



Comprehensive Plan/Municipal Code Advisory Group Meeting Minutes March 15, 2023

Call to Order: 5:30 pm

Advisory Group Members Present:

Kristine Birkenkopf, Community Member
Dylan Sluder, MBAKS
Meagan Watne, Community Member
Elizabeth Callaghan, Community Member
Peter Kamb, Community Member
Steve Shepro, Council Member

Staff Present:

Patricia Love, Community Development Director
Audrey Rotrock, Associate Planner
Tansy Schroeder, City Planner

Advisory Group Members Absent:

Tim Schmitt, Council Member
Jami Sollid, Community Member
Cody Davis, Planning Commissioner
Keri Moore, Snohomish Health District
Lauren Ruskauff, Community Member

New Business:

Land Use Element Draft

Staff is working with the consultant team updating the Comprehensive Plan as part of the periodic update process currently underway. The Land Use Element is the most critical component of the Comprehensive Plan and the basis for all other required elemental chapters. The 2015 Land Use Element consists of 25 different goals each with their own associated set of policies. Staff and consultant edits to this element concentrated on simplifying the text; removing redundant goals or policies due to redundancy, simplification, already implemented/adopted, or more appropriate for the Municipal Code or other elements of the Comprehensive Plan; and adding new policies addressing regional planning policies.

After Patricia Love gave an overview of the Land Use Element draft, the group had the following questions and comments.

Advisory Group Questions & Comments:

- The Land Use Element may be too technical for the average citizen to understand. The addition of maps, graphs, and pictures would help paint a better picture.
- The “intent” for Stanwood’s land use and zoning is a great statement (page LU-1) but it is difficult to find the intent being implemented in the following pages.
- Add topics such as mental well-being and non-motorized transportation to the intent for Stanwood’s land use and zoning statement.
- The Element is set up in easy to digest topics and sections.
- On the 2024 Zoning Map, consider adding percentages of the different zone types there are for each Single-Family Residential zone.
- Consider rezoning the Urban Growth Area to include a greater variety of housing types instead of all single-family residential zones. Also consider changing the coloring of different zones to signify different housing types.



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- Where in the city can more parks be added? The city would have to obtain new land for adding more parks.
- Distinguish the goals from the public comments – this adds confusion.
- Staff continues to monitor zoning reform issues at the state level. The city believes that local control over zoning options is important.

Land Use Goals and Policies

Comprehensive plan edits concentrate on simplifying the text, removing redundant policies, and adding new policies addressing regional planning policies. More policies do not mean better policies. The Land Use Element goals and policies listed below include four general changes:

- New – New policies/goals proposed to address identified new regional or local policy gaps in addition to expanding upon the vision of Stanwood residents
- Revised – Existing policies that can be revised to address policy gaps or for better clarity and simplification
- Moved – Policies that have been moved from other sections to better flow or for relevancy
- Deleted – Existing goals or policies that were removed due to redundancy, simplification, already implemented/adopted, or more appropriate for the Municipal Code or other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Advisory Group Questions and Comments

- LUP 6.5 is about supporting development of major retailers providing key goods and services. This is a controversial topic as many people do not want big box stores. Consider avoiding the use of the terms “big box stores” and “major retailers” but maintain that there is a need for essential goods and services.
- The Country Store and Grocery Outlet are large stores, but their parking lots remain mostly empty.
- Describe the big picture of annexation and how it works.
- LUP 11.17 requires new commercial development to provide open spaces for public gathering, seating, and eating at a scale appropriate for the development. Would this policy apply to commercial remodels? This relates to the unified development code and scalable open space.
- LUP 11.9 is about allowing flexibility in mixed use developments with residential units built into a convenient, transit oriented, and walkable downtown where there is not convenient access to commercial storefronts. Consider adding language on how, via transit or other, people would get downtown.
- Is the city responsible for shopping resources for a growing population? The city is not responsible but can remove “red-tape” making it easier for stores to open in Stanwood.
- Continue working on wording of the policies for easier readability.
- Add a policy for businesses that are currently in the UGA who have a use that may not be permitted if they were annexed into the City under new zoning rules. Protect these businesses, who provide needed services, from potentially violating the code.
- Consider adding commercial nodes to zones where commercial isn’t currently an allowed use. This would create an opportunity for areas to provide goods and services that local residents can walk to.



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- To attract more Traditional Neighborhood type of developers, consider making it more competitive, offer density bonuses, or even do a study group.
- Good quality developers will usually work with what a city envisions.
- Future residents of the Cedarside Commons development will likely drive across SR 532 to get to Haggen's. Consider allowing more grocery options north of SR 532.
- Group members would be interested to know how successful businesses have been in the areas of mixed use near Haggen's.

Stanwood Municipal Code Titles 9 and 13

The Advisory Group ran out of time to have the final discussion on Stanwood Municipal Code Titles 9 and 13. Patricia Love asked the group to forward any comments they have on the two titles to staff.

Adjourn: 7:06