

**Planning Commission Joint Work session with City Council**

**March 27, 2012**

**Minutes**

**Commissioners Present:**

Ms. Genevieve Keller (Chairperson)

Mr. Kurt Keesecker

Ms. Lisa Green

Mr. Dan Rosensweig

Mr. Michael Osteen

Ms. Natasha Sienitsky

**City Council Present**

Mr. Huja (Mayor)

Ms. Deedee Smith

Ms. Kathy Galvin

**Staff Present:**

Jim Tolbert

Missy Creasy

Brian Haluska

Richard Harris

Michael Smith

Willy Thompson

Ebony Walden

Ms. Keller convened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and turned the time to Mr. Tolbert who gave a presentation on the history of the Comprehensive Planning process since 2001.

### **Discussion on Presentation**

- Mr. Rosensweig wanted to know how many units are in the UHD and UMD areas. He also asked about other areas where nodes may exist. Will other areas such as West Main Street, the MJH area and areas south of the tracks be addressed during the comprehensive plan? He feels the UHD and UMD areas were a great success, but maybe we are focusing too much on corridors. He feels things are headed in the right direction, but also feels that other areas could be looked at including Elliott Ave, Harris St, and the Woolen Mills area.
- Ms. Galvin would like the presentation posted on line for viewing. She would also like to know the priority areas and feel this would be great conversation for future discussion.

Mr. Tolbert felt that the MJH area and the area south of the tracks would be great areas to look at.

Mr. Haluska gave an overview of the packet presented to the Planning Commission and City Council. He opened discussion of the three questions proposed in the packet.

### **Question 1**

What should the City's vision for the future be with regards to the land use policy?

### **Discussion of question 1**

**Ms. Galvin felt that Land Use could not be discussed without talking about building form, density and height. She also felt that other areas may evolve as nodes and confirmed that the corridors are still the main growth areas. She feels that quality in some places is an afterthought. There should be more integration with Parks and Recreation plans and more trails.**

Mr. Huja feels that the Comprehensive Plan is a general documentation. He feels that corridors could be strengthened and there is no need to remove industrial areas. There remains a need for location for current industrial needs.

Ms. Green would like to see if the corridors that are being looked at are the ones we would like to continue to look at. She also feels that the area south of downtown would be a good area to look at. Focusing on the Rivanna is an idea she does not want to get lost.

Ms. Keller feels that B1 and B2 areas should be looked at. Additional form based elements should also be considered. She also felt that there should be more talk with UVA concerning transportation.

Mr. Osteen feels that there is a need for more people to use the transit system.

Mr. Haluska summed up the discussion by saying things are going in a good direction and there are other opportunities to look at as we proceed forward.

## **Question 2**

What should the City's vision for the future be with regards to economic development and its impact on zoning?

## **Discussion of question 2**

Mr. Haluska gave an overview and highlighted aspects of the “new industrial” industries which are very different than the factories of the past.

Ms. Smith felt that hazardous materials need to be addressed. How do Land Use changes alter demographics and the people sites are being building for should be kept in mind.

Mr. Osteen feels that delivery of the product and logistics should be evaluated. He also feels that transition takes time and should not be rushed.

Ms. Keller would like performance management evaluated. She feels there are many businesses that can be to complimentary to the community.

Mr. Rosensweig wanted to go back to question one to clarify if a conclusion was made. He would like for residents to say what they want in their neighborhoods. Some people would like to live and work in their neighborhoods.

Ms. Sienitsky would like nodes introduced in some areas and see how they evolve. She feels that the reason some areas do not have businesses is due to zoning. This may be hindering the incubation of new businesses.

Ms. Galvin would like to see more discussion on form base and transitional zoning. McIntire Plaza is an example of an area where residents and businesses in a single area is compatible. She also felt that MJH is a transitional area. She would also like to see a decrease in the unemployment rate and would not like to lose land that could be developed to increase jobs.

Mr. Huja feels that habits are hard to change. He noted that the Belmont area needs transition.

Mr. Keesecker would like to know whether one big employer who hires 500 people is better than having many smaller employers each hiring smaller numbers. He feels a visual (map) would be helpful for indicating areas where people might desire more neighborhood scaled commercial development.

### **Question 3**

How should public outreach be completed for the Comprehensive Plan?

### **Discussion of question 3**

Mr. Haluska outlined the staff proposal for public outreach and asked for feedback.

Ms. Galvin would like to know what density looks like and what does it do for you. Density is needed for transportation alternative vitality and to increase community amenities. She also encourages streetscaping and a plan for the future.

Mr. Osteen would like to see neighborhoods get more education on the process.

Mr. Rosensweig would like to focus on larger areas of the city.

Ms. Green would like to know if the city would be looked at as a whole

Ms. Keller would like to see a parent and family focus group.

Mr. Keesecker would like the land map use reformatted for early conceptual considerations so it is easier to understand and discuss without too much parcel level detail and a wide variety of colors for land uses.

### **Summary of Meeting**

Planning Commission and City Council felt it was a very productive and informative meeting. They would like a future joint work session to include mapping exercises to allow for visual representation of the conversations.

### **Public Comment**

Ellen Wagner, 841 Locust Avenue, invited City Council and members of the Planning Commission to attend their annual cookout on May 6th. They will be devoting the first hour as a brainstorming session on what residents see for the future of their community.

Brian Carr, 100 Ridge St, he is not against the development of the proposed hotel on Main Street, but would like City Council and the Planning Commission to look at other related facts to the area such as; Main Street having a community center and the only one of its kind in the area.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50.