

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES



HYBRID/REMOTE AND IN PERSON AT THE MILL

March 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM by Chair Janice Huxford

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Janice Huxford, Commissioner Michael Duerr, Commissioner Jennifer Davis, Commissioner Nathan Packard, Commissioner Bruce Morton, Commissioner Murika Matz, Council Liaison Ryan Donoghue

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Connor Davis was excused. Commissioner Morton moved, and Commissioner Matz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

STAFF PRESENT: Principal Planner David Levitan, Planning Manager Christi Schmidt, Planning Director Russell Wright, Administrative Assistant Dawn Erickson

OTHERS PRESENT: No additional attendees

Chair Huxford opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: As noted above.

Guest business: None.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Meeting of February 19, 2025, were approved as written. Commissioner Packard made the motion, and Commissioner Matz seconded; the motion was carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

Principal Planner Levitan reviewed the 2025 Comprehensive Plan docket items

Two map amendments to change zoning to Public/Semi-Public for three city-owned parcels, one which contains an LSSD Lift Station and a two-parcel lot that houses a parking area for SRFR Fire Station 81.

- Three text amendments: one to update the city's subarea plans to reflect updated land use and zoning designations, policy language, growth assumptions and design concepts adopted as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. A second text amendment would provide a placeholder for potential changes to the plan elements, along with standard administrative amendments, including the Cover, Title Page, Table of Contents, Introduction and Appendices as needed. A

third text amendment would update the Parks Element to reflect the 2025 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, which must be adopted by December 2025.

All amendments would align the city with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan updates. Commissioner Morton moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt the docket ratification; Commissioner Matz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Commissioner Morton moved to close the Public Hearing; Commissioner Duerr seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Principal Planner Levitan then discussed the Development Code Update Requirements for STEP (various levels of supportive housing) Housing, which stems from 2021's HB 1220. Goals and policies were updated in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan in policies 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6 and 3.2.8. Maps were provided showing where specific types of housing are permitted by zoning. Planner Levitan then opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Duerr inquired about the city's financial commitment when partnering with a non-profit. Planner Levitan indicated it would apply to specific development proposals. A partnership brings the non-profit in to help develop regulations, and the city would rely on non-profits for building because the city doesn't provide housing. No legislation currently exists requiring jurisdictions to provide financial or property commitments for STEP housing. Commissioner Morton inquired about any current STEP housing in the city; Principal Planner Levitan stated there is none at this time. Commissioner Matz asked if it were possible for the city to make public spaces (libraries, etc.) available for some temporary housing. Principal Planner Levitan stated that consultation with the city attorney would be needed to answer definitively. The emphasis is more on making it possible and easier for them to be built rather than be responsible for providing them.

Planning Manager Schmidt gave the Commissioners edits regarding LSMC 14.110 Concurrency Management System and LSMC 14.112 Traffic Impact Mitigation. For LSMC on 14.110, the consultant (Transpo) made eight recommendations:

1. Prepare an annual concurrency report,
2. Consider collecting concurrency review fees,
3. Consider altering the current concurrency tracking process for projects outside the established subareas
4. Update tracking matrix to include Lake Stevens Industrial Center (LSIC) subarea
5. Re-evaluate the concurrency evaluation threshold,
6. Update traffic impact analysis guidelines,
7. Track concurrency using per-person trips instead of vehicle trips
8. Develop a certificate of concurrency approval (separate from the staff report currently provided)

After reviewing the consultant's recommendations, staff recommends:

1. Prepare annual concurrency report
2. Track concurrency within each traffic impact zone (TIZs)
3. Include concurrency tracking for the LSIC subarea once planning is completed
4. Set a lower threshold for concurrency evaluation but a higher threshold for when a traffic study is required
5. Update the traffic impact analysis guidelines to provide clear guidance on the level of traffic analysis

6. Adjust the concurrency tracking process to be based on per-person trips vs. vehicle trips

The suggested text changes to the policy documents will align the city with the 2024 Adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Jennifer Davis thought the concurrency update would be a great opportunity to connect with the community but isn't sure of the best method of engagement; she also asked about the exemptions from SEPA recommendations for Transpo. Planner Levitan pointed out that most of our development will be infill development where they are currently SEPA exempt. Chair Huxford mentioned that regarding a few intersections missing in Transpo's evaluation last fall, the acceptable service levels have now been met or exceeded. This led to a discussion regarding the use of Traffic Impact Mitigation fees and how they fit into the 6-year Capital Improvement Plan. Director Wright explained that the city cannot compel an individual developer to pay for roadway modifications for a specific purpose unless it is a project of great magnitude. Fees are collected for specific zones and projects are addressed as they come up in the 6-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Planning Manager Schmidt emphasized that a section on cost impact methodology was included in the code but eliminated to maintain flexibility, as it is administrative in nature. This text and maps, and the same for the Parks Department, will be in a guidance document and not codified.

Commissioner Jennifer Davis sought clarification that impact fees are collected by zones and determined by the 20-year and 6-year Capital Improvement Plans approved by the Council. Director Wright confirmed this and likened it to putting money in a savings account, then moving it to checking when needing to pay the bill.

Commissioner Reports:

Chair Huxford asked the clerk to read a comment submitted via e-mail by Commissioner Connor Davis regarding a pending sign permit for Lakeside Books, urging the city to expedite the process.

Commission Packard attended City Council yesterday and referenced a comment (by Commissioner Morton) posted online about a pilot program on 116th/117th, which received a robust response online. Also, the Planning Commission has been invited to participate in the City Council retreat on 4/24/25. Council Liaison Ryan Donoghue confirmed the invitation to anyone interested and asked that any suggested agenda items be submitted (through the PC clerk) and forwarded to him ASAP. Commissioner Packard stated he would like to attend; all other Commissioners present could not attend.

Commissioner Morton commented on the pilot program to make 116th and 117th streets a separate directional one-way street. He asked about this cost compared to just installing sidewalks, stating that some residents would give up some property to the city for a sidewalk rather than live on a one-way street.

Chair Huxford stated that Lakeside Books also approached her. Planning Manager Schmidt said she would provide permit status after the meeting. Chair Huxford also emphasized projects that could impact more people for less money, emphasizing that the south end of the lake has several project needs.

Director's Report

Director Wright last night presented a first-quarter long-range report to the City Council regarding the codes currently under review, the land use permit numbers YTD, and the 2024 permit statistics recently submitted to the Department of Commerce.

Adjourn: Motion by Commissioner Morton, with a second by Commissioner Duerr, to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,

Dawn Erickson, Administrative Assistant