focus primarily on signs within the public right-of-way. Proposals will be scheduled for Planning Commission study and hearings and the Commission will make recommendations to the City Council.

Following clarifying questions and discussion, the Planning Commission initiated the code review and directed staff to proceed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT & INFORMATION

Planning Manager Hough reported on upcoming City Council and Planning Commission meetings in June. He suggested that the June 9 Commission meeting be cancelled in favor of a more complete agenda on Jun 23. The Commission agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Patrick Decker, Chair