

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Draft Special Meeting Minutes: February 6, 2024
In-person and Zoom Hybrid Meeting

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Maddy Larson (via zoom), Cherie Finazzo, Melissa Cranmer; Meredith LaBonte (via zoom); Janne Kaje, Lois Lee, Vice Chair Ashton McCartney; Sam Castic

Staff and others present: Nick Holland, Senior Planner; Councilmember Bodi (via zoom); Cristina Haworth, SCJ Consulting (via zoom); Mark Hofman, Community Development Director (via zoom);

Members of the Public: Julian Anderson; Kim Jousud; Brad Holland; Randi Sibonga;

Planning Commissioners absent:

Call to order: Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Land Acknowledgement: Chair Larson read the land acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda

Comr. Castic made a motion to approve the agenda, Comr. Finazzo seconded, and the motion to approve the agenda was carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Comr. Finazzo made a motion to approve the January 9, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Comr. Cranmer seconded the motion.

All voted to approve the January 9, 2024, minutes as amended, and the motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Dates:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2023.

City Council Liaison Report

Councilmember Bodi said the new Council is starting business and that a briefing on the comprehensive update plan process will occur. She said that the Council is moving ahead with the master plan for waterfront park and that a staff presentation will occur at a future meeting. Councilmember Bodi said that the Council will have a retreat to discuss the strategic plan. She welcomed everyone to attend a Council meeting.

Old Business

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Land Use chapter updates

Chair Larson suggested starting with the land use designation terminology. She talked about how some commissioners weren't in favor of removing the word 'family' from the land use designations. Comr. Kaje asked to flag the word 'conservation' as it is used in the larger lot size designations. He said that larger lots don't necessarily create environmental conservation and that conservation is spread throughout all lot sizes via the critical areas regulations. Chair Larson confirmed and acknowledged his input. Comr. Castic said that he would like to understand the intent of the statements. Comr. Kaje said that the content was created in 1998, so an update should probably be considered. Chair Larson stated that the discussion tonight should create a productive work session with SCJ at the next regular meeting. Comr. Lee suggested changing the designation language to 'low DR' 'moderate DR' 'high DR' 'low DMU' 'mod DMFU' for the various land use

1 designations, respectively. Director Hofman said that the goal for tonight should be to determine where
2 consensus can be made on the draft and to identify where potential hang ups exist. Chair Larson suggested
3 taking a poll to determine who would be in favor of Cmr. Lee's suggestions. All Commissioners provided
4 their opinions using a hands-up gesture. Chair Larson drew the group's attention to page 12 in the packet
5 materials. Cmr. Castic suggested awaiting Council and State Commerce guidance before providing detail on
6 the type of middle housing for the plan. Director Hofman responded and indicated that a model ordinance
7 from Commerce needs study to determine how local cities can change their middle housing regulations to
8 align with the model ordinance or to make potential changes which might align with local character. Cmr.
9 Kaje said that the housing study is going to be presented at a later date from the housing consultant, so
10 potentially the discussion could wait. Director Hofman responded and indicated that Leland consulting will
11 return in April with a housing study. Cmr. Kaje proposed striking the last sentence of the definition to
12 exclude 'conservation' because larger lots do not always create conservation opportunities. Cmr. Lee suggests
13 that leaving the terms open ended allows for creativity, rather than stating simply the type of dwelling unit
14 desired. Cmr. Kleweno said he was a bit uncomfortable with leaving the terms open ended, because of the
15 potential for the unknown. Chair Larson clarified her understanding of Cmr. Lee's suggestion, and Cmr. Lee
16 provided a response. Cmr. Finazzo said she likes the designation because it can identify with the zone in
17 which it is located. A discussion continued about the difference between the zoning code and the land use
18 designations. Cmr. Castic provided his perspective and suggested removing the language in the parenthetical.
19 Chair Larson said that some guidance is needed to finalize the language in these sections.
20

21 Chair Larson asked for input on the commercial land use designations. Cmr. Kaje said he had done a
22 walkthrough of the low density and transition areas of the southern gateway and there isn't much to change,
23 he emphasized the changes are to be within the corridor portion of the gateway district and they have the
24 potential to occur over the next few decades. Cmr. Kleweno asked what the significance of the inclusion
25 statements will be and suggested including it as a separate statement when developing policies and codes.
26 Cmr. Kaje also suggested including inclusion statements in all aspects of planning, not just for the
27 comprehensive plan updates. Director Hofman said that infrastructure to support growth and statements to
28 support that idea is important for the comprehensive plan and consistency with the countywide policies and
29 GMA. Cmr. Lee asked when the graphics in the comprehensive plan will be updated, and Director Hofman
30 responded and indicated that all of the graphics should be updated if they are supportive of policy changes.
31 A discussion on pedestrian circulation policy language occurred relative to the content in the draft on page
32 15.
33

34 Cmr. Castic suggested language to support development and conservation of lots in LFP, specific to language
35 drafted on page 17. He said that the city might not want to promote development in all situations. Chair
36 Larson clarified her understanding of the statement. Cmr. Castic asked for the opinions of others. Cmr.
37 Kleweno suggested that the two ideas may be in competition. Councilmember Bodi talked about how the
38 Council is discussing climate action and said that they feel strongly about how the tree canopy contributes to
39 climate action policy and the preservation of the environment. Cmr. LaBonte said that she would prefer the
40 term 'equality' as to 'equity.' Cmr. Kaje said that he has been through a lot of equality and equity training and
41 the terms are very different and have specific aspects to their use. Chair Larson suggested talking about the
42 terms at a later time.
43

44 Cmr. Lee commented on the content on page 18. She suggested including the tree canopy plan to promote
45 tree canopy growth in the more urban areas of the city, like the Southern Gateway neighborhood. Cmr.
46 Kleweno said that there are other ways to create vegetated areas in the city. He suggested policies supporting
47 green buildings and the like. Cmr. Kleweno suggested using the term 'stand of trees' in that section, Chair
48 Larson responded and agreed. Cmr. LaBonte asked why the term 'character' was replaced with 'form' and
49 wanted to understand the change with a possible explanation. Chair Larson said that she will send her
50 detailed notes for language changes to staff and Director Hofman responded and said he can include them in
51 conversations with SCJ along with the staff information to summarize the overall content of the meeting.
52 Cmr. Kaje provided his perspective on the language changes for the words 'character' and 'form.' He

1 indicated that 'character' often takes on different meanings for whoever is interpreting the term. Director
2 Hofman said that the term 'form' is a more objective term, often used in planning. Discussion continued on
3 the terms 'form' and 'character' as they are used in the draft chapter.
4

5 Cmr. Castic talked about what makes LFP neighborhoods unique and recited a section of the draft chapter.
6 Chair Larson asked if there was agreement on the statement from Cmr. Castic as read and all agreed. Cmr.
7 Lee suggested drafting language to support green infrastructure and plantings along SR 522. She provided
8 some draft language for consideration. Chair Larson asked for input. Cmr. Kaje said he wants to better
9 understand the origin of the section that is existing.
10

11 Cmr. Lee said that regarding land use policy 7; LFP desperately needs walkable and pedestrian facilities
12 throughout the city and that policy should be contained within the comprehensive plan. She suggested
13 bringing the issue to the forefront and discussing streetscape improvements in the city. Chair Larson asked if
14 it were appropriate to reference safe streets plan. Director Hofman suggested making the plan as inclusive as
15 possible, and potentially reference another policy document within a statement. Cmr. Kaje asked how sub
16 area plans contribute to the comprehensive plan and how the commission can use them in the update
17 process. Director Hofman provided a response and said that reference to other sub area plans can occur as a
18 part of this project, but updating other sub area plans shouldn't occur as a part of the comprehensive plan
19 update.
20

21 Cmr. Lee suggested edits to Land Use policy 9.2. No objections were noted. Cmr. Kaje asked for guidance
22 on how to include implementation steps. Director Hofman provided perspective on his experience for how
23 implementation steps are used in comprehensive plans. Cmr. Castic noted that SCJ does have questions for
24 the Commission on the issue of implementation steps. Cmr. Kaje noted that for his use, this is more an
25 organizational strategy. Chair Larson asked for an example and Cmr. Kaje provided one. Cmr. Klewen
26 made a comment on the correlation between equity and climate change. He said that areas of the city have
27 tree canopy but others do not and it plays a role in the neighborhood experience. He emphasized that access
28 to green spaces should be equal for all neighborhoods.
29

30 Cmr. Castic asked what the Commission thinks of SCJs suggestions for Land Use policy 10. Cmr. Kaje said
31 that he agrees with the draft language. Cmr. Castic said that he also agrees and proposed a minor language
32 edit. Discussion occurred on the difference between the terms 'equity' and 'equality'.
33

34 Chair Larson led the group to page 20-21 in the meeting materials. She asked for input. Director Hofman
35 said that the term 'buildable lands report' has been changed to the 'urban capacity report'. Cmr. Kaje said that
36 the southern gateway zone was a location where he walked with several other residents over the past weeks
37 and said that the commercial and street frontage areas have not been developed. He said that given the
38 guidance in the sub area plan, it seems clear what the city is requiring and what is needed to develop the
39 parcels within the sub area. He talked about the potential for the sub area plan to have different restrictions,
40 which may explain the lack of development in the zone. He suggested that the group examine how and why
41 the street frontage in that zone hasn't been developed and determine the need and potential missing elements
42 in the plan that might encourage development.
43

44 Chair Larson said that there may not be time to analyze the other two chapters, but at the next meeting the
45 Commissioners should have language ready for the other sections. She said that she is optimistic that the
46 next two chapters can be done quickly. She said that there may be additional changes to the land use chapter
47 when the content of the climate action committee's report becomes available. Cmr. Castic asked if there was
48 anything that could be done prior to the meeting. Chair Larson suggested compiling the draft language from
49 other commissioners to provide to SCJ and she asked if that would be appropriate. Director Hofman replied
50 and said that it can be done, but any meetings or deliberations should be done in public. Chair Larson
51 recommended that all email her directly with draft language so that she can send it to SCJ.
52

1 **New Business**

2 None.

4 **Reports and Announcements**

5 None.

7 **Citizen Comments:**

8 Julian Anderson said that he commends the Commission for the work done on the comprehensive plan. He
9 said that he feels like everything is in good hands. He said that a few things caught his eye and provided his
10 opinions on several comprehensive plan element changes, language and graphics. He talked about how the
11 proposed Lakeview development behind Sheridan Market is proposing to connect to the city's stormwater
12 system. He suggested requiring infiltration of stormwater for development projects within the
13 comprehensive plan. He talked about how referencing documents within the plan can be confusing when
14 referenced documents are changed.

16 **Agenda for Next Meeting:**

17 Additional discussion on comprehensive plan amendments.

19 **Adjournment:**

20 Cmr. Kaje made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cmr. Cranmer seconded, and the motion was carried
21 unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm.

23 APPROVED:

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27 Maddy Larson, Planning Commission Chair