

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2022 – 3:30pm

Members Present: Mable Cannings, James Montoya, Steele Wright, Michara Delaney, Sydney Register, Denise McDonald, Larry King, Kathleen Belanger, Nicole Ivancic, Kurt Sutton, Taylor Talavera, Ken Deppisch, Jacob Lusk, Ed Pool, Brad Maule, Paul Jackson and Carrie Charley

Members Not Present: Roy Bolden, Juan Gonzalez and Marilyn Walton

Staff Present: Alaina Helton, Steve Bartlett, Larrisa Philpot-Brown, Mario Canizares, Jessica Sowell and Juan Pollette

1. Call the meeting to order: Meeting was called to order by Ken Deppisch at 3:34pm

Chairman Deppisch gave opening remarks, discussed meeting procedures and introduced the SFA student representative, Taylor Talavera to the committee.

Taylor Talavera gave a brief introduction.

2. Presentation and discussion regarding the different elements and themes in the current 2003 Comprehensive Plan. This item will include a review of the goals and objectives found in various chapters of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman Deppisch stated that the meeting will cover the different elements of the current 2003 Comprehensive Plan and review the goals and objectives of the various chapters. Ken Deppisch began discussing the goals and objectives of Chapter 4, Environment & Natural Resources.

Chairman Deppisch asked for feedback on the goals and objectives and which goal would the committee members like to see continued in the new Comprehensive Plan.

Kurt Sutton - stated there should be other objectives added such as the agricultural aspects of the local economy. Noted that the county agricultural economy contributes to the viability of the community.

Sydney Register - stated that the city and the county work together as county residents commute to the city to conduct business.

Chairman Deppisch spoke about the local parks and trail systems in town and asked if there should be a focus in the new plan to develop places that promote more outdoor activities.

Ed Pool - stated most people he has spoken with that are anticipating a move to Nacogdoches, the parks and outdoor recreation system is one of the most important factors.

Chairman Deppisch mentioned the flood plains along University Drive and Pearl Street; what are the best uses for those areas and how to possibly develop.

Nicole Ivancic - stated that parks need to accommodate kids of all ages.

Mable Cannings - stated that there is a great disparity in the equipment and green space in parks in certain parts of the town.

Nicole Ivancic - mentioned the efforts being made to updating those parks with better equipment.

Chairman Deppisch stated that since we are on the subject of parks, we can transition to the Parks & Recreation chapter of the 2003 plan.

Alaina Helton stated that the goals shown in the 2003 Plan are the same goals in the 2017 update to the Parks & Recreation plan.

Chairman Deppisch discussed the goals and objectives of the Parks & Recreation chapter and asked for comments.

Mable Cannings - stated the importance of not continuing to neglect sections of the city's disparities and to allocate funding to correct those issues and follow through.

Chairman Deppisch stated that is not one of the goals in the current plan but should be a goal in the future plan.

James Montoya - stated that he agreed with Ms. Cannings' statement that there is a disparity in where the care and maintenance of parks are done in the community and would like to see the community have access to the parks in the public school system in their areas.

Kathleen Belanger - stated the importance of serving multiple purposes in one particular area such as preserving our natural resources as well as paying more attention to the history of the community.

Chairman Deppisch reviewed the goals and objectives of the Land Use section of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, and asked when and where we should allow high-density development.

Kurt Sutton - stated that believes high-density development is not a priority and that people come to Nacogdoches because they want a single family home with more room.

Ed Pool - stated that as the community grows and more jobs are created, there is a section of the community that seeks apartment living. The current apartment occupancy rates are near 100 percent and the issue is that rental rates do not reflect the current market which does not justify new apartment development. Mr. Pool suggested that we review the current zoning map and make the necessary changes to reflect the community needs.

Vice Chairman Wright asked to clarify the parameters of high-density development.

Chairman Deppisch asked Ed Pool for clarification.

Ed Pool - stated that what is needed is a variety of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartment complex options such as ones on University Drive.

Brad Maule - stated the importance of preserving historical neighborhoods from government incentivized multi-family dwellings.

Chairman Deppisch stated that one of the goals in the future Comprehensive Plan could be to reassess the zoning map on a regular basis.

Larry King - stated that he wanted to point out a statement in the introduction that referenced the importance of maintaining the character and integrity of neighborhoods.

Kathleen Belanger - stated that one of the goals could be the preservation and protection of neighborhoods including historic neighborhoods. Stated that she would like to review Legacy Zoning due to its misinterpretation.

Chairman Deppisch stated the goals in the current Land Use Plan are too vague and aspirational while not being specific enough.

Jacob Lusk - stated that there is no mention of I-69 Corridor in the current plan.

Chairman Deppisch reviewed the goals and objectives of the Transportation section of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and the progress that has been made to date.

Sydney Register - mentioned the number of pedestrian fatalities in the city and what are the factors that led to those numbers.

Kurt Sutton - stated that while sidewalks in neighborhoods would help reduce the number of incidents, the notion that pedestrians have the right of way could be the main factor for the number of accidents and that pedestrians as well as drivers need to be more cautious.

Brad Maule - stated the more thoroughfares made in town the more traffic that will be created.

James Montoya - stated that not having sidewalks puts people in harm, causing people to walk in the street.

Chairman Deppisch reviewed the goals and objectives of the Utility Infrastructure section of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Deppisch asked Steve Bartlett to speak on the current Utility Infrastructure capacity.

Steve Bartlett stated that there is more than sufficient capacity remaining for future growth in the city's water and sewer plants based on future growth plans.

Chairman Deppisch asked what are the biggest challenges or areas of focus with the infrastructure of the utility system.

Steve Bartlett stated if the city is going to proactively look into growing into new areas such as the I-69 Corridor, then the city needs to extend service to those areas to make them developable. Bartlett stated another challenge is there are a lot of overloaded systems that need to be upgraded and replaced.

Chairman Deppisch reviewed the goals and objectives of the Community Facilities & Services section of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

Kurt Sutton - commended the work of the police and fire department and stated that the capacity and future growth of the city land fill should be mentioned in the future plan.

Denise McDonald - stated the importance of noting the goals that have already been implemented in this section of the current plan.

Chairman Deppisch stated that next month's meeting there will be discussion about the goals that have and have not been accomplished. Deppisch asked Steve Bartlett to comment on the capacity of the city land fill.

Steve Bartlett stated that there is over 20 years of capacity left with the current foot print and the city is working with the state to add another 20 years.

Brad Maule - asked if the goals should be listed by order of importance.

Chairman Deppisch stated they should. Deppisch asked to move on to the Housing & Neighborhoods section of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

Kathleen Belanger - stated that it is late and would not want to rush the discussion.

Chairman Deppisch stated that due to the time constraint, the sections of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan that were not addressed in this meeting will be addressed in the February meeting.

3. Review and discuss Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document.

Chairman Deppisch asked Alaina Helton to elaborate on the FAQ document. Helton gave an explanation of the FAQs and asked for feedback and or clarification of the answers written.

Jacob Lusk - asked if the FAQs will be translated into Spanish.

Alaina Helton said yes.

Kurt Sutton - asked for clarification of using money budgeted for the Comprehensive Plan on needed water and sewer improvements instead.

Steve Bartlett stated there are two separate funds that the city has available to use and can only use the Utility Fund on water and sewer improvements.

Kathleen Belanger - asked if the committee is expected to approve of this document tonight. Belanger stated that there are areas of concern that need to be addressed but asked if more time

Chairman Deppisch suggested a deadline to submit comments on the FAQs document so they can be addressed before the document is published.

Alaina Helton agreed to share the document with the committee for their comments.

4. Presentation and discussion regarding upcoming Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meetings.

Deppisch asked Alaina Helton to talk about the future meeting.

Alain Helton stated the next Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee meeting will be February 10th and anticipate it will be in person depending on the Covid rates. Helton stated that at the next meeting will finish the discussion on the goals and objectives of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and give a presentation on the implementation status of the current plan.

Chairman Deppisch asked if there were any other questions and thanked everyone for their time.

5. Adjourn: Adjourned at 5:34pm