

**Planning Commission Work session  
January 25, 2011  
Minutes**

**Commissioners Present:**

Mr. Jason Pearson (Chairman)

Mr. Dan Rosensweig

Mr. Michael Osteen

Mr. Kurt Keesecker

Mr. John Santoski

Ms. Genevieve Keller

Ms. Lisa Green

**Staff Present:**

Missy Creasy

Richard Harris

Michael Smith

Melissa Thackston

Mr. Pearson convened the meeting at 5:00pm. He provided an overview of the agenda.

William Wanner of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) gave an overview of the Planning Commission training schedule and handed out a pamphlet.

Mr. Daniel Narin with the TJPDC, provided a review of the Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing. Ms. Thackston asked the Commission to comment on zoning/planning issues that present challenges to fair and affordable housing. She asked for the Commission to limit comments to specific challenges in the ordinance and not to broader land use issues. HUD would like the answers to be more positive and specific instead of negative and broad.

Ms. Keller stated her concern that the CRHA master plan might have the effect of concentrating poverty in certain areas of the city.

Mr. Rosensweig cited the second SUP for the Atwood project on West Main as an example of where the recently adopted zoning ordinance revision actually hampered the city's ability to achieve affordable housing. In a previously vested plan, the applicants had agreed to more affordable units than the commission was able to condition as a part of the second application.

Mr. Pearson stated that we have limits on what we can require.

Mr. Rosensweig asked how to convey the results of the above mentioned SUP process to lawmakers in Richmond so that they may consider amending/strengthening the enabling legislation.

Mr. Keesecker feels the code allows the ability to "buy out" affordable units and the West Main Street site was noted an example of that.

Mr. Rosensweig said that it would be a bit disingenuous to discuss impediments to fair and affordable housing without talking about land use, density and overlays. He referenced critical slopes, historical preservation and low density zones as examples of challenges to overcome in a city without the ability to annex more land.

Ms. Keller stated that the city needs to continue to offer a variety of housing types and options for all its residents and that some city residents will continue to choose to live in R1 zones and do not want to live in high density areas. She continued that many residents have the option to increase density and provide affordable housing through auxiliary units but that most choose not to do so.

Mr. Rosensweig feels that R-1 is desired zoning for many people but low density does create some impediments to development of affordable housing and doesn't necessarily promote the ability to walk to jobs and services..

Mr. Santoski gave Fry's Spring as an example of an area in debate over R1 and R2.

Mr. Rosensweig feels that the 2003 ordinance changes creating University high and medium density districts is an example of success and has taken some of the pressure off adjacent neighborhoods.

Mr. Osteen feels that accessible units should meet the needs of correct groups and address universal design.

Ms. Green touched on visitability principles. Ms. Keller is concerned about land cost—that the high cost of land in the city and region conflicts with affordability.

Mr. Rosensweig feels that there are multiple examples in our standards and design manual that create impediments to affordable and sustainable housing. He suggested that we look carefully at issues such as frontage, parking requirements, and street widths.

Peter Loach from PHA noted that Charlottesville has had a hard time deciding if it wants to be a town or a city. He feels that just the use of deed restrictions and financing subsidies will not solve the access to affordable housing problem.

Mr. Pearson gave an overview of the committee's 2010 work plan. He also touched on traffic issues and Belmont planning.

Mr. Pearson felt the staff report included both staff and Planning Commission projects and would like to know where they originate from. Ms. Keller expressed concern that some of the projects accredited to the Planning Commission had not been Planning Commission agenda items. Mr. Tolbert explained that staff had addressed some projects such as Belmont as a result of concerns expressed as a result of cases previously before the commission.

Ms. Creasy gave a little overview of what she had been working on with the Sustainability grant.

Mr. Pearson wanted to know the things both the City and County will be working on with the grant and to see if anything was missing.

Ms. Keller wanted to make sure that all the players are invited to the table during the Comprehensive Plan review process and that the neighborhoods know about changes in the process from previous reviews.

Mr. Rosensweig said the HAC offered to help with outreach into housing communities that traditionally have low participation rates and would like to help with the housing section. It was noted that this partnership is anticipated and the HAC report would be used as the starting point for the housing section.

Mr. Pearson would like the commission and committee to meet on a regular basis. He would like that built into the process. He has a few questions that he would like to be added into the plan such as; "What is the will of the city". and would like to include special initiatives as part of the plan rather than long lists of goals and objectives.

Commissioners agreed that we should look at the structure of the plan, community values and include population data.

Mr. Pearson mentioned the possibility of considering a one-page Comprehensive Plan and feels there should be an alignment between the Planning Commission plan and the City Council vision.

Ms. Green asked about the voting process of Council and was given that information.

Mr. Rosensweig referenced comments by Mr. Osteen regarding the proposed Eton Place PUD. Mr. Rosensweig suggested adding to the work plan an examination of where the ordinance prohibits innovative, less impactful and more sustainable design.

Mr. Pearson adjourned the meeting at 7:00pm.