



# Planning Commission

## Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, July 23, 2024**

**4:30 p.m.**

**City Hall**

**Council Chambers**

**415 W 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Vancouver, WA**

**Commission Members Present:**

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

**Commission Members Absent:**

Marjorie Ledell

**Staff Present:** Rebecca Kennedy, staff liaison, Julie Nischik, staff liaison, Becky Rude, staff attorney

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Chair Adigweme.

Motion by Vice Chair Pyle, seconded by Commissioner Cavel, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Commissioner Ledell.

Motion by Vice Chair Pyle, seconded by Commissioner Cavel, and carried unanimously to mark Commissioner von Borstel's absence as unexcused.

Motion by Commissioner Beck, seconded by Commissioner Cavel, and carried unanimously to approve the June 25, 2024 minutes.

**2024 Housing Code Changes**

Bryan Snodgrass, Principal Planner, Community Development Department

Staff presented information on proposed code changes to comply with new State laws that affect allowances for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes, streamline standards for development under the City's infill standards, and amend parent parcel size requirements for cottage cluster developments. An additional change that is being

## Members

**Patrick Adigweme**  
*Chair*

**Zach Pyle**  
*Vice Chair*

Sandra Beck  
Nena Cavel  
Marjorie Ledell  
Jeff Prussack  
Melissa von Borstel

**Community Development  
Department**

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considered is a new mobile home park zone, which requires more outreach and research before it would be implemented.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- What are the benefits of a mobile home park, and can density be increased? Staff responded there could be an addition in the code to allow a property owner to develop higher density housing and/or affordable housing. Manufactured homes are often the most affordable non-income restricted housing on the market.
- Agreement with staff regarding removing barriers to infill development.
- Regarding common space portions of cottage cluster developments, how is the common area managed? Staff responded there hasn't been a land division for cottage clusters to date, so it's not clear how it would be managed in Vancouver. It may be similar to a subdivision where shared space is owned in common via a homeowner's association.
- If an existing garage is closer to the lot line than is currently allowed and is then converted to an ADU, would the owner be allowed to expand it in size? Staff responded this proposed change only affects allowing for a second ADU. If an ADU was expanded, it would need to remain within the current standard for square feet and comply with height and setback requirements. The code allows for non-conforming existing garages to be converted to an ADU, but we typically do not allow non-conforming uses to expand.
- Could a modular home placed on a foundation meet the ADU requirements? Staff responded there are regulations regarding utility connections, so it would need to meet the building code requirements as well as the ADU requirements.
- Clarify the parking requirements for a duplex? Staff responded the requirement is one parking spot per unit.
- If there is not street frontage in a cottage cluster unit, are there other setback requirements between the units and adjacent properties? Staff responded there are size limits on the houses that allow for greater density on the lot and setback requirements apply to the units.
- What might be the minimum size parcel for a mobile home park? Staff responded they will need to look at the current lots, but that hasn't been determined yet. The existing ones vary from twenty to thirty mobile homes to in the hundreds. The intent of this is to preserve existing parks and apply this zone to those.
- Consideration for ADUs as a commercial space? Staff responded they haven't considered that aspect yet, as this change is to comply with new State laws. For commercial activity, there may be a need for a home business permit, but it's generally allowed.
- Limits to short term rentals in ADUs? Staff responded the Planning Commission and Council have begun to regulate short term rentals in the City but the process to adopt that was separate from discussions about ADUs. Current regulations would apply to any type of short term rental- an ADU, entire house, bedroom within a home, etc.
- Will there be options for the property owners of mobile home parks to rezone? Staff responded they expect that will be an option and something to take into consideration when developing the code.

### **Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program Update**

Katherine Kelly, Senior Policy Analyst, Community Development Department; Shilpa Mallem, Design Manager, IBR Program

Staff presented an overview of the program, the process to restart the program in 2019, the partner agencies involved in the program, the program area, the purpose and need for replacement, addition of equity and climate as priorities for the program, an overview of the program schedule, and the National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and its elements. The presentation walked through the project [roll map](#), showing the existing structure and several proposed future elements, including the light rail extension and stations, active transportation connections and crossing, connections with SR-14 and C Street, the extension of Main Street south to the river, design options of the bridge (single span, double span, lift span options), the Community Connector, potential locations for park and rides, the Mill Plain interchange, and the addition of a single auxiliary lane throughout the program area.

Commission discussion and questions. Due to time limits, staff provided responses to the below questions in a follow up memo (included as a separate attachment).

- Process for reviewing and making decisions regarding changes to the local street network?
- Time frame for construction.
- How will tolling fees apply to bridge construction costs?
- Using the existing rail bridge for light rail.
- Long haul truck lane.
- Height of bridge and impact to sight lines and views from downtown and the waterfront.
- Process for assessing the needs for park and ride stations and impact on land use for people who live downtown.
- Will the draft EIS assess impacts on current land uses, or will it be based on the land uses in the new comprehensive plan?
- In downtown and uptown, there will be negative impacts to residential properties due to traffic noise. Will the project assess and mitigate for noise in the project area?
- Do you expect changes to the schedule?
- What types of feedback have you received from the community and work groups?

### **Community Forum**

No members of the community were present to speak during community forum.

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development Department; Sam Rubin, Environmental Planner, WSP

Staff presented the process used by staff to analyze the land use exercise and development of a consensus map, areas of variation throughout the city and the three land use possibilities.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- What additional knowledge was gained through community engagement? Staff responded the community has local knowledge and desires that staff may not know about that result in options that are no less and sometimes more optimal than what might be proposed by staff alone. Additionally, plan policies will result in significant change in the community over the next 20 years and it's important to engage with the people who will be living with that change and impacted throughout the process. The development of the focus areas relied heavily on best practices in urban planning and design and reflect Council policy direction as well as planning staff expertise. It is City policy to engage with the community on projects and programs that impact them and is essential for achieving equity goals. The Growth Management Act (GMA) also requires cities to ensure public participation in the comprehensive plan update.
- Desire for more policy level takeaways from the mapping activities.

The presentation continued with policy takeaways from the mapping activity including the mix of housing and place types between the three possibilities, impacts of the three possibilities to environmental health factors, and employment land variations between the three possibilities.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Difficult to provide meaningful feedback given the level of detail provided in the workshop and would be helpful to have key differences between the possibilities highlighted by staff.
- Would be helpful to be able to compare possibilities with overall goals for the comprehensive plan. Staff responded that they are only putting forth possibilities that meet the overall goals of the comprehensive plan.
- How do the focus areas relate to nodes?
- What are community members most interested in when staff engage with them at events? Staff responded generally people fear or are hesitant about change in their community. Common issues they bring up include mixing of uses in a negative way, increases in traffic, access to parking, and change in the character of their neighborhood. On the other hand, they also express interest in having a walkable neighborhood with access to parks, restaurants, and businesses and more housing options.
- How was the percentage of total acreage assigned to employment determined? Staff responded it initially starts with housing units. We look at the likelihood of housing development over 20 years and applied planning best practices to estimate the proportion of employment in each place type. Staff also just received additional employment data from the State. Once that data is analyzed these percentages will be updated to more accurately reflect existing employment densities.
- How will the Evergreen and Grand corridor plan and other subarea plans be affected by the updated comprehensive plan? The overall intent for the new comprehensive plan and zoning code is to have fewer comprehensive plan designations and fewer nested zoning districts, and to provide greater flexibility. Ideally, we would have a place type that aligns with Evergreen and Grand, for example, with an overlay that is either specific to that area or could be applied to other similar areas. This is a topic that staff are still working through.
- How do the possibilities vary in terms of timeline of development of housing? Does one possibility deliver the same amount of housing in a shorter time frame? Staff responded building typology is tied to the cost of development and feasibility, so we'll need to work through how to communicate that information in a clearer way.
- Request for visual models to better understand how the experience of a neighborhood might change with these various place types.
- How to manage the transition from current state to future state? Staff responded state laws don't allow us to phase in regulations that allow for middle housing, for example. Overall, it will be a phased and slow process to transition parcel by parcel over 20 years. For areas like Evergreen and Grand, where policy has recently been developed, we need to ensure that the comprehensive plan has minimal conflict with the corridor plan.
- What was successful and takeaways from staff on the previous comprehensive plan? Staff responded they can provide that information at a future workshop/meeting.
- Takeaways on housing for possibility 2? Staff responded possibility 2 was very geographically specific and puts housing and jobs around parks and schools. It was also lower intensity and had less mixing of uses.

**Communication from the Chair**

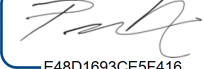
None.

**Communication from Staff**

The next Planning Commission meeting is in September.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm

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Patrick Adigweme, Chair