



Joint Planning Commission & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 – 6:30 pm

Call to Order: 6:33 pm

Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Patrick Hosterman, Commission Chair
Robert Hicks, Commissioner
Melissa Toner, Commissioner
Cody Davis, Commission Vice-Chair
Jeff Wheatley, Commissioner
Tim Schmitt, Council Member
Steve Shepro, Council Member
Marcus Metz, Council Member

Staff Present:

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

Absent:

Eric Warnat, Commissioner, Justin Burns, Commissioner

Also known to be present: Rick Williams, Jay & Carly Sarver, Sean Connolly, Melodee Sarver, Stuart Heady.
Online: Nicole Ng-A-Qui, Meagen Watkins, Charvet Drucker, Kathleen Shepro, Matt, Tom Surridge, Christy Ward, Ellen Paige, Sam Drucker, William Lippens, (925) 878-5677, Observer 1, Observer 2

Public Requests and Comments:

None

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the April 10, 2023 Planning Commission meeting were unanimously approved.

New Business:

2024 Comprehensive Plan Organization

The March Advisory Group meeting included a robust discussion on the Land Use Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Several comments centered around the Element being too technical, and it didn't flow well. Some of the information that felt missing from the Land Use Element is actually located in other Elements / Chapters of the Plan. To help better understand the general flow of the entire Comprehensive Plan and the topics covered in each Element, staff prepared a table describing the topics addressed in each Element.

- The Planning Commissioners and Council Members found the table very helpful in understanding what each Element contains.

2024 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element

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, 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.



Joint Planning Commission & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 – 6:30 pm

The Advisory Group reviewed the draft land use element at their March meeting and two issues dominated the discussion on the land use element: Provisions for commercial goods and services, and housing. Staff then reorganized the land use element and reviewed the proposed 2024 Zoning Map and are suggesting a few map changes for consideration:

- Commercial Goods and Services:
 - Option 1: General Commercial on existing “Big Box” property.
 - Option 2: Include Viking Village and QFC properties adjacent to 271st Street in General Commercial zoning.
 - Option 3 (Advisory Group preferred): Include Viking Village in GC zoning, exclude QFC properties adjacent to 271st Street.
- Expanding Housing Variety:
 - Option 1 (not supported by the Advisory Group): Apply the TN zoning to larger undeveloped lots in the uptown area.
 - Option 2: Require commercial development on TN zoned properties adjacent to SR 532.
 - Option 3: Rezone large, undeveloped parcel on Pioneer Highway to Multifamily.

Mixed-Use Zone:

One of the goals of the downtown zoning analysis was to reduce the number of zoning districts and eliminate the confusion between the Mainstreet Business District I and Mainstreet Business District II zoning districts. By combining these zones, the new Mixed-Use Commercial zoning doesn’t account for the existing “Big Box” stores which currently serve the community.

To address this disparity, staff is suggesting the following zoning amendments:

1. Preserve the downtown, small business owner atmosphere along 271st Street, 270th Street (Main Street) and 102nd Avenue by applying the Mixed-Use zoning. This allows small business development with infill residential to support retail and restaurant shopping.
2. Apply the General Commercial zoning designation to the “Big Box” properties along 92nd Avenue, 88th Avenue and a portion of Viking Way. This preserves the existing “Big Box” development and allows for their continued use over time.

Expanding Housing Variety:

In 2015 the City adopted the Traditional Neighborhood zoning district. The TN zoning requires three types of housing units or two types of housing units with commercial uses. The Advisory Group has suggested expanding the TN zoning and consider requiring more commercial development. In considering the AG’s comments, staff is proposing the following changes for consideration.

Proposed 2024 Uptown Zoning:

- Traditional Neighborhood Zoning (TN)
- Multi-Family Residential Zoning (MF)
- Single Family zoning (SF)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Parks / Open Space (POS)
- Public Use/Facilities (PF)
- Industrial (GI and PI)



Joint Planning Commission & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 – 6:30 pm

Proposed Uptown Zoning Amendments

1. Apply the TN zoning to larger undeveloped lots in the uptown area.
2. Require commercial development on TN zoned properties adjacent to SR 532.
3. Rezone undeveloped parcel on Pioneer Highway to Multifamily. This could allow for various infill housing types on small lots.

Commissioner & Council Member Questions & Comments:

- Consider also adding General Commercial zoning to portions of Pioneer Highway.
- There is room for more residential neighborhoods north of Stanwood.
- Concerned about potential apartments going in near QFC. There is already a lot of traffic in this area and apartments and more cars would make getting in and out of the plaza difficult.
- Support for mixed use residential in transportation corridor (downtown and Viking Village).
- Commissioners and Council members support Option 3 under Commercial Goods and Services.
- The Commissioners and Council Members would like to learn more about Commercial Accessory Units.
- Maintain compatibility of uses in residential areas to avoid nuisances such as noise, odor, and traffic.
- An increase in traffic in residential areas and school zones is a concern. Development along SR 532 is a better option.
- The City will identify and define the types of uses/businesses that would be allowed in residential areas.
- The Residential Commercial zone appears to be what the original intent of the TN zone was. This zoning change would allow these uses to arise naturally/as needed (uses such as daycare centers, mini marts, etc.) instead of forcing them into certain zones. They will also need to meet certain parameters, such as lot size.
- Can we create parameters for places of worship to allow them to have combined uses such as worship plus a daycare? These are conversations that will happen when defining uses.
- Could a business come in and ask the City for a variance to allow a different use in a residential zone? One could get a Special Use or Conditional Use Permit that would allow a new use to happen in a zone but with certain conditions and requirements. The State discourages single area re-zones.
- There are concerns of certain types of business/uses that would not be compatible with a residential neighborhood. How can this be managed? The City asks that the Planning Commissioners create a list of uses they would and would not like to see to bring them joint Planning Commission & City Council meeting on May 11th. Here they can discuss uses and narrow them down.
- Consider creating a restrictive list of residential commercial uses and have each proposed use subject to review.
- Nearby homeowners should have input on what businesses will be allowed and not allowed.



Joint Planning Commission & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 – 6:30 pm

Public Questions & Comments:

- Infrastructure of streets needs to be addressed as traffic increases. What is the timing to update the infrastructure with new developments? Developers are responsible for upgrading the infrastructure, otherwise it would be paid for by residents.
- Can new mixed-use areas be built up instead of out? The City doesn't anticipate increasing building height, but it is a topic that can be discussed with the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Many areas where residential commercial zoning may be allowed also have Homeowners Associations that could limit the types of uses allowed as well.
- There is a need for more townhomes and duplexes, instead of single-family homes and multifamily residences. These needs fluctuate with the economy.

Housing Action Plan Strategies

Stanwood received grant funding to prepare a Housing Action Plan (HAP). The purpose of the HAP is to develop a single report that defines community needs, analyzes projected needs, and identifies the most appropriate strategies and implementation actions that promote housing opportunities at all income levels. The HAP is not intended to be a regulatory document, but instead is a toolkit of recommended policies, programs, regulations, and incentives that were selected based on Stanwood's unique needs, character, and community. The City is required to adopt the HAP by June 30, 2023. City Staff and consultant, Blueline, have prepared three goals, each with 2-3 associated strategies that the City is seeking the Advisory Group's feedback on.

Goal A. Provide the foundation for a growing urban community.

- Strategy 1: Plan for intentional growth of infrastructure with consideration of the relationship between existing needs and future needs.
- Strategy 2: Foster community in areas that will experience the fastest growth.

Goal B: Promote a wider variety of housing opportunities for homeowners and renters.

- Strategy 1: Allow for higher-density residential development in proximity to services and transit.
- Strategy 2: Promote the use of infill development.
- Strategy 3: Allow for more flexible development of single-family residential units.

Goal C. Promote opportunities that foster a livable Stanwood, including housing affordability, for everyone now and into the future.

- Strategy 1: Consider ways to reduce the displacement of existing households.
- Strategy 2: Incentivize the construction of more homes for low-income and cost-burdened households.

Commissioner & Council Member Questions & Comments:

Goal A: Provide the foundation for a growing urban community

- Commissioners and Council members have no concerns about Goal A, to provide the foundation for a growing urban community.

Goal B: Promote a wider variety of housing opportunities for homeowners and renters.



Joint Planning Commission & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes April 24, 2023 – 6:30 pm

- Have developers asked to build different housing opportunities? Not in Stanwood, but in other jurisdictions. There are ways to create incentives for developers to want to build different types of housing units.
- Manufactured housing is a misunderstood housing type but is becoming a popular option and could help to fill in gaps. Manufactured homes could be an affordable option for seniors.
- Tax exemptions for developers would increase everyone else's property taxes.
- Why would we offer a tax exemption? Is it for enticing developers to build? It's a new option under State law, and the City wants to inform everyone that it is an option. It also helps provide managed affordable housing that will stay affordable housing in the future.
- A tax exemption might be necessary for a short period of time when developers aren't willing to build alternate housing types.

Goal C: Promote opportunities that foster a livable Stanwood, including housing affordability, for everyone now and into the future.

- All goals show responsible stewardship for affordable housing.
- Developers want to make money and will want to build the most profitable type of housing. These goals are geared towards developers who only build affordable housing.
- What would prevent a homeowner from pricing a home at a high rate in a Community Land trust? Community Land Trusts are specifically for affordable housing. The City will do more research and get more information back to the Planning Commissioners and Council members on this topic.
- What are the challenges of accessory dwelling units (ADU)? Some challenges that are faced when building ADU's are meeting setbacks, minimum building separation, and sewer and water connections.
- It is the School District's responsibility to accommodate growth. They currently have the capacity to meet this growth within the whole district. The City is continuing to build a relationship with the District.
- Consider reinstating school impact fees.
- Planning Commissioners and Council Members are supportive of moving the Housing Action Plan forward to City Council.

Public Questions & Comments:

- The Navy is bringing in six new ships to Everett over the next three years. Currently, sailors are struggling to find housing in Everett, and Stanwood is close enough to accommodate them.

Old Business: None

Miscellaneous Business:

- May 8, 2023 Planning Commission meeting is canceled for the joint meeting on May 11, 2023.
- The City has received funding for repairing the dike.

Recent Council Action on Commission Items:

- Municipal Code Chapters 9 and 13 are going to Council for the first reading on May 11, 2023.

Upcoming Items:

- Joint Planning Commission and City Council meeting on May 11, 2023.

Adjourn: 8:40 pm