

PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

Wednesday, September 11, 2019

#1 Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Gorham called the Planning Commission Workshop to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Noted present were Commissioners Burslie, Duval, Gorham, and Woodward. Community Development Director Chanski and Council Liaison Lambert were also noted as present. Commissioner Marohn and Foley were noted as absent.

#2 Comprehensive Plan Review

Community Development Director Chanski welcomed Matt Kallroos from Sourcewell who was present to answer questions from the Commission and receive feedback regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan. He showed a brief video that Sourcewell created about the City of Brainerd with several residents speaking about the area. He said the main purpose of the workshop is to briefly go through each section of the draft Comprehensive Plan for input. He indicated the housing section will have some updates, based on input from Jennifer Bergman at the HRA.

The Commission discussed the areas of the plan and the following are suggested updates/changes or general comments about the plan:

VISION STATEMENT

Commissioner Duval suggested a revision of the Vision Statement to read *“We seek to provide high-quality, year-round recreation, a strong workforce, and a variety of life experiences that support a welcoming place to live, work, play, stay and learn for all.”*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Commissioner Gorham suggested a revision to the seventh principle regarding the downtown revitalization statement. Discussion resulted in changing it to *“Be active in our vibrant downtown, support existing business, new business development, housing, and cultural events all tied to Brainerd’s historic character.”*

Commissioner Burslie suggested a revision to the sixth principle regarding rental opportunities. Discussion resulted in changing it to *“Expand and enhance high quality rental property opportunities in Brainerd by continuing to encourage best practices and accountability.”*

Commissioner Lambert suggested a revision to the first principle regarding safe neighborhoods. Discussion resulted in changing it to *“Continue enhancing Brainerd’s neighborhoods that encourage safety and a sense of community.”*

GOALS AND POLICIES

Commissioner Duval stated an introduction should be before goals and policies, but after Guiding Principles.

Community Development Director stated there are sections that repeat in other areas of the Comp Plan; this is due to the sections being involved with each other.

LAND USE

Commissioner Duval indicated the term “communities” are referred to in a confusing way and should be referred to as a neighborhood in some instances.

Commissioner Gorham asked about specific data to support goal three, number 6: *“Preserve our natural resources and spaces, specifically the Mississippi River.”* Community Development Director Chanski stated this statement would influence future policies and possible variance or conditional use permits.

Commissioner Burslie asked where the information for goals and policies was gathered from. It was determined a lot of the information was influenced by the surveys, listening sessions, and from the steering committee.

HOUSING

Commissioner Gorham stated goal two, number 1 says to identify the historic neighborhoods, but he feels all neighborhoods are historic.

Community Development Director Chanski indicated in working with the zoning revision subcommittee, one item developed was defining historical neighborhoods, suburban and agricultural neighborhoods.

Commissioner Burslie asked if the revisions would include condensing the residential zones into two zones. Community Development Director stated that is the idea and then having a third defined as agricultural.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community Development Director Chanski stated the steering committee wanted this area to tie into everything else about who we are as a community by acknowledging the past but also to look to the future.

Commissioner Gorham asked the definition of goal three, number 1 that states the term *“built form”*, which is the term referring to how something is built.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Commissioner Duval asked if goal two, number 4 regarding transit possibilities would expand past the main areas of the City and branch out to other businesses, such as Clow Stamping. Community Development Director Chanski indicated there is a current fixed route with the transit system, and other options are being discussed.

MOBILITY

Commissioner Gorham commented on goal one, number 1 which reads *“Balance the competing needs and safety of local traffic, bicycles, and pedestrians and ensure the efficient transfer of freight through the City of Brainerd.”* Why is the transfer of freight in the policy?

Community Development Director Chanski stated part of the transfer of freight is the train system that goes through town and BNSF has a lot to do with pedestrian and bicycle safety, as well as truck traffic.

Commissioner Duval suggested the following changes:

- Goal one, number 4 is the title of goal five and does not need to be in two areas.
- Goal four, numbers 2 and 3 seems to need more definition.
- Goal five, number 4 that reads, “*Extend a new taxiway from the east end of the general aviation ramp to the intersection of taxiways A and C.*” This appears to be too specific and should be removed.

PARK & RECREATION

Community Development Director Chanski stated this section was designed to encourage master planning.

Commission discussion took place regarding trees and landscaping.

Commissioner Duval would like to see goal three, number 2 be enhanced to indicate development of programming on a regular basis for arts and various public events. Matt Kallroos stated he can come up with an alternate definition.

FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Commissioner Gorham stated he has concerns with the need to identify areas that are affected by the climate changes that are taking place.

Commissioner Woodward suggested adding a policy to goal three that states, “*Steer city developments to energy and resource conservation.*”

PUBLIC SAFETY

Commission discussion took place.

Commissioner Duval suggested the addition of a policy to assess the vulnerabilities of the city, such as adding a number 4 to goal two that states, “*Conduct a vulnerability assessment.*”

NATURAL RESOURCES

Commissioner Gorham stated there should be the addition of a fourth policy to “*Identify strategies for encouraging a functional ecosystem.*”

Commissioner Duval suggested to move the one policy that is listed under goal two to goal one.

OTHER DISCUSSION

Community Development Director Chanski stated if anyone finds any typos or minor things to change, please email those to him rather than discussing each item tonight.

Commissioner Burslie indicated there are a lot of references to links in the document and asked if those will be removed from the final document. A pdf version will be provided in place of the links.

Commissioner Duval stated he would like to revisit the second paragraph of the chapter Natural Resources to explain cultural significance.

Community Development Director Chanski reviewed some of the Implementation section of the document and obtained input from the Commission regarding suggested changes in priority level ratings.

#3 Adjourn

The Chair adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Don Gorham, Planning Commission Chair