



**City of Lake Elmo  
Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of June 25, 2012**

Chairman Williams called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 7:03pm.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Hall, Fliflet, Obermueller, Haggard, Williams, and Bloyer;

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Ziertman and Pelletier;

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning Director Klatt, City Administrator Zuleger, and City Planner Johnson.

**Approve Agenda:**

M/S/P: Hall/Fliflet motion to approve the agenda. Vote: 5-0

**Approve Minutes:** None

**Business Item:** *Review of Draft Comprehensive Plan Amendment-Housing Element*

City Planner Johnson presented an overview of the draft housing section of the Comprehensive Plan. The housing section was drafted to comply with Met Council requirements related to the upcoming Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

After reviewing the requirements, Planner Johnson reviewed City goals for housing in community.

Chairman Williams noted that the goal of emphasizing walkability in residential neighborhoods should apply to the I-94 Corridor as well.

Commissioner Haggard wanted to make sure that senior housing is affordable and that we are providing for a variety of housing types for seniors.

City Administrator Zuleger felt that adding language to promote a variety of “life-cycle” housing under goal number three would be best.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that single-family housing may still provide for the needs of seniors, would like to see variety in their options.

Chairman Williams noted that the density south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street is predicated by meeting the requirements of the MOU, not providing housing for a specific age group.

Chairman Williams wanted to know what the population charts in other communities look like compared to Lake Elmo.

Commissioner Bloyer asked about what other factors may be causing people to not move to Lake Elmo other than affordability in the housing stock.

Commissioner Fliflet noted her concern about goal number #4, suggesting a rewording of the language related to attracting specific age groups through housing.

City Planner Johnson reviewed the affordable housing allocation formula for communities in the Twin Cities region.

Chairman Williams wanted to know how affordable housing will be defined in the context of these land use plans.

Planner Johnson explained that affordable housing will primarily be explained through the densities included in the land use plans.

Commissioner Bloyer asked if it is possible to do find statistics that document how many people in the twin Cities walk to work. City Planner Johnson will look into this matter.

Chairman Williams noted that there are other objectives for walkability other than transportation, such as recreation and health.

The Planning Commission pursued a general discussion on walkability and objectives for neighborhood design.

Commissioner Hall felt that environments that are more walkable provides residents more options, and that people can still own a car, yet walk or bike to their local destinations.

Commissioner Obermueller wanted to have more examples of people who ride bikes to work, shop, doctor, and other locations.

Commissioner Bloyer – asked if there is any research on happiness in terms of the physical environment.

**Business Item:** *Review of Draft Comprehensive Plan Amendment- I-94 Land Use Chapter*

Planning Director Klatt presented the additional material that will be submitted along with the Comprehensive Plan Update related to the land use plan, specifically the I-94 Corridor. Klatt explained how the plan relates to the revised version of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The revised MOU allows for relief from 2010

growth expectations until 2015. The new version of the MOU targets REC unit growth in 5-year increments. In addition, there is a time extension on the wastewater inefficiency fee. However, the 2030 expectations for growth and REC counts are still in place at this time.

Commissioner Fliflet asked if the City truly expects that the Met Council will not adjust its projections for growth.

Planning Director Klatt explained that the projections will be adjusted through the next round of regional forecasts.

City Administrator Zuleger noted that relief was granted to Scott County.

Commissioner Fliflet felt that the City should be more proactive in terms of presenting growth forecasts that are more realistic.

City Administrator Zuleger noted that the Met Council wants to see the City of Lake Elmo achieve some growth. It is important to get the process moving to build some trust.

Commissioner Bloyer asked if the City believes that the Met Council will enforce the wastewater inefficiency fees.

Planning Director Klatt explained the numbers of the revised MOU. Klatt noted that there are 200 existing REC units from the existing residential in the Village. In addition, future commercial development could bring 250 additional units in the Village. These numbers ensure that Lake Elmo will meet the overall 6600 REC expectation. Finally, the revised MOU will backload the growth of RECs in the period between 2020-30.

Chairman Williams noted that there is not a "consistent rate of change" in the growth plans like the Comp Plan amendment indicates. There is a discrepancy between this statement and the backloading of the growth during the period of 2020-30. There must be consistency.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that we should revisit the employment RECs. The current plan for the I-94 Corridor expectations are too high for the number of

Planning Director Klatt noted that some of these areas have flexibility built into them, allowing for different land uses that may drive different employment figures/

Commissioner Bloyer noted that if the market conditions change so will the type of commercial or office development that could be located in the I-94 Corridor.

Planning Director Klatt explained that we are trying to build the REC count into the plan.

Chairman Williams noted that the City is making a land use plan based upon REC unit counts.

Commissioner Bloyer expressed his feelings that the discussions are mired down in the REC Units.

Planning Director Klatt explained the rest of the REC unit requirements within the revised MOU. There is more flexibility built into this approach.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that it is best to have more details built into the plan so that the Staff has the proper direction. In addition, records and minutes must be improved in order to understand the motives of these decisions.

City Administrator Zuleger felt that there should be a legislative intent built into the minutes.

Commissioner Bloyer asked if it is necessary to provide developers with comp planning and zoning before development can occur. He wanted to know if it is possible to miss some opportunities in completing this process.

City Administrator Zuleger noted that the City will not miss opportunities if we can get through our Comp Plan process and zoning by the end of the summer. Also, our approach has been market driven in working in market realities in our land use plans.

Planning Director Klatt then summarized the next steps. They include adding the staging plan, finalizing the housing sections, getting Planning Commission and City Council approval and distributing to the surrounding communities and Met Council.

Chairman Williams asked if it was more appropriate to submit all of our amendments at the same time.

Planning Director Klatt noted that the ancillary issues will be addressed when the Village Area portion of the Comp Plan is submitted. Finally, Klatt noted some minor changes to the I-94 land use plan that make the numbers, or REC counts, more consistent and appropriately aligned.

Chairman Williams asked when is it appropriate to show the maximum densities.

Planning Director Klatt noted that the Comp Plan is an appropriate time to include this information.

Chairman Williams noted that the Planning Commission needs to discuss what the maximum densities should be.

Planning Director Klatt felt that a workshop about density may be appropriate.

Commissioner Hall asked if development failure is factored into the comprehensive planning.

Planning Director Klatt noted that failed development is not accounted for. Failure is more a market element that is not accounted for. However, Klatt did note that the expansion of sewer is dependent on successful development if it is to be done in a fiscally responsible manner.

Chairman Williams noted that Page 11- mixed use 20-50 units per acre- check on this.

Commissioner Bloyer asked if it is possible to change the land uses after the Comp Plan has been amended.

Planning Director Klatt noted that other communities are more general or vague in determining the location of certain land uses, simply determining areas for housing, commercial and industrial. Meeting the requirements of the MOU, however, make it necessary to be more prescriptive and precise in the case of Lake Elmo.

Terry Emerson, a lifelong Lake Elmo resident, made a request that additional portions of his land on the East side of his property be guided for Highway Commercial land use.

Neither Chairman Williams nor Commissioner Hall, members of the I-94 Work Group, knew why this area was not guided for Commercial use.

Planning Director Klatt noted that Staff needs direction on this proposed change.

Commissioner Fliflet wanted to know how this area will be accessed in terms of roads.

Chairman Williams noted that the hope is that a development plan for this area would be submitted at the same time to incorporate access.

Planning Director Klatt suggested that we make the property in question a more mixed-use designation.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that she would not be opposed to this change because there is a natural break due to the nearby Holiday gas station to the East.

Chairman Williams noted that the form of the building is in many cases more important than the use.

City Administrator Zuleger noted that this can be addressed with design standards.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that we need to have our design standards ready at the same time as zoning.

City Administrator Zuleger noted that the City is working with a landscape architect, Damon Farber, to address this very issue.

Chairman Williams wondered when the Planning Commission will see the zoning code for the new zoning districts, as well as design standards for the I-94 Corridor and Village Area.

Planning Director Klatt stated that drafting new zoning districts and design standards are next in terms of the process. Design standards can run concurrently with zoning.

Chairman Williams noted that he would be willing to hold extra meetings to work with the zoning.

### **City Council Updates**

Planning Director Klatt noted that the City Council approved a minor subdivision for a well site at the Madrinich property.

In addition, the City Council approved the renaming of a portion of Julep Ave. N. to 45<sup>th</sup> St. N. near Tapestry at Charlottes Grove.

### **Staff Updates**

Planning Director Klatt informed the Planning Commission that the Planning and Engineering Departments are now located in the Community Development Annex. Staff still has the same phone numbers, but these will change at some point.

### **Commission Concerns**

Chairman Williams noted that an Economic Development Authority was discussed at the last City Council meeting. Chairman Williams noted that this material should be presented to the Planning Commission. He felt that the Planning Commission should review and discuss this material.

Planning Director Klatt noted that this sentiment will be passed along to the Council.

Adjournment at 9:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Johnson  
City Planner