

SPOKANE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP
April 28, 2022

A Meeting and a Public Workshop of the Spokane County Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Stephen Pohl at 9:00 a.m. on March 28, 2022. The hearing was accessible to the public via Zoom, with links provided in public notices, published in the Spokesman Review on April 13, online, by mail, and by email 16 days prior to the meeting, as required.

Present

Stephen Pohl, Chair
Wayne Brokaw

Deacon Band, Vice Chair
Pete Rayner

Jim Carollo
Duane Hamp

Spokane County Department of Building and Planning Staff

Saegen Neiman, Planner

Elya Miroshin, Clerk Susan Luna, Clerk

Scott Chesney, Planning Director

Public Commenters

Paul Kropp

Michelle Pappas

Kevin Freibott

Larry Krauter

Call to Order: Stephen Pohl called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

Public Comment for items that are not on this agenda:

Paul Kropp asked when the 2026 Periodic update is scheduled to be completed. Scott replied that although commerce will allow the Periodic Updates completion an extension until December, the county intends to have them before the Commissioners by July 1, 2022. Paul also asked when and if the Public Participation Guidelines revision will be adopted by the Commissioners to change the time of the SCPC meeting from morning to later in the day. The commission acknowledged the question and thanked Paul for his contribution. There were no more public comments for items that are not on this agenda.

Public Hearing—West Plains Planning Study Area & Program:

The Commissioners and the public were asked to consider a Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezoning study of the West Plains and Thorpe Urban Growth and Joint Planning Area. This study area is the UGA area generally south of I-90 except for a small area east of Spokane International Airport and is undergoing an increase in residential growth over the past few years. The area is generally transforming from Light Industrial and Low Density Residential to a higher population density as a result of recent residential comprehensive plan amendments. Land zoning swaps might be in consideration to address the increasing isolation of light industrial lands to the east of emerging residential areas.

Increased development in this area has had a deleterious effect on stormwater management and runoff. and this planning effort will take advantage of the BoCC allocation of \$5.5 million for stormwater management facilities in the southern portions of the study area.

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This area is a presumptive annexation area for the city of Spokane, which is the retail service provider for water supply, and wastewater. The Commissioners and the planning director discussed concerns in the area over the consequences on private landowner rights, Infrastructure, land values, and Prior Non-conforming use for properties.

The Commissioners opened the public hearing. Paul Kropp said he would like to encourage the proposal for the study and for the collaboration between the county and the city. He also offered his opinion about the discussion, calling it incredibly encouraging and healthy. Kevin Freibott, planner for the city of Spokane, voiced concerns over airport interactions, Cheney school district, the development of the road network, and the impact of intense development in the area. He felt that Washington Department of Transportation and Spokane Regional Transportation Council should be involved with the examination as well. The Chair recommended a motion to close the public hearing, it was moved by Deacon Band and seconded by Wayne Brokaw and passed with a unanimous vote. The motion to initiate a study of the Thorpe-West Plains UGA-JPA lying south of Interstate-90, designated Light Industrial category for further consideration and possible future recommendation of a Comprehensive Plan amendment was put forth by Pete Rayner. A discussion was opened, and no comments were made. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Additional Public Comments: Larry Krauter brought additional comments regarding the proposed study because due to schedule conflicts he was not available during the initial discussion. Larry wanted to examine the residential zone change in a specific area within the study boundary that may have future conflicts with airport functions. Scott stated that this area was on the study plan and the county is supportive to discuss those issues with Larry and his staff. He also assured Larry that comments on any proposed Comp Plan amendment are welcome at any time until late in June.

Public Participation Program Guidelines Hearing: The committee addressed a proposal to amend the Spokane County Public Participation Guidelines to better reflect modern virtual digital capabilities for more robust public participation and commenting. The county proposes a 21-day advance notice to make final draft documents available to the public for consideration. Additionally intermediate works in progress can be made available within 7 days ahead of a meeting. Michelle Pappas commented on the Public Participation Plan, she stated a concern that the document did not include early participation in the amendment process. For instance, early public notice and comments on proposals to initiate comprehensive plan amendments. She also encouraged the county to provide public notice and comment opportunity for all the key steps of initiating, updating, and the final adoption of amendments, and the recommendations under consideration by the BoCC. She asked the county to provide notice through the county website, through email mailing lists, and in the newspaper. A discussion followed Michelle's comment. Scott Chesney mentioned that Spokane County will always fulfill the legal obligation to provide notice in the newspaper. He also mentioned that at the beginning of this year the county began including the public in the initiation of Comp Plan amendments in their early stages. In the past these proposed amendments simply went from application to staff compilation then to the Board for initiation.

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Paul Kropp felt he and others in the public did not have enough notice to react to the document in question and urged the commission to defer making any decisions on this proposal. A discussion ensued about the prescribed timeline for public comments on proposals. Kevin Freibott gave a recommendation from planning director Spencer Gardner of the City of Spokane to retain the original existing language from the second sentence of section three, paragraph two. The sentence "Spokane County shall ensure the public is aware of meetings or hearings and of their opportunity to be involved in local planning efforts." Mr. Kropp stated that he supports the City's comment and asked that the Board reconsidered the change. No other public participants asked to speak.

Subject Postponed: It was agreed that the item would be postponed until the next meeting. At the direction of the commission, the hearing was left open to allow for additional public comments through the county website.

Workshop: Spokane County has started a major process of updating the Capital Facilities Plan to fully address a requirement through the settlement agreement. The County is currently updating the plan to keep it in compliance with the State law and for practical budget purposes. Detailed updates will review levels of service such as police, transportation, water, or wastewater. These were not considered in the previous iteration of the plan for properties in the rural areas. As work toward this effort progresses, Building & Planning will keep the Board informed of previews for changes to this plan. The completion of this plan will bring a good foundation for Comp plans in the coming years. There was discussion about the annexation of rural areas by cities and the cost of the infrastructure as well as parks.

Action on Minutes of March 31, 2022: Deacon Band made a motion to adopt the minutes, Pete Rayner seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Staff Report: The County staff will be working on a "code clean-up" effort and improvements which will be previewed at a future meeting.

The Steering Committee of Elected Officials subcommittee is working on revising the Countywide Planning Policies and the Planning Commission will be presented with an update on that process and invited to give feedback at a future meeting.

Set Next Agenda: The next meeting date is May 12, 2022.

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Deacon Band moved to adjourn; it was seconded by Mr. Rayner. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Stephen Pohl, Chair



Approved 4/28/2022

Susan Luna, Clerk to the Planning Commission