



**City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission Workshop Meeting
Minutes of December 18, 2012**

Chairman Williams called to order the workshop of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 6:40p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Fliflet, Hall, Obermueller, Larson, Kreimer, Reeves, Morreale, Haggard and Williams;

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Battah;

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

Approve Agenda:

The Commission accepted the agenda as presented.

Approve Minutes - None

Business Item: *DRAFT Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Village Land Use Plan*

The meeting began with City Administrator Zuleger addressing the Planning Commission about where the Comp Plan Amendment fits in the timeline of infrastructure planning and review. He highlighted three key numbers:

- 180 Days: Amount of time it takes for a major Comp Plan Amendment to proceed through adjacent jurisdiction and Met Council review.
- \$1,000,000: The City was awarded a grant for extending the sewer to the Village, but this expires in 2014.
- 515 Homes: The number of homes expected to be built by the end of 2015 as programmed by the MOU.

Susie Dunn asked Staff to clarify the cost of the Wastewater Inefficiency Fees (WIFs). Klatt explained the amount of costs associated with the WIFs.

Zuleger moved forward explaining how Staff interacts with the development community. Staff does not recruit developers. Staff only responds to developers who express interest in the community. Once these contacts have been made, Staff has relayed information about serious development inquiries to the City Council and Planning Commission. Finally, Staff is disciplined and cautious in its approach. Staff conducts research and background checks on all interested developers.

Administrator Zuleger finished up by asking the Planning Commission to be mindful of Staff's approach, as well as the three numbers he discussed as the Commission reviews these plans moving forward.

Planning Director Klatt began his presentation by outlining the draft proposal of a Village Comprehensive Plan Amendment, highlighting the topics that are addressed in the plan. Klatt presented the Planned Land Use map contained within the proposed amendment.

After describing the land uses of the community as a whole, Klatt presented a blown up version of the Village Planned Land Use map. He took the group through all of the land use categories within the land use plan, as well as the proposed densities. Related to these land use categories, Klatt explained how the categories drive the proposed unit counts. The proposed unit counts contained within this plan is 997 units outside of the mixed use area.

Moving forward, Klatt presented the Village Open Space Plan, noting that previous plans did not differentiate the different types of open space. The presented plan shows three types of open space: Rural Preservation Areas, Natural Resource Preservation Areas, and Greenbelt Corridors.

Moving ahead, Klatt further outlined the text of the document itself. It includes the guiding principles of the plan, as well as the history of previous planning efforts in the Village.

Regarding the MUSA boundary, Klatt presented a map showing a proposed change to the Municipal Urban Service Boundary (MUSA).

Steve Delapp noted that the map should more precisely define the areas that will be served by sanitary sewer, as opposed to simply by parcel line.

Klatt explained the next steps in terms of process. He also outlined a list of additional work that will be important for implementation of next steps.

Steve Delapp noted that the plan should note that stormwater features should be incorporated as amenities such as natural water courses and other features.

Klatt finished the presentation and opened the discussion up to questions.

Obermueller asked what efforts the City is making to work with the railroad on noise mitigation and the crossing of the collector road system.

Williams noted that he is concerned with the approach of not reaching out to the railroad companies as of yet.

Johnson noted that the collector road system in the Village is in the current transportation plan. The railroad has been sent these plans when the City updated the transportation plan in 2010.

Fliflet noted that due to the significance of the regional recreation facility, she noted that she would prefer to show it on the Land Use Plan. She also noted that she thought there would be more flexibility in unit counts as opposed to hard targets.

Haggard noted that due to the unit counts, there would only be 200 units available for the mixed use areas if the City capped the units at the 1100. The group engaged in a discussion about residential unit counts.

Haggard asked about ensuring that the intent of the Comp Plan is followed when development proposals come forward.

Johnson explained how implementation through preliminary plat and zoning code give the Planning Commission additional avenues for review for whatever projects come forward.

Mr. David Deebach made a comment that there must be enough density to warrant urban services for the development community to commit.

Steve Delapp commented on the HWY-5 transportation corridor. He also noted that the growth in the Village will drive the traffic levels up.

Williams asked about the potential uses within the open space. In addition, are these spaces public?

Klatt noted that more than likely these open areas would be private. However, the City could negotiate for trail easements through park dedication.

Williams asked about the pursuit of conservation easements in the natural resource preservation areas and rural preservation areas.

Johnson noted that some grant funding may be available. In addition, the City should consider prioritizing areas for conservation easement in order to systematically incorporate these easements.

The group engaged in a discussion regarding pedestrian safety around HWY-5.

Following that discussion, the group discussed the need and practicality of design standards for single family homes in the Village and Lake Elmo in general.

Williams wanted additional text to be included regarding the existing conditions of stormwater management for different areas in the Village.

Sue Dunn asked if there is a direct correlation between the number of RECs distributed to the I-94 Corridor and Village.

Klatt noted that the two plans together meet the total required amount of residential RECs as spelled out in the MOU.

Sue Dunn made the point that she hopes to see the mature trees north of the Brookman site preserved or included as part of an open space area. Klatt noted that Staff is looking at a tree preservation ordinance. Ms. Dunn also noted that she supports design standards. Finally, she wanted the new planning commissioners who are not as familiar with the Village to be cognizant of the surface water issues that exist in the area.

Tom Kreimer asked if design standards could be handled collaboratively with HOAs. There was a general discussion about design standards.

Steve Delapp made the point that 50% of the sites in the Village should be left open for open space. He asked if this seemed reasonable.

The Planning Commission engaged in a general discussion about the implications of a larger Greenbelt Corridor.

Jay Morreale asked about what kind of land protection would be offered to protect open space.

Staff explained that the City has developed a good relationship with the MN Land Trust over many years of conservation efforts. This relationship should be utilized to strategically pursue conservation easements in areas of high cultural or environmental quality. In addition, Staff is exploring other funding mechanisms, such as the Metro Greenways Program.

The group engaged in a discussion about unit allocation and densities in relation to clustering.

Planning Commission gave Staff direction to increase the greenbelt on the East side, as well try to make the plan more walkable by increasing densities north of the railroad tracks.

Williams commented about the Village Green. The group discussed different aspects of the gathering space.

Williams thanked Staff and the members of the Village Work Group for their hard work.

Obermueller noted that she thinks the collector road system is critically important to the Village Land Use Plan. She felt that the City should work collaboratively with the railroad to ensure that a crossing is provided for.

Meeting Adjourned 9:50p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Johnson
City Planner