

MINUTES
Planning Commission
Committee of the Whole
CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU
Mike Satre, Chairman

November 24, 2015

I. ROLL CALL

Dennis Watson, Vice Chairman, called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, to order at 5:05 pm.

Commissioners present: Dennis Watson, Vice Chairman; Bill Peters,
Michael LeVine, (telephonically) Nicole Grewe, Ben Haight,
Paul Voelckers, (telephonically)

Commissioners absent: Chairman Mike Satre, Dan Miller, Matthew Bell

Staff present: Rob Steedle, Interim Planning Director and Deputy City Manager;
Beth McKibben, Planning Manager;
Greg Chaney, Lands and Resources Manager

II. REGULAR AGENDA

- Review of 2015 Land Management Plan Update

At the request of several Planning Commission members, Mr. Chaney provided an overview of what transpired at the last regular Planning Commission meeting concerning the Land Management Plan. He said at the last meeting they discussed the main facets and highlights of the Land Management Plan. The biggest highlight for the staff is the map displaying all of the CBJ properties, said Mr. Chaney. The map is up-to-date, with the accompanying data set which lists the size of the properties, and the department to which they belong. The map is a great working document for the staff, said Mr. Chaney.

In addition, the goals and objectives at the end of the document provide guidance for the Plan, said Mr. Chaney. He said at the last meeting most of discussion centered on how long and how detailed of a process the Commission wanted to engage in regarding review of the Land Management Plan. He said Mr. Voelckers had a clear vision of how the Commission should address the Plan and has shared that information in a written summary.

Mr. Chaney said he thought it would be a good idea to address the summary submitted by Mr. Voelckers as a way to move forward with review by the Commission of the draft Land Management Plan.

Commission Comments and Questions

Ms. Grewe asked which ordinance guided the Commission regarding its review of the Land Management Plan.

Mr. Chaney responded that it is guided by Title 53. He stated that the adoption process includes review by the Planning Commission prior to the Plan's submittal to the Assembly for adoption. After its adoption the Plan will be updated every two years, he said. It has been 16 years since the last Land Management Plan was adopted, said Mr. Chaney. The Plan can also be updated during the interim, said Mr. Chaney.

Title 53 states that the Planning Commission shall recommend to the Assembly a land management plan for all of the City and Borough lands. The plan shall address the retention, use, disposal, development and subdivision of City and Borough land and the acquisition of private land for the City and Borough of Juneau's purpose.

Title 53 stipulates that the Planning Commission shall recommend changes to the Plan as necessary, said Mr. Chaney. It states that multiple use should be encouraged; the use of land for land resource extraction or removal should be considered with future use of the land, said Mr. Chaney. The title states that adequate land should be obtained and preserved for public use and development, added Mr. Chaney. Mr. Chaney proceeded to read more of Title 53.09.150 to the Commission. That title can be accessed here: [Title 53](#)

Mr. Voelckers said he believed that the Commission had reached a consensus at its last meeting that the Planning Commission would look at the Plan more closely in terms of giving more feedback on its contents. He said he wrote the summary presented to the Commission to provide his input on what kind of items appeared to him to need more attention in the Plan.

Possible Process and Timeline for Planning Commission Action

Addressing the schedule in Mr. Voelckers' summary, Mr. Chaney said he felt that working on the Land Management Plan would be appropriate every two weeks rather than once a month. He felt the Commission's work on the Plan could be accomplished in a more compact timeframe.

Mr. Haight mentioned that it was important to keep in mind that there would be a sizable turnover in Commission members in just a few weeks. He said there would need to be time invested in the new Planning Commission members to provide them with background on this issue.

Mr. Voelckers said that he had no problem with meeting on this issue more than once a month, but that he felt the Committee of the Whole structure rather than the regularly scheduled meetings better suited the needs of the Commission to discuss the issues in the Plan.

Mr. Watson said when the Commission had similar in-depth work to perform on the Comprehensive Plan review, that regularly scheduled meetings often fit the schedule just fine. He noted the sparse attendance at this evening's COW meeting. He said he would prefer that the Commission work on this issue regularly at every regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

Land Management Plan Process

Among other items, Mr. Voelckers stated that in his summary under the above heading that an outline of a proposed process would be good in the summary section of the Land Management Plan for Assembly review and approval.

Mr. Chaney stated that the lands studies underway by Docks and Harbors and Parks and Recreation are not close to completion, and would potentially not be ready for several years for insertion into the primary Land Management Plan. He added that when a plan comes up which is before the Commission for review and the Assembly for adoption that affects CBJ property, that a formulation of how those should be integrated into the Land Management Plan would be beneficial. He said he welcomed Commission member's feedback on how this could be accomplished. Those subsidiary plans could be incorporated into the broader Land Management Plan as they arose, or at the biennial plan renewal, said Mr. Chaney.

Mr. Voelckers stated that one of the reasons this was the first issue mentioned in his summary was because of a comment made by the CBJ Public Works Director at a meeting which Mr. Voelckers had attended. Mr. Watt had observed at that meeting that the different City departments all work relatively autonomously in terms of establishing what their land goals are. Mr. Voelckers stated he felt it was the job of the Planning Commission to unify these department land goals into one cohesive Land Management Plan.

Mr. Voelckers added that the Parks and Recreation Department has a huge land base within the Borough and that it feels that if it gives a piece of land that another piece should come back to the department. Mr. Voelckers stated that he felt it was the goal of the Commission to assist the various department land holders to work holistically.

Mr. Chaney proposed that for the next meeting on this topic that he would provide to the Commission an appropriate block of text that would address this issue and he would identify its appropriate place in the Plan.

Property for Housing

In his written summary Mr. Voelckers stated that the Plan needed additional recommendations and more specificity regarding the next steps in development of identified properties within the community.

Mr. Chaney said the Plan already carries a very heavy emphasis on the provision of land to alleviate housing shortages in Juneau. The Plan already recommends development of Sixth Street in Douglas and at Second and Franklin streets, said Mr. Chaney. He said he was not sure about outlining the development process more specifically because each piece of property carries with it its own public process.

The Affordable Housing Commission has already provided its comments regarding the Land Management Plan, said Ms. McKibben. It is in support of the Plan as written, said Ms. McKibben. She said that the Housing Action Plan does not make specific recommendations regarding the disposal of CBJ land. It speaks to the facilitation of housing development in more general terms, she added. For these reasons, she said she was not sure that holding up the Land Management Plan awaiting the incorporation of the Housing Action Plan would be beneficial.

Mr. Watson concurred, stating that the Land Management plan should identify properties for disposal and if it should be rezoned, but not the mechanics of the rezone itself.

Mr. Voelckers said he did not find many opportunities for land development within the core town area identified within the Plan.

Mr. Chaney said that at their next meeting that he could bring forward an overview for the Commission of City property in the downtown area, and what might be available for housing. However, he said, the City holds hardly any land that is vacant suitable for housing in the town area.

Strategic rezoning

In his written summary, Mr. Voelckers stated that the Commission should look at areas, especially in the downtown and Auke Bay areas, where rezoning would facilitate current goals and needs.

While it would be feasible for the Land Management Plan to recommend rezoning, it has not been recommended because zoning is an area generally recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Chaney said to him the Comprehensive Plan leads the Land Management Plan, and the Land Management Plan should not lead the Comprehensive Plan.

Commission Comments and Questions

Mr. Haight stated that he agreed that zoning issues should remain within the purview of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Voelckers asked if the Auke Bay Plan was like a mini Comprehensive Plan or if its recommendations would be fed back into the Comprehensive Plan.

The Auke Bay Plan has been adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan, answered Ms. McKibben.

Ms. McKibben stated that the CDD staff is working on zoning ordinance language to implement the Auke Bay Plan. It is also crafting a new zoning district which would implement the vision of that plan to bring forward to the Title 49 Committee for review in the near future. That would be the process in which to implement the recommendations of the Auke Bay Plan, she stated.

Establish Right-of-Way Needs

in his written summary, Mr. Voelckers stated that it is important to identify the location of the Auke Bay Bypass given the substantial change and development near Pederson Hill that will likely be affected by such right-of-way designations. He added that the North Douglas Bench Road should also be considered a priority because of its prominence in the Juneau Economic Development Plan. He added that channel crossing options should also be considered, for a future land use plan update.

Mr. Chaney stated that the Department of Transportation (DOT) has currently let go of the Auke Bay bypass topic. He has located potential sites for the bypass, which turned out to be very limited because of the location of Pederson Hill. The easiest way to construct a bypass would be to go around Pederson Hill, said Mr. Chaney. He said he felt it would be appropriate to add language stating that a corridor would be identified for the Auke Bay bypass. He added at this point they are not in a position to actually develop an Auke Bay Bypass plan.

Industrial/Commercial Land Base

in his written summary, Mr. Voelckers stated that it is important to provide adequate industrial and commercial land. In order to move in this direction and provide meaningful recommendations on this topic, the CDD staff would need direction from the Commission to prepare an overview of the existing inventory, and potential land re-designation or acquisition.

Mr. Chaney stated that the above recommendation actually covers two different topics. The first topic would be rezoning to increase the industrial and commercial land base. The other related topic would be the purchase of property for that purpose, he said. The City currently does not hold a lot of property that is zoned Commercial and Industrial, said Mr.

Chaney. Most of the industrial land lies within the airport area, and it will remain designated for airport use, he said.

The remaining commercial and industrial property owned by the City is already currently in use, said Mr. Chaney. Therefore rezoning would be necessary, said Mr. Chaney, which goes back to the statement that the Comprehensive Plan drives the Land Management Plan and it is in the Comprehensive Plan that zoning would be stipulated. Mr. Chaney added that he did not know why the City would need to buy property for commercial use when that property was already in the hands of private owners who could sell their property for that purpose.

He said if the Commission had any recommendations on property which could be rezoned for this purpose that he would welcome those recommendations.

Commission Comments and Questions

Mr. Voelckers said this topic has come up repeatedly at other meetings he has attended that there is a severe shortage in the community of commercial and industrial land for development.

Mr. Watson said it would be good if the Commission could address the future use of the current gravel pits, which are zoned Industrial, since their time as gravel pits will be limited.

Mr. Chaney said he could bring to the next meeting information gathered on the gravel pit sites in the Lemon Creek area and what their plans are for the future.

West Douglas Master Plan

In his written summary Mr. Voelckers stated that the Juneau Economic Development Plan identified implementation of the West Douglas Master Plan as one of the top priorities for Juneau, given the potential of new housing and marine port alternatives. He stated that the entire area is currently zoned Rural Reserve land and that nodes for development should be discussed.

Mr. Chaney said that West Douglas is an area of great opportunity. The transportation infrastructure would need to be vastly improved for development within this area, he said. This would either mean improvements to the existing bridge or an additional crossing across the channel, said Mr. Chaney. The master plan for the West Douglas area has been adopted, said Mr. Chaney. A pioneer road will be constructed in the relatively near future, he said.

The important point to be considered is that all of the real development nodes are on Gold - belt property, said Mr. Chaney. The Goldbelt property is located on the water, he added. Mr. Chaney said some of the important points from the West Juneau Master Plan could be incorporated into the Land Management Plan.

Commission Comments and Questions

Mr. Voelckers said he feels there is a role in the Land Management Plan for highlights from the West Juneau Master Plan to be incorporated. He said he recalled an exiting Commission member commenting that it was important for the Commission to keep its eye on the broader picture for the community because no one else would perform that function for the community.

Mr. Chaney said he would take a look at the West Douglas Master Plan and see how it could be incorporated. He added that the CBJ owns a lot of property in West Juneau, but that it owns no property on the waterfront. Therefore, development in the area will be driven by a Goldbelt timeline, said Mr. Chaney.

Other Topics

In his written summary Mr. Voelckers stated that the Sustainability Commission had asked the Planning Commission to keep an eye on supporting dense, multi-use development that used current infrastructure. He added that is probably a topic best addressed in the forthcoming Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Chaney said that the stated goal in the Land Management Plan is to develop housing opportunities where there is existing infrastructure such as roads and sewer.

As the outcome from this meeting, Mr. Chaney said that he would bring back to the Commission the following information:

- ✓ Develop text addressing the planning process with the goal of updating the Land Management Plan as new City plans are adopted
- ✓ Take another look at housing opportunities in the core town area
- ✓ Look at the Auke Bay Plan and see if there is any language from the adopted plan which can be incorporated into the Land Management Plan
- ✓ Bring back more specific language regarding the Auke Bay Bypass and how to address that in future development plans
- ✓ Discuss lemon Creek properties which are or may be in the future potential areas for industrial development
- ✓ See if it would be appropriate to incorporate language from the West Douglas Management Plan into the Land Management Plan

Commission Comments and Questions

Mr. Watson asked if the Comprehensive Plan addressed development on the back side of Douglas Island.

Mr. Chaney responded that it did address that development.

In response to Mr. Watson's next question, Mr. Chaney answered that the City did own land out near the end of the road.

Mr. Voelckers stated that language in Title 53 specifically addresses the acquisition of private land for public purpose. He said that would become important when projects such as the Auke Bay Bypass road were contemplated. He said he felt it would be appropriate to identify any private property that was obvious for this type of use within the Land Management Plan.

Mr. Voelckers said he felt it was important to outline a specific process for implementing the bigger goals outlined in the Land Management Plan.

Mr. Chaney said that they are in the process of developing an acquisitions list for the purpose of acquiring land for public use. He said that he would provide an updated acquisitions list at the next meeting, but that it is often difficult to anticipate land needs for the future.

Mr. Watson added that in the annual CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) process departments identify land they would like to acquire for their purposes.

Mr. Peters said he felt that the Commission kept reviewing this process but that at some point it needed to be completed and sent to the Assembly. He asked if the goal was for the Commission to complete its review at the next meeting or if there would be more meetings after that.

Mr. Chaney said that he would work hard to complete his list of tasks and to bring this information back to the Commission at its next regular meeting. He said they could ascertain at that time if the Commission felt comfortable moving the Plan forward to the Assembly or if more work was required.

Ms. Grewe asked for a brief description of the feedback on the plan which came back from the other boards, departments, committees and commissions.

Mr. Chaney said the most significant feedback came from the Parks and Recreation Department. They submitted a very lengthy list of properties for both disposal and acquisition, said Mr. Chaney. This material was most appropriate in an update to the Parks

and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, said Mr. Chaney. That list may be set aside until it is incorporated in the Parks and Recreation document, said Mr. Chaney.

Mr. Voelckers asked Mr. Chaney if Parks and Recreation viewed the land base assigned to their department as their property. Mr. Chaney said he believed that was the premise that they were operating under, but that mechanically if the Parks Department sold property it would be the City selling the property, and those funds would then go into the land fund. It would not be a separate account managed specifically for Park land, said Mr. Chaney.

Mr. Watson said that he concurred with the opinion of Mr. Peters. He said it was time to begin formulating their input into the Land Management Plan so that it could be moved on to the Assembly.

III. **OTHER BUSINESS** - None

IV. **REPORT OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES** - None

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.