**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**
**501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926**

# MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

**Date and Time:** Planning Commission Meeting of October 14, 2021 at 5:45 p.m.

**Place of Meeting:** Hybrid - In Person at City Hall, 501 N. Anderson Street, and Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Present (in Person):** Fred Padjen, Beverly Heckart

**Present (Virtual):** Ed Harrell, Sathy Rajendran, Sigrid Davison, Geraldine O'Mahony, George Bottcher

**Absent:**

**Others Present:** Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett (in-person); Rich Elliott Council Liaison (in-person)

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Padjen called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Heckart asked for approval of the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Rajendran seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

## 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Minutes of September 23, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Heckert moved to approve the minutes with edits previously submitted to Staff. Chair Padjen seconded. All in favor, motion passed

## 4. NEW BUSINESS

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

## 6. CITIZEN COMMENT

No members of the public in attendance.

## 7. STAFF UPDATE

### a. Discussion on Council-docketed items for 2021 Comprehensive Plan

Director Sackett said that the purpose of the meeting was to review the docketed comp plan items with the planning commission prior to the public hearing that will be held in November. Director Sackett shared the steps that would be happening in the next few weeks with the process and she shared her screen to talk through each of the docketed items.

**Docket Item 21-01** Updates to the 6 Year Capital Improvement Plans.
Director Sackett stated this is an item that is updated annually, with information gathered from other plans previously adopted by the City.

**Docket Item 21-02** New DEI Chapter.
Director Sackett gave the commissioners an overview of the DEI committee members and how the chapter was conceived and written. Comments from the commission. Commissioner Heckart had three comments: 1. She commented that the statistics should be noted and then followed up with the census. 2. The DEI commission should be made aware of APOYA and FISH entities. 3. At the end of the chapter there should be cross-references from other chapters to the DEI. Director Sackett noted that to make changes you need to update them in this process. Commissioner Davison asked about the figure that referenced the population by race, she asked about the LatinX not being there at all and the numbers are not added. Director Sackett thought maybe the table was cut off and something is missing. Commissioner Bottcher commented about the header graphic. He feels that the graphic doesn't actually match the demographics of Ellensburg. Director Sackett asked if the rest of the commission has a similar opinion about the graphic. Commissioner Davison feels that it might overemphasize the diversity of our population and she is not quite comfortable with it. Commissioner O'Mahony also feels that it doesn't represent the age of our population either. Commissioner Heckert thinks it would be hard to find a graphic to represent our actual population. Commissioners feel since it is a graphic and not a picture it is acceptable, but they did recommend that the DEI Commission look at using another graphic that is more representative of Ellensburg. Commissioner Harrell noted that the chapter itself was very readable.

**Docket Item 21-03** Updating Housing Chapter to Conform to HB 1220.
Planning Manager Ayling said that he submitted the docket request for this item, after participating in an audit with the State. The updates are slight modifications to the goals in the Housing Chapter to match the State's recommendations and satisfy their requirements. Adding this additional text will make the City more eligible/attractive for grants when we apply for them through the state. Commissioner Bottcher asked about the emergency housing language. He asked if this applied to natural disaster emergencies. Council liaison Rich Elliot noted that the Comprehensive Emergency Management plan is what is used during a natural emergency. Planning Manager Ayling noted that this docket item was meant to address the emergency housing need for homeless or other needy populations.

**Docket Item 21-04** Updating the Housing Chapter to Conform with Current Demographics as outlined in the Housing Need Assessment.
Director Sackett said that staff is recommending that this docket item be deferred into the 2022 docket cycle, in order to allow for a more comprehensive review of all of the amendments needed to be made to the entire Comp Plan in relation to the community's housing needs.

**Docket Item 21-05** Update Telecom Utility Articulating Broadband Vision for City.
This docket request was submitted by the City's IT department to make sure that we address broadband availability for the city. Amendments would be made to two chapters of the Comp Plan – Capital Facilities and Utilities, and Economic Development. Director Sackett shared screen to show the commission the proposed text amendments. Commissioner Heckert feels that broadband is very necessary to any community and she is glad to see the inclusion. Commissioner Padjen commented that it really emphasizes business connectivity and glosses over residential usage and feels that it should have as much emphasis. Commissioner Davison asked about the difference between downtown and downtown core. She recommended that better language be used to to define exactly where the area is. Commissioner Harrell asked which city department would supervise broadband. Director Sackett noted that the IT Division is part of the Public Works Department.

**Docket Item 21-06** Update Economic Development chapter with current data.

Centerfuse proposed the changes to the Economic Development chapter. Most of the changes are re-arranging of the data and updating the tables with current information. The Community Development staff worked with the proposal to make it complement and match our other chapters. Commissioner Heckart noted that some of the duplication of the plan could be removed from the chapter but the change of emphasis of the Economic Development is appreciated. Commissioner Harrell also thought the re-write was well done. Director Sackett asked what the commission thought of the section that included the transportation and industrial information. Commissioner Davison wanted to be sure the data is going to be consistent. She noted there were several places in the document that don't match up and she would like to be sure they will be cleaned up. Director Sackett asked if the commission would recommend including references to COVID and the impact on the local economy. Commissioner Heckart thinks some of the it is unnecessary and Commissioner Padjen agreed that it felt like it didn't need to be added. They also suggested changing the title from Resiliency to Resilience. Commissioner Davison thinks the COVID section is overstated, and the Commission agreed that much of the section is unnecessary and could be more succinct.

**Docket Item 21-10** Update Future Land Use Designation from Blended Residential Neighborhood to General Commercial & Services.
Director Sackett shared her screen to show the parcel owned by Fabian Kuchin. Commissioner Heckart commented that she felt the city had enough Commercial Highway in the area and that it should be zoned some sort of residential but not R-S and kept the way it is. Commissioner Padjen asked what conditional uses are allowed in Commercial highway, and also asked if residential is allowed in the C-H zone. Director Sackett said it is not currently permitted, but a proposed zoning ordinance could change this to allow multifamily in the C-H zone with a conditional use permit. Commissioner Bottcher asked whether there was a flood plain on that property. Director Sackett pulled up the map to verify whether it was or not. Commissioner also felt at first that it should not be C-H but now thinks that maybe some commercial use would be good, considered the number of houses that are going to be built on Dry Creek Road. A mixed-use zone might be useful to service the neighborhood.

A brief discussion was held about the single-family residential development that is in the works. Director Sackett shared screen and pointed out the recently approved Preliminary Plat of the Foster Subdivision, and also explained where the proposed Foster Subdivision North is proposing to develop.

**Docket Item 21-11** Update Future Land Use Designation from General Commercial & Services to Light Industrial.
Director Sackett changed the shared screen to the new map area. The property is at the south interchange, located just outside city limits. If the land use designation changes, it would allow the property to be zoned Light Industrial upon annexation into the City. The Commissioners supported the proposal for this property to be used for I-L. Sackett stated that since the time of docketing, the property owner proposed keeping the northwest portion for Commercial Highway, and the remainder as Light Industrial. After further discussion, Commissioner Heckart thinks all of the property should stay I-L, and Commissioner Rajendran agreed with Commissioner Heckart. Commissioner Padjen said he could go either way. Commissioner Padjen wondered who owned the property south of the wastewater treatment plant. Director Sacket noted the City owned it. She pointed out the properties that are in the industrial zones.

**b. Discussion on staff proposal to revise annual docketing procedures in ECC 15.250.090**

Director Sackett discussed the land development code process for comp plan docketing, and said that she would like the commission to consider changing the procedure. Commissioners agree that the process is very cumbersome and the time between the submittal date and a usable proposal is not very workable. The commissioners feel that more time is needed to accomplish the goals. Director Sackett thinks the language could be changed to just delete any deadlines in the code and come up with more usable dates for the docketing, submissions and proposals. Commissioner Davison noted that the process should be changed for it to work best for staff. Planning Manager Ayling noted that in the other jurisdiction' he has experienced, they were less rigid and the process worked. Director Sackett commented that she will explore procedures from other jurisdictions and will be working on this amendment in the spring.

**Staff Update**:

1. IT is going to give all commission members city emails to use instead of personal emails.

2. Council is looking at the procedures of the commissions and will recommend some changes to the commissions to make them all consistent. Commissioner Bottcher noted that the Council appoints the commissioners and they could just decide to change the commissioners at will if they wanted.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Padjen adjourned the meeting at 7:35 pm.