

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2018***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Nemeth on September 25, 2018, 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners present: Dean Daninger, Bert Koehler IV, Nick Loehlein, and Mary VanderLaan.

Commissioners absent: Scott Hudson and Jeff Sims.

Also present: Community Development Director Joe Janish
City Planner Stephanie Hanson
Others

DISCUSSION OF 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

City Planner Hanson stated tonight's discussion will focus on Chapter 1: Foundation of the Comprehensive Plan, and Chapter 6: Implementation.

- **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

City Planner Hanson reviewed the information received from the Metropolitan Council outlining what is required to be contained in the City's Comprehensive Plan. It was noted that Chapter 1 describes the goals of the community and the strategies that are employed to achieve them. City Planner Hanson stated she had already updated the growth forecast table.

Chairperson Nemeth asked whether that forecast is based on where the Metropolitan Council thinks the City's population will be in 2030 and 2040. City Planner Hanson stated that is correct and those numbers are required to be within the Plan but the City is not held to meet them.

Commissioner Loehlein asked if the purpose is for the City to grow in a denser manner, is it just a projection, or a deeper meaning. City Planner Hanson stated the Metropolitan Council uses what it believes will be growth in the metro area and then divides it between communities. The Metropolitan Council does prefer a denser population but that is not a requirement.

Commissioner Loehlein referenced the opening paragraph, Identity, and stated he has no problem with it but wondered if a survey had been conducted to back up resident's priorities or was this a subjective identity statement. City Planner Hanson stated it is more of a subjective identity statement, but resident surveys have been conducted in the past to provide information.

Commissioner Daninger stated it seems like this Plan review is a lot easier this time and asked if that is because there are not as many drastic changes. City Planner Hanson agreed this Comprehensive Plan update is easier than the last time.

Commissioner Daninger recalled that the 2008 update resulted in many residents attending Planning Commission meetings to provide feedback. City Planner Hanson agreed and stated it was because that Plan included major land use changes and this time it is just to update the numbers and include the transportation plan. Also, in 2008 one of the big issues was the Rural Reserve area and change in the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) boundaries.

Commissioner Daninger stated the goal is to get the information out so when it is viewed by the public, the City can answer questions asked.

Chairperson Nemeth asked whether the MUSA is changed in this Plan update. City Planner Hanson answered there are no changes to the MUSA boundaries. In addition, the City Engineer has conducted calculations of service areas and determined the City is at capacity considering anticipated urban development on the eastern side of the Winslow property. City Planner Hanson explained with the Winslow Woods plat, the MUSA will be pushed under the tracks to serve the eastern side.

Overarching Goals, Objectives, and Policies

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 1: 'Maintain and enhance the quality of life in Andover,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Koehler stated preserving the rural character of the community is frequently the cause of debate at Planning Commission meetings. He asked what is the definition of 'rural character,' which some think means no homes being constructed, or one home on 2.5 acre or larger lots. He asked if there is anything more specific to provide a definition of 'rural character.' City Planner Hanson referenced the policy statement, noting the Metropolitan Council defines rural development as 2.5 acres.

Commissioner Koehler stated that is Rural Residential but residents say Rural Residential and Rural are different and they don't want residential in many cases if in their own back yard. He stated he understands the Metropolitan Council definition of Rural Residential and wondered if the City has a statement or definition.

City Planner Hanson referenced Chapter 2 and the Implementation chapter where the rural character of the community is defined, noting it is Rural Residential. Andover is classified as a Rural Residential community with one home per 2.5 acres. She noted the Rural Residential Reserve Area is one house per ten acres. The City takes the Metropolitan Council's definition of Andover as Rural Residential and that is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Koehler noted often the comment on support for Rural is accompanied by the conflicting request for more restaurants.

Chairperson Nemeth asked if the Metropolitan Council is guiding what they consider to be 'rural' and when compared to other locations, 'rural' denotes the same tone in those areas. City Planner Hanson agreed and stated it is a blanket land use defined by the Metropolitan Council.

Commissioner VanderLaan stated while the Metropolitan Council has that consistent definition, residents attending meetings have a different definition. However, she noted the Planning Commission needs to remain consistent when applying those guidelines.

Commissioner Daninger stated Rural Reserve at four houses per acre (with City utilities) will eventually be R-4, which is a confusing term. He asked if that can be clarified in this Plan update. City Planner Hanson stated it cannot because it is defined by the Metropolitan Council and that definition must be used in the Comprehensive Plan.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 2: 'Maintain a high degree of community planning and involvement,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Koehler referenced the first policy listed: 'Provide access to information in a variety of forms including the newsletter, official newspaper, website, and televised meetings. He stated he sees Fire Chief Streich providing information on safety, noting the City does a terrific job in certain venues to provide access to information on-line, outside of the City's website. He suggested that point of access also be referenced.

Commissioner Daninger referenced the sixth policy indicating: 'Encourage resident involvement through the public hearing process and utilize a variety of public hearing notification methods including direct mailings, publication in the official newspaper, and signs placed on subject properties.' He asked whether reference to 'direct mailings' can be eliminated, noting this is a ten-year plan. City Planner Hanson explained that by State law, the City is required to make direct mailings.

Commissioner Daninger stated support to remove the 'direct mailings' reference regardless as the State law may change over the next ten years. City Planner Hanson stated that would require a change to State statute as it is legally defined as mail via the US Post Office. She stated she will add reference to on-line sources as suggested by Commissioner Koehler.

Commissioner Koehler stated his support to offer the City's newsletter on-line rather than receiving a mailed copy.

Commissioner Daninger stated all support the US Mail service; however, the younger generation is not as reliant on mail or land line telephones.

Chairperson Nemeth noted if State statute or the Metropolitan Council does change something, the City can amend the Plan to be reflective. City Planner Hanson confirmed the City could amend certain section through an amendment process.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 3: 'Maintain the Comprehensive Plan as a relevant official document,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Loehlein asked how often a Comprehensive Plan amendment is made. City Planner Hanson estimated one to two per year.

Commissioner VanderLaan referenced the policy subset indicating: 'Conditions have changed since the present land use designation was established such to warrant the proposed amendment or the present land use designation is in error.' She noted when considering the Petersen Farm project, it required a change from Ag Preserve to Rural Residential. However, the Ag Preserve zoning was not an error but was an appropriate land use at that time. She questioned the use of the word 'error' as it would be incompatible with past or future conditions and does not acknowledge the change that occurred from the time it was a farming activity to today's use.

Commissioner Koehler noted the language includes the word 'or,' so there is another condition besides being in error. The language indicates: '...the present land use designation was established such to warrant the proposed amendment or the present land use designation is in error.'

City Planner Hanson explained that in the past, the City has had to amend the Plan due to an error.

Commissioner Koehler stated he agrees with Commissioner VanderLaan's point about the change in land use not being an error; however, there is another condition stated in the language.

Commissioner VanderLaan thanked Commissioner Koehler for the clarification and stated she sees that other condition is established.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 4: 'Allow residential growth while maintaining the quality of natural resources and amenities,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Koehler stated this language gets at his initial comment about how you define ‘rural’ and not just ‘rural residential’ as it is an issue raised regularly. He asked how the City rates themselves against the Comprehensive Plan to determine if the goals have been met.

Commissioner Daninger stated it is reviewed at the end of the year in a summary report.

Chairperson Nemeth stated with Comprehensive Plan amendments, he assumes either staff periodically reviews the Comprehensive Plan to ensure the goals are being met and if not, then an amendment may be made. City Planner Hanson stated that is correct and it is typically handled by her. She stated there is not a specific meeting to review the goals and objectives annually, but staff constantly reviews the Comprehensive Plan and drafts amendments, when needed.

Commissioner Koehler stated goals should be measurable and the City should look to see if they are being met which, as mentioned by Commissioner Daninger, is done at the end of the year though the summary document.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 5: ‘Encourage appropriate economic growth and redevelopment,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies. She noted there are few redevelopment areas in Andover and as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, there has been discussion on the location of higher density.

Commissioner Loehlein referenced the second objective: ‘Create a downtown area by aggregating commercial land uses along Bunker Lake Boulevard between Hanson Boulevard and Crosstown Boulevard.’ He asked if there should be consideration of expanding that zone to the west. City Planner Hanson stated the language is fine as stated.

Chairperson Nemeth asked Commissioner Loehlein how far west he was thinking. Commissioner Loehlein stated to Crosstown Drive as there is activity to purchase some of the houses and to the west, there is commercial on the north side of Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Chairperson Nemeth stated the big commercial hub with the Downtown Center is at Round Lake Boulevard and Bunker Lake Boulevard. He noted from Hanson Boulevard to Round Lake Boulevard, there are other pockets of commercial.

Commissioner VanderLaan asked whether there is evidence of skip development on Bunker Lake Boulevard from the chiropractic office, CVS, and Walgreens, noting there is some residential activity and a nursery. City Planner Hanson stated the nursery is no longer in operation.

Commissioner VanderLaan asked if skip development should be addressed, noting the Sonstebly property is 112 acres and reaches almost to that area. City Planner Hanson stated it is just the northeast corner of Seventh Avenue and Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Commissioner Daninger noted that would be a large area for a downtown center.

City Planner Hanson pointed out that not much of that land is developable.

Community Development Director Janish stated Sonstebly has 22 acres of buildable land out of 114 acres owned due of flood plain and wetland impacts so it is mostly the corner and area behind Slims Auto that can be developed.

Chairperson Nemeth agreed there is some hit and miss with commercial between Crosstown Boulevard and Round Lake Boulevard. He stated it does not need to be pushed beyond Crosstown Boulevard but there are several pockets on the south side of Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Commissioner Daninger asked if the intent of the line having is to define a minimum. He agreed the downtown area could be extended to Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Commissioner Loehlein referenced the policy indicating: ‘Maintain the existing commercial nodes along Hanson Boulevard, Bunker Lake Boulevard, and Round Lake Boulevard as cohesive, interrelated nodes of commercial activity,’ which may cover the issue he raised.

Commissioner Loehlein asked what is meant by the policy indicating: ‘Prevent fragmented, uncoordinated and linear commercial development away from these locations.’ City Planner Hanson referenced the land use map and stated she would say it is what is currently on Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Community Development Director Janish stated the intent is a mixed-use development along Bunker Lake Boulevard with commercial and residential or mix to the back. He pointed out and described areas along Bunker Lake Boulevard that are and are not developable. He stated with the exception of the redevelopment area, Bunker Lake Boulevard is pretty much developed from Hanson Boulevard to Crosstown Boulevard.

Commissioner Daninger raised the option of relocating the power substation and asked whether it could be relocated to the old landfill property. Commissioner Loehlein stated a solid subbase would be required to build a power substation.

The Planning Commissioners reviewed the land use map and asked questions of staff about zoning, current and potential future uses.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 6: ‘Protect and develop access for alternative energy systems,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Koehler asked whether the Planning Commission discussed charging stations for electric vehicles. City Planner Hanson stated it was decided to not do anything at this time. Commissioner Koehler asked if any businesses have approached the City about putting in charging stations. City Planner Hanson stated staff has not been approached. Commissioner Koehler asked if there is anything in the Comprehensive Plan to prevent it from occurring. City Planner Hanson stated there is not.

Chairperson Nemeth stated Kwik Trip had raised that option. Commissioner Daninger stated they have a charging station in the back of their property.

Commissioner Loehlein explained how electric vehicles can be charged at different rates.

Commissioner Koehler stated the Planning Commission discussed how to list it in Code and whether it would require a permit. At that time, staff suggested it not be addressed until someone makes the request.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 7: 'Reduce maintenance and energy costs for public facilities and infrastructure,' and the accompanying objective and policy.

No comments were made related to this goal, objective, or policy.

Housing Goals, Objectives and Policies

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: 'Provide a variety of housing types to accommodate the life cycle needs of all residents,' and the accompanying objectives and policies. She noted one objective is: 'Utilize the existing housing stock to provide a portion of the affordable housing demand projected by the Metropolitan Council.' However, it is her understanding that existing housing stock cannot be used in the count to provide affordable housing. She also presented the goal: 'Remain responsive to housing market demands through implementation of the Land Use Plan,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Chairperson Nemeth referenced the policy: 'Work with property owners to identify sources of funding for home improvements to prevent deterioration of the City's older homes.' He stated the City Council had discussed the policy of the City setting aside money to address deteriorating property, which had been raised by one individual, but the City Council decided not to do so. He asked whether it is appropriate to include that language if there is no intent for the City to set aside funds to rehabilitate a home.

Commissioner Koehler noted the language does not reference the City. It states: 'to identify sources of funding.'

City Planner Hanson stated people have contacted the City asking if there are funding sources but Andover does not have a revolving loan fund so staff directs them to Anoka

County. She clarified that policy relates to identifying sources of funding, not providing funding.

City Planner Hanson noted the second policy addresses continuing the housing rehabilitation revolving loan program, which the City no longer has so that reference will be removed.

Chairperson Nemeth noted the Minnesota Housing and Finance Agency used to have programs and asked if that is what is being referenced in the two policies under discussion. City Planner Hanson stated the Plan policies specifically relate to City programs and the City does not have such a program.

Commissioner Koehler stated he has no problem directing people to outside resources or local businesses, but the wording could be misconstrued as it refers to continuing a program. City Planner Hanson recommended removing that bullet point.

Chairperson Nemeth suggested another option is to merge and redraft the two policies into one policy.

Chairperson Nemeth raised the issue of life cycle housing and stated he thinks the City offers housing for those who want to purchase a home or a townhome, but Millennials like the uptown/downtown lifestyle which Andover does not provide. He would like to see the City Council and EDA push for those individuals who are not ready to purchase a house or townhome and prefer to rent. He pointed out that Andover has a lot to offer with outdoor open spaces, trails, and parks, and suggested a smaller two-story 30-unit complex could provide that missing housing option.

Commissioner Loehlein referenced the policy: ‘Utilize the planned unit development (PUD) review process for medium- and high-density residential projects...’ He asked about using the PUD process for low density residential projects. City Planner Hanson stated one-quarter acre is low density. Community Development Director Janish stated medium density is a rating based on the number of units. Through the PUD process, the developer can cap out at 14.2 units per acre as opposed to 12 units per acre, creating bonus units if the developer provides something additional in return such as architectural elements or open space.

Commissioner Loehlein stated the language references medium- or high-density residential projects yet the City looked at the Petersen Farm PUD as a low-density area. He asked if this language should instead indicate it is used over all densities.

Commissioner Koehler noted the wording indicated a PUD process is used for medium- and high-density residential projects but it does not say a PUD cannot be used for low-density residential projects. He noted if the PUD process is used everywhere, then it wouldn’t have to be noted here. Commissioner Koehler stated he is comfortable with the way this particular bullet point is written.

Commissioner Loehlein stated since it calls out two types of density, it creates ambiguity in his mind and he would ask if it should also call out low density.

Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: ‘Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that is cost effective and serves the existing and future access and mobility needs of the City,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies. She noted the City’s transportation plan has been updated.

Commissioner Koehler asked how much of the transportation system is beyond the City’s control as it involves Anoka County roads. He also asked about the process for the City to request changes to Anoka County’s transportation system. City Planner Hanson stated the process involves City staff talking with Anoka County staff.

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: ‘Provide a coordinated transportation system that is compatible with the adjacent municipality, Anoka County, Metropolitan Council, and State of Minnesota transportation plans,’ and the accompanying objective and policy.

No comments were made related to this goal, objective, or policy.

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: ‘Provide multi-modal transportation options whenever and wherever feasible and advantageous,’ and the accompanying objective and policy.

Commissioner Loehlein stated this goal speaks to the earlier comment by Chairperson Nemeth about higher-density housing for Millennials, noting they also use public transportation.

Chairperson Nemeth stated his concern with the City looking at lower-income housing or Section 8 because Andover does not have public transportation.

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: ‘Minimize impacts of the transportation system on the natural environment,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Commissioner Koehler asked whether language should be included to address salting roads and resulting natural environmental impacts. He recounted resident comments on turf damage and noted this section could also address how streets are cleaned and maintained. City Planner Hanson stated she will make a note of that item.

Chairperson Nemeth stated the issue with road salt deals with the winter season but there are also issues during spring and summer seasons when a lot of roadway dirt can wash into the storm sewer and maybe that should also be mentioned.

Commissioner Koehler stated his point is not to call out a specific action or season but rather, care of the transportation system.

City Planner Hanson presented the goal: ‘Enhance accessibility by providing an interconnected multi-use trail system,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Chairperson Nemeth stated the Park & Recreation Commission continues to work on the City’s trail system, which is a monetary consideration so as money becomes available, improvements are made.

Water Resources Goals, Objectives, Policies

City Planner Hanson stated this section was presented at a prior meeting by Director of Public Works/City Engineer David Berkowitz.

No comments were made related to these goals, objectives, or policies.

Parks and Open Space Goals, Objectives, and Policies

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 1: ‘Provide parks and facilities that meet present park needs and plan for the future needs of the City,’ and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Chairperson Nemeth asked where park dedication fees are placed. City Planner Hanson stated the fees go to the Park Dedication Fund.

Commissioner VanderLaan referenced the policy: ‘Consider the adopted Guidelines for Field Usage by Youth Athletic Associations.’ She stated during an earlier Workshop, there was discussion about needing \$6 million to develop parks in the City. She stated it is not a position of the Planning Commission to ask for fees from athletic associations, but she wondered how much was collected from the athletic associations operating in Andover. Commissioner VanderLaan stated her impression that no money is collected and the City Council is reluctant to levy for park improvements. City Planner Hanson stated she does not know but will research the item.

Commissioner VanderLaan stated athletic associations could potentially be a source of funding for park improvements. She noted there was mention of volunteerism by the athletic associations, but this may also be an area to get dollars to develop the City’s parks.

Commissioner Daninger stated volunteerism may deal with things like maintaining parks but the City does not accept volunteerism to do things like mowing. He stated quite a bit of money has been donated by athletic associations to update fields, though it is a goodwill donation and not an obligation. In addition, the Baseball Association donated money to develop a ballfield.

Commissioner VanderLaan stated Andover is an attraction to families because of the athletic associations and parks. Commissioner Daninger agreed.

Chairperson Nemeth stated when the Park & Recreation Commission considers requests to utilize parks, a fee is charged for activities like tournaments.

With regard to the level of park land dedication fees, Community Development Director Janish explained the City sets the fees based on the study findings. In addition, the fee is limited by State statute, so the City can't rely on a peer review against other communities. He noted it may be a question of whether peer cities have studies to support the fees they are charging.

City Planner Hanson presented Goal 2: 'Promote, protect, preserve and enhance the City's natural and open space for the enjoyment of residents, protection of water and air quality, and the preservation of wildlife habitat,' and the accompanying objectives and policies.

Chairperson Nemeth asked about additional money being set aside for open space. City Planner Hanson noted that would be a City Council decision.

Commissioner Koehler stated open space is phenomenal and asked whether there is a way to measure the level of open space use to gauge whether more should be purchased.

Commissioner VanderLaan noted there is a dual purpose with open space as it is also an issue of preservation, not just use.

- **Implementation Plan**

It was noted that most components of the Comprehensive Plan identify what Andover intends to do over the next 30 years. The implementation portion of the Plan lays out how the City intends to do it and when infrastructure investments will occur.

City Planner Hanson reviewed revisions that will be made. She stated once the Capital Improvement Plan is adopted in October, those spreadsheets will also be included.

Commissioner Daninger asked if those tweaks will come back to the Planning Commission for review or go directly to the City Council. City Planner Hanson stated she will provide a copy for Planning Commission review at a future Workshop.

Chairperson Nemeth asked if the Planning Commission will receive a copy of the updated Comprehensive Plan. City Planner Hanson stated it is on line, an electronic copy will be provided, and Commissioners can ask for a paper copy if they prefer.

OTHER BUSINESS.

Chairperson Nemeth asked about the next meeting date. City Planner Hanson stated she has not seen any items for the October 9, 2018, meeting and the deadline is next Tuesday. The Workshop on October 23, 2018 will include presentation and discussion of land uses, land use maps, and the housing plan.

The Planning Commission agreed to meet in Workshop on October 9, 2018, if a regular meeting is not scheduled.

Commissioner Daninger asked about the status of the clock tower, noting money is put aside but now a very expensive sign was constructed where the clock tower was supposed to be built. Community Development Director Janish clarified that the clocktower will be part of the building constructed on that lot, which is part of that permit and PUD amendment. It is not a separate clock tower.

Commissioner Daninger stated it was said the clock tower would not be built until the location of all the buildings is known. Now a sign has been erected in the location he thought the clock tower was to be located.

Commissioner Koehler recalled discussion of plans showing the clocktower as being part of the side of a building.

Chairperson Nemeth stated this is a valid question and discussion as a clocktower was promised as part of that development.

Commissioner VanderLaan stated there is a point at the intersection where the stoplight pole blocks the sightline of the sign. Community Development Director Janish explained that during the upcoming Hanson Boulevard reconstruction, the location of the signal lights posts will be adjusted, which will minimize the obstruction.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by Koehler, seconded by Daninger, to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m. Motion carried on a 5-ayes, 0-nays, 2-absent (Hudson and Sims) vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carla Wirth, Recording Secretary
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.