

**SPOKANE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**JUNE 29, 2023**

<b>Planning Commission Members Present</b>	<b>Spokane County Department of Building and Planning Staff Present</b>
Stephen Pohl, Chair Pete Rayner, Vice Chair Clyde Haase Wayne Brokaw Melissa Wittstruck Logan Camporeale Alan Nolan	Robert Brock, AICP, Planner Saegen Neiman, Planner Elya Miroshin, Clerk Scott Chesney, AICP, Planning Director Jessica Pilgrim, Legal Counsel

The June 29, 2023, meeting of the Spokane County Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Stephen Pohl at 9:00 A.M. A quorum was present. The meeting was accessible to the public in the Commissioner’s Hearing Room, Lower Level, Public Works Building, located at 1026 West Broadway Avenue, Spokane, WA, and Via Zoom with web and telephone links provided on the Building and Planning website and in a public notice published in the Spokesman Review on June 14, 2023.

**Public Comment opened for items that are not on the agenda:**

No comments were made; public comment was closed.

**WORKSHOP**

**DISCUSSION OF THE URBAN GROWTH AREA SINCE THE LAST MAJOR UPDATE IN 2016:**

Mr. Chesney started the workshop with a Metro Urban Growth Area (UGA) Map providing the members with a visual of the current Municipal Boundaries including the Urban Growth Areas. The next point of discussion was the updated Washington State Office of Financial Management Chart (OFM) that displayed Preliminary population estimates in the Unincorporated and Incorporated Spokane County. The numbers will be finalized towards the end of July, as they are still going through refinement.

These numbers show that Spokane County had the third largest population growth of Washington State counties in the period of 2020-2022 including the second largest net in the migration category showing an interesting dynamic of active growth. The discussion then led to the last, 2016, Land Capacity/Quantity Analysis web view model using the Moran Prairie as an example to show how planning views every developable, underutilized parcel, and assigns a value based on the current

regulatory system after the Land Capacity Analysis is complete. If it is already developed, that UGA shows up a future dwelling of zero. Zone changes amendments since 2016 will be accounted for and projected as part of the 2026 growth.

Mr. Neiman further took the members into a subarea analysis, as an example, of the Valley UGA that had been completed in 2016 and applied two new recommendations (not yet finalized) of the methodology changes for the 2026 update that will be completed at a Countywide level via GIS: The vacant land improvement number has been increased from \$500 to \$5,000, and partially used land improvement value ratio to land value ratio has increased from less than five to one to less than eight to one.

#### **Comments:**

-Mr. Haase asked what the timing for the countywide methodology changes and application looked like. Mr. Neiman answered that the Steering Committee of Elected Officials (SCEO) will preview the proposed methodology changes in July's workshop for comment and any modification suggestions as a group. In October, it will be presented to them at a final hearing, and in theory have a newly adopted methodology by fall of 2023.

-Mr. Nolan asked what different approaches other areas with high growth rates, specifically Post Falls, Idaho, look like without having Urban Growth Areas or a Growth Management Act but seem to be very effective and if maybe some of their ideas may be adoptable. Mr. Chesney answered that we have looked at surrounding areas with big subdivisions and will have to balance things on our end especially with "housing leakage" happening to Kootenai County.

-Ms. Wittstruck asked how we will figure out what we are withdrawing from our aquifer. Mr. Chesney answered that water will be factored in through the Capital Facilities Plan. The planners will demonstrate that the land being anticipated for development can be served in urban services for the full twenty-year period of its projection. Mr. Haase commented on his concerns about water issues. Mr. Chesney said that Rob Lindsey, Environmental Services Administrator, will be working with the planning team to update the consolidated water service plan in concert with the Comprehensive Plan Update.

-Mr. Nolan asked if we were going to consider ways to ease growth within the Urban Growth Areas to prevent future constraints in UGA accessibility. Mr. Chesney answered that we will look at every variable and parameter that we could realistically consider.

-Ms. Wittstruck asked how the analysis will consider market factors. Mr. Chesney answered that there will likely be boundary adjustments in the UGA, and that is why the variable of "market factor" is in place. Mr. Neiman informed the members how the Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) methodology has had its market factor at 30%, and with guidance from commerce will continue to stay at 30%. Mr. Chesney informed the members that the LCA methodology will be presented to the Steering Committee of Elected Officials (SCEO) July 19, 2023, for their consideration with an intention of adoption on October 18, 2023.

### **Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development**

Mr. Chesney presented the members with Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD) which were created in the Growth Management Act (GMA) and existed pre-GMA establishing three different types. Mr. Neiman presented two examples of a LAMIRD within the Spokane County:

- Type one category - Mt. Spokane, an area with urban density, outside the UGA, and it has sewer.
- Four Lakes contains lots of existing historic plats, and limited water.

#### **Comments:**

-Mr. Rayner questioned if the plan is to add these LAMIRDs into the Urban Growth Areas. Mr. Chesney replied that the data or the study warrants no conclusion, but the hypothesis is not to consider these as UGAs but as separate, developable areas replacing themselves and growing marginally.

-Ms. Wittstruck's concern with LAMIRDs is do they pay their way of growth or does the burden fall on Spokane County residents to pay taxes to support that growth. Mr. Chesney said the anticipation of any growth in these areas would still have to filter through Capital Facilities Planning.

-Mr. Nolan questioned if there were any authority levels, such as water or sewer districts, that could possibly "sink" this idea of growth. Mr. Chesney replied that there are possible fatal flaws especially with this type of innovative planning, but believes the time is ripe to further study these areas.

-Mr. Camporeale appreciates the idea of giving these places a second chance as Spokane grows.

-Mr. Brock pointed out the Four Lakes LAMIRD opportunity for infill suggesting they produce a water system plan. He also pointed out a very frequent bus service that comes through there with enhanced bus stops. It also includes a post office, convenience store, church, and a saloon.

### **JOINT PLANNING**

Mr. Chesney related the complications of joint planning particularly when taking into consideration different development standards, and when considering an annexation program. The members were asked their thoughts and opinions of things they think are important to be considered within a joint planning process.

#### **Comments:**

-Mr. Camporeale shared the three areas that stand out to him. Interfaces between the city and the county at Eagle Ridge, West Plains, and Mt. Spokane.

-Mr. Rayner, Mr. Brokaw, and Ms. Wittstruck all voiced their appreciation for starting the process of joint planning process.

### **ACTION**

Chairman Pohl opened comment and discussion to set the regular meeting time for the Planning Commission.

**Comments:**

-Mr. Camporeale commented on lack of public attendance once again and doesn't have the right answer of a right time, while staying conscious of staff and family members to go home to. He believes that 9:00 AM is just not working for public attendance. Mr. Camporeale stated that he would love to hear from the public, but it doesn't appear there is anybody to testify. He read through the list of meeting times for other jurisdictions pointing out Spokane County is the only one to meet in the AM hours.

-Mr. Chesney commented that we anticipate many future workshops, meetings, and potentially public hearings that will be at non-traditional times. As planning staff, we acknowledge that to meet our public, we will be going out at different times. With the action being taken today, you are not saying to the staff that this is the only time we will ever meet. This is business times where we meet once or twice a month.

**Motion:**

Mr. Camporeale made a motion to change the regular meeting time of the Spokane County Planning Commission, keeping the days the same, moving the meeting time to 3 PM. Seconded by Ms. Wittstruck. Discussion ensued.

-Mr. Rayner commented that having served on multiple different commissions, at different times of day, the room is just as packed at 9 AM if it's a hot topic. He doesn't see a reason to change and opposes.

-Mr. Chesney clarified that the Board of County Commissioners meet two times a week at 9 AM as well.

-Mr. Nolan is willing to try a different time keeping in mind the types of customers we serve. He believes that 5 PM or 6 PM would work better than 3 PM.

-Mr. Camporeale commented that he believes 6 PM would be the time to meet for best public participation, but maybe not for staff nor the applicant. He agrees to a trial period to see if public attendance increases at a different time, agreeing to Mr. Nolan's suggestion of three months.

-Mr. Brokaw agrees with Mr. Rayner. He commented on the convenience of joining via Zoom while at work or home. Mr. Brokaw stated some negative points about having an evening meeting such as family activities and school functions, as well as it makes it harder on staff after a full workday. Overall, from his personal past experiences, 9 AM has worked out great.

**Public Comment:** Jennifer Thomas addressed her dismissal of being a public participant able to testify. She pointed out that possibly the empty room can be indicative of summer vacation and the leading up to a holiday weekend or perhaps a lack of notice rather than a bad time for people. As a single mom,

she prefers coming to a meeting during her normal workday even if it means leaving other activities rather than having an evening away from her kids. She values being able to participate in a morning meeting during her workday as well as pointing out that we humans are the sharpest in the morning not in the evening for making important decisions. Ms. Thomas asked if a survey has been done to see what the community needs.

-Mr. Camporeale replied that he had requested a survey specifically for a meeting time, instead the survey asked about additional participation to which only one participant suggested that the meeting time was not great. He would still like to see a robust survey with different meeting time options, with a set goal of amount of reach.

-Ms. Wittstruck commented that it is helpful to have an evening time for different professions, one of them being teachers. Ms. Wittstruck also believes that a three-month trial is too short, one year would be better for people to get used to. She appreciates the motion.

-Mr. Camporeale amended his motion for a limited time-period to be assessed in three months and to determine whether we should continue with a new time or go back to the old time based on more participation or not.

-Ms. Wittstruck seconded the friendly amendment that came forward.

-Mr. Haase agrees with Mr. Rayner having 40 years of experience himself. Mr. Haase called for the question.

-Chairman Pohl opened the vote to call on the question.

-Mr. Haase asked for clarification on the vote.

-Mr. Chesney said they are voting to end debate.

**Motion:**

Chairman Pohl called for a vote to end discussion:

Motion carries 5-2; Chairman Pohl – Aye, Mr. Rayner – Aye, Mr. Haase – Aye, Mr. Brokaw - Aye, Ms. Wittstruck – Aye, Mr. Camporeale – Nay, Mr. Nolan – Nay.

**Motion:**

Chairman Pohl called for a vote on the original motion made by Mr. Camporeale to change the regular meeting time of the Spokane County Planning Commission, keeping the days the same, but move the meeting time to 3 PM.

Motion fails 4-3; Chairman Pohl – Nay, Mr. Rayner – Nay, Mr. Haase – Nay, Mr. Brokaw – Nay, Ms. Wittstruck – Aye, Mr. Camporeale – Aye, Mr. Nolan – Aye.

Mr. Camporeale made a point of privilege to the public by saying that he is trying to make it more accessible, this was his first failed attempt, but he will continue to try.

MINUTES

Chairman Pohl asked for a motion to adopt the June 15, 2023, minutes. So moved by Mr. Camporeale; seconded by Ms. Wittstruck. No discussion. Unanimous approval.

STAFF REPORT

There will be no meeting on July 13, 2023. The Planning Commission will reconvene on July 27, 2023.

**Motion:**

Chairman Pohl called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. So moved by Mr. Rayner; seconded by Mr. Camporeale. Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:56 AM.

Stephen Pohl, Chair  Date 7-27-2023

Scott Chesney, AICP, Planning Director 