

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

6:30 p.m.

City Hall

Council Chambers

415 W 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

Commission Members Present:

Patrick Adigweme, Sandra Beck, Nena Cavel, Marjorie Ledell, Zach Pyle, Jeff Prussack, Melissa von Borstel (remote)

Staff Present: Bryan Snodgrass, staff liaison, Julie Nischik, staff liaison, Philip Gigler, staff attorney

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Adigweme.

Motion by Commissioner Cavel, seconded by Commissioner Beck, and carried unanimously to approve the February 13, 2024 minutes. Commissioner Prussack abstained from the vote.

Community Forum

James Mullen, representing The Herbery marijuana retail store, was present to request the Commission consider code changes for relaxed buffer zones to mirror the State's from restricted entities. The County recently updated its buffer zones for certain entities. The Herbery has had a challenge with finding sites for its business and there are currently few sites available for potential new marijuana retailers on the east side of Vancouver.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Domenique Martinelli, Senior Planner, Community Development Department; Nicole McDermott, Consultant Project Manager, WSP

Staff presented an overview of past engagement in 2023 through early 2024 and the community mapping activity. The presentation continued with framing of neighborhoods in the Plan, connected and accessible

Members

Patrick Adigweme
Chair

Zach Pyle
Vice Chair

Sandra Beck
Nena Cavel
Marjorie Ledell
Jeff Prussack
Melissa von Borstel

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neighborhoods, the process of developing the vision statements, and how the vision statements will lead to goals and policies. Next steps include developing the three possibilities to be presented this summer to Council and Planning Commission and through community engagement.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- How to define where a connected and accessible begins and ends? Staff responded they considered what services and amenities are included in a connected and accessible neighborhood, where those currently exist in the city and overlaid a walk and bike-shed to show where those types of neighborhoods already exist. As the land use possibilities are evaluated, staff will consider land use designations that allow for those types of amenities and their proximity to housing to work towards increasing connected and accessible neighborhoods. Not every neighborhood or individual residence will fall into this classification, but those that are within the focus areas are more likely to be connected to amenities within a short distance.
- How will the comments regarding specific land uses such as parks, arts spaces, and community benefits from the mapping activity be incorporated into the three land use possibilities? Staff responded in the Comprehensive Plan, we won't designate specific uses on a particular block. Those comments are collected into themes and incorporated in the goals framework to be related to the map and policy.
- How and when annexation is involved with the Comprehensive Plan? Staff responded there is an annexation chapter with the key features of sustainable growth and maintaining levels of service. It will talk broadly about future annexation but would not include details on land use or zoning policy in annexed land. Those details would need to be resolved in a separate annexation policy document.
- Did representatives of the development community participate in the mapping activity? Staff responded there are several community working groups that include some developer representation that participated in the mapping activity. The development community will be consulted as Title 20 is refined.
- What is the general reaction of the public to the mapping activity and the Comprehensive Plan? Staff responded during the mapping activity, the public was focused on solving the problem of adding housing. The public was also concerned with balancing adding housing while preserving the parts of Vancouver that they already like. There were connections to adding housing and implications for infrastructure and traffic while also an effort to place housing near amenities, services, transit, and employment.
- Are you considering the Urban Land Institutes guide for 15 minute neighborhoods? Staff was not familiar with the standards in that particular guide. As the project proceeds, there will be analysis of the clusters of growth in the city, impacts to transportation demand, and emissions, among others.
- Transformation of commercial areas to more mixed use zones with housing. Staff responded they are considering the function of retail spaces, as well as vacant buildable land as a space to convert to mixed use in the long term that will be reflected in the three possibilities.
- Will there be specific neighborhood plans to create connected and accessible neighborhoods? Staff responded there will be. The Comprehensive Plan is a broad policy umbrella and the sub area and neighborhood plans will get into the finer details to implement those policies. Within the implementation plan, there will be details on sub area plan timelines and when those plans may get developed.
- The rapid increase in housing will stress the existing infrastructure. How will the Comprehensive Plan address that and how will development happen in an equitable way across the city so as not to strain one area more than another? Staff responded the Comprehensive Plan and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will address the infrastructure required to support the

proposed land uses. The Plan will detail the infrastructure, transportation, and utility work that would be required to support the level of growth and development over the next 20 years. There are capital facility planning components in the Plan, and the detailed plans will come later in the sub area plans. We are also looking at market feasibility to understand and inform what areas of the city may be more right for development in the short term. The development review process looks at the infrastructure systems ability to accommodate growth at the individual development level.

- How did you determine existing assets in the city and were there any assets that you didn't identify that came through from the mapping activity with the public? Staff responded there were a number of known assets in the project assumptions. We conducted a connected community/15 minute neighborhood analysis to understand where those currently exist, looking at proximity and concentration of businesses, active trip potential, and proximity to Vine stops. That information informed the focus areas. During the mapping exercise, we received input from the public regarding other areas to think about outside of the focus areas. Areas outside of the focus areas will still experience some growth and development.
- What information do you wish you could gather from everyone in the city? Staff responded it would be great to know what everyone wants to see in terms of scale and intensity of development in Vancouver and as many people weighing in on the three possibilities.
- How do you quantify past performance on the topics in the vision statements around sense of inclusion, preventing displacement, and others? Staff responded there is an audit of existing code and past policies. In some instances, we may not be able to quantify past performance on these topics because these policies didn't exist in previous Plans. As part of the process of implementation, staff will determine metrics to measure performance on these topics that haven't previously been tracked.
- How will you weigh the tradeoffs between the three possibilities? Staff responded the three possibilities will vary by what is emphasized. It may be difficult to accomplish every goal laid out in the vision statements for each chapter. The three possibilities will weigh these goals slightly differently with the same basic underlying goals as laid out by City Council. The possibilities will be evaluated in a quantifiable way through the environmental impact statement process.
- What are some publicly available resources and data that are part of the Comprehensive Plan? Staff responded a lot of the underlying data used is from the US Census. The existing conditions data will become available on the City website and project webpage.
- The types of jobs in connected and accessible neighborhoods. Staff responded there will be a variety of jobs supporting upward mobility in the neighborhoods. People will often and likely travel beyond their neighborhood for their job.
- How would the Comprehensive Plan inform specific policies for things like cannabis businesses? Staff responded the regulation of cannabis businesses is within the Vancouver Municipal Code (VMC). Changes to that would follow through the code update process.

Communication from the Chair

None.

Communication from Staff

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm

Patrick Adigweme, Chair