

WEST ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION

Work Session

The West St. Paul Planning Commission work session meeting was called to order by Chair Kavanaugh on Tuesday March 20, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at the Municipal Center, 1616 Humboldt Avenue, West St. Paul, Minnesota, 55118.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: McPhillips, Kavanaugh, Strohmeier, and Ramsay.

Absent:

Nelson, and Leuer

Also Present:

Asst. Community Development Director Boike, Erin Perdu with WSB, Jim Gromberg with WSB, and Community Development Coordinator Melissa Sonnek

Comprehensive Plan - Parks and Recreation

The chapters relating to economic development, parks and recreation, sustainability, and implementation were summarized for the commissioners.

Erin Perdu reviewed the parks and recreation chapter. The Metropolitan Council requirements for this particular chapter are minimal, only requiring the acknowledgement of the regional connections to parks and trails as well as the existing facilities. Minor updates were made to this chapter to reflect any changes that were made since the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, item updates such as the relevance of the previous goals, objectives, and maps were reviewed as well.

Additional feedback on this chapter was gained when the Parks and Recreation Committee reviewed the document during the prior week, the recommendations made by the Parks and Rec Committee were not reflected in the chapter seen by the Planning Commission during the March 20th meeting. One of the changes recommended by the Parks and Rec Committee was to update the list of accomplishments the City has completed.

Commissioners discussed adding the expansion of our parks and open space systems in addition to expanding our existing trail systems to the listed goals. Discussion on the policies included creating equitable accessibility within our parks for residents with disabilities, increasing the number of city and business partnerships to improve existing infrastructure, the encouragement to create green space and public areas during the redevelopment of private and/or business sites, and the creation of pollinator friendly areas.

In efforts to make West St. Paul more sustainable, the Commissioners discussed exploring impervious surface regulations.

Comprehensive Plan - Sustainability

Per the Metropolitan Council’s requirements for this chapter, the City is allowed a certain amount of leniency, establishing the only requirement as the plan must address potential solar access throughout different areas of the City. The chapter addresses the City’s past and present efforts toward sustainability and environmentally friendly practices, such as healthy communities, renewable energies, and environmental assets, and managing climate related risks.

The Commission discussed the possibility of encouraging environmentally friendly and sustainable buildings through redevelopment incentives as other cities have implemented such measures. The desire for clarification and general education of the negative impacts of the Emerald Ash Borer was discussed as well as how to mitigate the issue. The evaluation of organized trash collection was brought up in order to preserve and lengthen the lifespan of the City’s existing infrastructure.

Comprehensive Plan – Implementation

The implementation chapter is written to establish different methods to achieve the goals and establish priorities and strategies listed throughout the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter includes a chart that includes a timeline for each goal as well as strategies, potential policies, timelines, and the appropriate staff to champion each goal.

Staff requested adding potential funding sources for each listed goal to the chart. The Commission recommended that strategies include that the City Code is regularly updated to reflect recent trends and evolving needs, specifically the Zoning Code.

Comprehensive Plan – Economic Development

Jim Gromberg presented the Economic Development chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He reviewed the new requirements established by Metropolitan Council such as listing major employers within the City. He also discussed the primary contents of the chapter such as demographic information, the existing condition of the housing stock, planning assistance programs, and the importance of establishing a sense of place and a sense of community.

The Commission inquired about the proportionality of the current businesses, if the variety of the businesses within the City were drastically different from other surrounding cities, and the importance of creating jobs that provide a livable wage for workers.

Jim elaborated on what this particular chapter roughly outlines on how the City expects redevelopment to occur in eight different potential areas. The Commission mentioned adding an additional area for redevelopment near the intersection of Wentworth and Charlton where parcels were down-zoning to single family, as this could be a large redevelopment project. The Commission also discussed the importance of branding within the City, and how it can affect existing and future businesses.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Tuesday March 20, 2018 work session meeting of the Planning Commission was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Approved during the 7/17/2018 meeting

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Melissa Sonnenk

Community Development Coordinator