

**Planning Commission Public Hearing Meeting
Wednesday, August 16, 2023**

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Rutherford convened the Planning Commission Public Hearing meeting at 6:08pm.

PRESENT

Commissioner William Rutherford

Commissioner Alex Murray

Commissioner Dave Watterson

Commissioner Darnella Stenzel

Commissioner Matthew Rounsley

HOUSEKEEPING

1. Agenda approval of the 8/16/2023 Planning Meeting

Recommended Action: Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Watterson, Seconded by Commissioner Rounsley.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Rutherford, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Watterson,
Commissioner Stenzel, Commissioner Rounsley

Motion carries 5-0

2. Meeting minutes for 07/19/2023.

Recommended Action: Motion to approve 07/19/2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Approval postponed to next meeting due to wrong minutes being attached to agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPORTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. Housing Action Plan (HAP) 2023

Recommended Action:

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Recommendation to Council for motion to approve.

OR

Recommendation to Council for motion to deny.

OR

Direct staff to revise the HAP and come back at the next meeting for discussion and consideration.

Commissioner Rutherford opened the Public Hearing period on the Housing Action Plan at 6:10pm.

City Planner Penrose presented a summary of the HAP.

Commissioner Rounsley: page 59 compared to page 62, have some contradictory information in regard to the pocket gophers. C/P Penrose: Page 62, Fig. 28- shows areas that are thought to contain the protected gophers based on geodata soil map indicators. This was also a projection map from 2017.

Commissioner Rounsley: when looking at the numbers, Thurston County determined how much the population should grow in the next 30 years- how often does this hold true? Does the city have enough land? C/P Penrose: does feel the number of prospected units is a lot, but it is feasible within the domain. It depends on what you do with some of the recommendations in the HAP and how they decide to try and fit those dwelling units.

Commissioner Rutherford: how are we addressing the issue with water rights? C/P Penrose: that will be an issue in the Comp plan and that is when it is recommended to look at it.

Commissioner Rutherford: On page 14- first mention of building heights being recommended by stakeholders/developers. At no time during discussion or meetings did we discuss building heights for the HAP. Feels this should not have been placed as a goal as planning commissioners had requested more information. Would like to see that removed in the final draft. C/P Penrose: We didn't take a verbatim take set of comments from the community interviews in particular because we're having a conversation and recording is just not the way we get good, honest feedback. There is a sentiment throughout, especially on the downtown side looking for ways to bring people downtown and keep them downtown. This does not necessarily have to be vertical; you can have mixed use as discussed before. It is a common tool that planners use- you either go up or you go out. The plan does not call for any specific dimensional differences, it is just a recommendation that provides developers density and/or height incentives for desired unit types. Commissioner Rutherford: Height is just one of the things that could include density. I am fairly sure that if we start putting in 50 ft buildings- the town is so narrow that stepping down to the surrounding single-family, single-story units is going to be difficult as there's not a lot of space for maintaining lines of sight or solar availability. I wonder if the people who live here now would want that. To state it as a goal in the goal section specifically kind of presupposes that's what the people want as a community. I don't feel you would get that response if you were to interview the town. Commissioner Rounsley: can height incentives

simply mean building a townhome and providing an incentive to provide that multi home option vs single dwelling unit.

Commissioner Rutherford opened the Public Hearing period to the Public at 6:45pm.

The following was emailed in by a member of the public:

Mike Brown, 187 Hodgden St. Tenino, WA

No explanation of community participation in the development of the plan other than from government and commercial stakeholders.

There is no record of public meetings or surveys to get the general population's ideas or concerns.

There is no record or recommendation about the ability of the water system and current water rights to support the growth forecast.

Same as above for the sewer system.

Those things may be beyond the scope of this draft, but certainly do need to be considered when talking about a population increase of 25%.

There is no justification for the recommendation for higher building heights (pg 14). It is assumed (by the reader) that higher buildings will allow more people to pack into them.

Where is the needs assessment? Why does the city need to grow? Who benefits?

And who has predicted how the increase in population will affect the "small town quality of life" that is enjoyed by a majority of the population? This document lacks merit if that piece is left out.

Appendix B is missing.

Appendix C is missing.

There is no record of stakeholder interviews or individuals who were interviewed. Pg 8 & 14.

What is the timeline for updating the GMA compliant Comprehensive Plan?

Shawn Brown, 187 N Hodgden St. Tenino, WA.

Read Mike Brown's concerns.

Contract from Department of Commerce complaint: issues with item 1 on scope of work: provide for participation and input from community members, community groups, local builders, realtors, non-profit housing advocates and local religious groups. The input from community members is not met. Item action 2: provide for participation and input from community members. Not met. Item step 2.1: identify and establish stakeholder groups including residents. Not met. Step 2.3: Conduct survey to gather information of community perceptions of housing issues. Not met. Step 4.1: present draft housing action plan and public hearing before the prevailing commission. Not completed- draft in incomplete. Item step 4.2: present draft housing action plan and public hearing before city council. Not completed. In the contract you have to abide by these, otherwise the contract is null and void, so are we putting ourselves at risk by not doing that? There was no public survey of the community residents in this town. There was no mention in the paper. We didn't get a blurb in the water bill. You need to talk to the people before you start thinking about building up and out. We don't necessarily believe that we're going to grow 396 or whatever the quote is. We don't have to go that big,

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yes- the growth plan we have to provide for residents. But say let's apply for 100 people, you know it doesn't have to be what they say in the housing action plan.

Jean Petit. 249 Old Hwy 99 N. Tenino, WA

Has been a resident for 81 years, has seen changes and no changes and things that have been going on. Increase in city population. She agrees with what Mike Brown had to say. I'm disappointed in the fact that there's been no public hearings on this document. There's very poor dissemination of this document showing that it's made available to the citizens of Tenino. I feel that they have been left out in this process. I think you should go back and require that things get done in that direction before this is sent for inclusion in the comprehensive plan. When they talk about height changes to get the downtown more vital in all the years that I have lived here people shop and will continue to shop outside of Tenino. It has become a bedroom community. People shop where they work, and they don't work in Tenino. So, I am against any height increase to 25 feet and there has got to be ways to recreate some of the goals in this without that serious increase heights. I think here needs to be more public participation, it hasn't been there and that's not fair to the community members of Tenino. Most of my friends have been there that long. I come from a family that's been here since I don't know, I know change has to come, but it needs community involvement more than what has taken place today.

Jeff Eisel. 239 McArthur St S. Tenino, WA

My first meeting and so I don't know everything about that so I just offer a few comments as a contractor. The mention there about incentivizing developers to do business here with the height increase. I understand if we have some huge development like the west Tenino was going to be, that's one of the big boys. For the small infield that we're talking about here, I'm not an expert but my opinion is that there are plenty of smaller contractors that take on doing that duplex or the fourplex without having any extra incentive. Regarding the incentive, you know if your city code says you have to build a two-story building for any new residential structures or you don't get your permit, it seems to me that is incentive to do what you want them to do and that's your choice whether you're turning away a potential business but my opinion is if you make an opportunity for someone to make money here, it really doesn't matter what the rules are. you're going to find somebody who's willing to do that. So, if the issue here is that people don't want three-story buildings in town then get as much as you can with the two-story buildings. The other thing about doing height, there's also the other dimension of basement dwellings. Dwellings that are partially or completely underground with the appropriate safety egress and whatnot. It's more expensive to excavate for building but just throwing that out that there's more than two levels on a lot going up. And that's all I have, thank you.

Commissioner Rutherford ended the Public Hearing and opened the floor for C/P Penrose to provide response to the Commissioner's and Public's concerns at 6:59pm.

Commissioner Murray: I think that a lot of times we make decisions on smaller things. On a bigger thing like this thank you all for coming out. this is probably some of the most public that we've had in a meeting the last 5 years. We are a government of the people for the people, but I can't tell you how many times people don't show up to talk and give us feedback. The next

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thing- I am really big into transparency of government and making sure that everyone feels like they've had their share of the information, that they've had their ability to talk so Dan I was wondering can we touch base on some of the things that we did to try and get community input or involvement as we went through this process.

C/P Penrose: Yes, on the scope that we shared with you several different times- the contractual obligation come sin the deliverables and the deliverables were all met and commerce has received those deliverables and has reimbursed the city for the expenses towards the contract because in the course of one and a half, or almost two years' worth of a process there are some things that are going to be met more than others and so there is some fungibility on there so for example we decided to not do a community survey. I had asked about that, and a decision was made that it wasn't the best use of the funds at the time. We had 5 or 6 planning commission meetings on it, I kind of listed some of the outreach efforts starting on January 13th with the planning commission kick off, we had community interviews in August of 2022 and a variety of pieces, and you know the plans not adopted yet. This public hearing is part of the public outreach, and the commissioners can extend this comment period if they wish. So that is how I would directly answer that piece. We didn't go door to door, I've used utility flyers before, I really like them, they're really effective but in a setting like this, especially so close to the comp plan outreach effort which will have much more extensive community engagement, specifically related to downtown, land use and housing. The grant did not require that type of public engagement and so we chose to apply our efforts in different spots than that. As far as commerce is concerned, we have met all the requirements and closed the grant.

Commissioner Watterson: I want to make sure we're all on the same page here. We're not adopting this. We're just saying this is what we think should pass onto the council, the council adopts this so we're not adopting anything, when we do this, we're just saying what we think's best. This goes to the council for further public input and further consideration by them hearing from the public. So, there is further chance for more public input. In addition to that, this is more of a guidebook for our comp plan update, so it is like Dan said that it's some of the things we think should be considered when we look at our comp plan to address growth issues in housing in our community.

C/P Penrose: That is correct, you are making a recommendation to either approve or deny the plan. Denial is rejecting the plan altogether. You can also change it or approve it outright, but yeah, the council can choose to have a public hearing, I don't believe the code requires it if it's held at this level so it's up to the council whether they want to open it back up to another public hearing. We are sort of bound by trying to get this thing done in the next seven weeks, and I think there's enough time to do that but it's up to the council to decide. It's a policy document and it's really a precursor to the conversation we're going to have on the comp plan in the next year and a half.

Commissioner Watterson: There are a couple things in there that he would change in regard to transportation and offering more options than just inter city transit.

Commissioner Murray: has always been big on creating a downtown that attracts more people, feels we have gotten closer to that. When talking about a particular path forward that has potential ramifications and they could impact as greatly as five-story buildings, we want to make

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sure that's something we acknowledge, discuss and take into consideration. From this point here, how do we move through this process going forward.

Commissioner Rutherford: recommends moving forward with approval pending striking the mention of building heights as an incentive portion.

Seconded by Commissioner Watterson.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Rutherford, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Watterson, Commissioner Stenzel, Commissioner Rounsley

Motion carries 5-0

Commissioner Rounsley: when only 3 of the public show up and express the same concern, you have to use that as your public response in considerations.

Commissioner Rounsley: moves to change page 27: change the word discuss and insert "review options to". Also change page 30: same.

Seconded by Commissioner Murray.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Rutherford, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Watterson, Commissioner Stenzel, Commissioner Rounsley

Motion carries 5-0

Commissioner Watterson: change transportation with inter city transit, look at transportation options besides them. Motion to remove inter city transit and add "develop partnership with transportation providers to expand services to additional areas of the city".

Seconded by Commissioner Rounsley.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Rutherford, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Watterson, Commissioner Stenzel, Commissioner Rounsley

Motion carries 5-0

Commissioner Rutherford: Moves that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the Housing Action Plan with the changes as specified by the Planning Commission.

Seconded by Commissioner Stenzel.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Rutherford, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Watterson, Commissioner Stenzel, Commissioner Rounsley

Motion passes 5-0

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Commissioner Rutherford adjourned the meeting at 7:24pm.