



**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
& PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH, 2021
HELD REMOTELY**

Planning Commission Members Present: Tim Olsen, Jamie Baird, Chris Cargill, Joe Mann, & Stephen Ramirez

Adjunct Member(s) Present: Marilyn Van DeGrift, Conrad Band

Absent: Richard Siler, Marc Rubin

Staff Present: Lisa Key & Kelsey

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

Roll Call: A quorum of members was present. Commissioner Ramirez joined just after roll call, and Commissioner Band joined at 4:16 p.m.

Review of Agenda & Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Baird moved that the October 13th agenda be approved, seconded by Commissioner Van Degrift. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Van Degrift moved that the September 8th minutes be approved, seconded by Commissioner Baird. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing:

Meadowwood Technology Campus Comp Plan Amendment & Zone Change

The public hearing commenced at 4:06 p.m. Lisa Key presented a brief staff report on the proposed comprehensive plan amendments. She also gave a brief summary of written comments received from the public and advised that the comments were provided to the commissioners in their entirety. Questions asked and answered.

Michael Terrell and Kevin Schneidmiller, representing Greenstone, gave a brief presentation on the proposed comprehensive plan amendments. Questions asked and answered.

Public testimony opened at 5:10 p.m.:

Greg Cronin: City resident, inquired whether low-income housing was allowed in this area. Lisa Key responded that there are no restrictions on low-income housing.

Hayley Steward: City resident, inquired whether there would be any changes to current access points. Greenstone responded stating that they don't have any intentions of adding additional entrance points at this time. Lisa Key added that a traffic analysis would be required at time of each specific project application.

Tom Sahlberg: City resident, spoke in opposition of the amendment, stating he agreed with Commissioner Siler's view that Liberty Lake is not Kendall Yards, and he believes that this change is to benefit the developer and not to Liberty Lake.

Ron Gray: Non city resident, inquired whether this change would take away opportunities for light industrial.

Rich Maes: City resident, asked if the allowed uses in the M2 zone are published somewhere. Lisa Key advised it is within the development code published on the City's website.

With there being no further comment, public testimony closed at 5:22 p.m. and deliberations ensued.

While the Development Code is not explicit regarding criteria for approval of a Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment, the following are criteria were considered by the Planning Commission in their deliberations:

- *Is the proposed amendment consistent with Comprehensive Plan Goals & Policies?*

Several Commissioners felt that the proposed amendment was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan regarding diversity of housing, mixed use, and economic development policies.

- *Has a change in economic, technological, or land use conditions occurred to warrant the proposed amendment?*

Commissioners acknowledged that Covid-19 has resulted in changes to the workforce and the economy with a potential impact on call centers and similar types of industries as a result of more remote work opportunities and less investment in brick and mortar offices.

- *Will the proposed amendment be compatible with adjacent land uses, or are there mitigations that will make the proposed amendments compatible with the surrounding land uses?*

Commissioners had a divergence of opinion regarding compatibility with surrounding land uses. Several thought townhomes to be very compatible with the character of the nearby Rocky Hill and Stone Hill neighborhoods, and that it provides an opportunity for affordable, workforce housing. Others indicated a concern regarding compatibility, with the property surrounded on nearly all sides by Light Industrial-zoned properties.

- *Will the proposed amendment negatively impact transportation facilities? If so, can those impacts be mitigated?*

Commissioners generally agreed that, based upon the Trip Generation Letter submitted into the record, the proposal would not result in negative impacts to traffic.

- *Is the proposed amendment detrimental to the public good?*

Some Commissioners indicated that a diversity of housing types and range of affordability was in the public interest, though others questioned whether it was appropriate in this location.

- *Is the proposed amendment in the public interest?*

Several Commissioners agreed that various types of housing and additional, small neighborhood-centric commercial uses were in the public interest, others expressed concerns regarding housing in this location, and lack of specific information regarding the actual uses to be developed there.

Based upon the proposed amendments consistency with Comprehensive Plan Policies, the change in economic conditions warranting the amendment, and the public interest served by increasing the diversity of housing options in the City, Commissioner Olsen moved to approve an amendment to the City of Liberty Lake 2015 – 2037 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, to change the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation of the subject property from Light Industrial to Community Center – Mixed Use. Commissioner Cargill seconded the motion. A roll call vote followed. Commissioners Mann, Olsen, Cargill and Band voted in favor; Commissioners Baird, Ramirez and Van Degrift voted in opposition. The motion carried with a final tally of 4-3.

The Hearing closed at 6:01 p.m. Lisa Key, Director of Planning & Engineering reviewed next steps in the process.

Secretary's Report:

No reports were made at this time.

Planning Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Cargill encouraged everyone to vote.

Commissioner Ramirez volunteered to report at the October 19th City Council Meeting.

Citizens Comments:

No citizens comments were made at this time.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Baird moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez which carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.