

**CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON  
MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**July 30, 2018**

The meeting of the Connell Planning Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Commission Chairman Roger Bailie, Commission Members Vangi Ellwein, Robert Misener, Bruce Blackwell

**ABSENT:** Jay Patel

**STAFF:** Mayor Lee Barrow, City Administrator Maria Peña, Accounting Clerk Ivan Barragan, Deputy City Clerk Marissa Ortiz

**VISITORS:** Nicole Stickney, Kathy Bingham

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Motion:** Commission member Misener moved to accept June 25th, 2018 minutes as written. Commission member Ellwein seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

**a) Focus on written policies**

**Land Use Goals and Policies**

City Administrator Maria Peña stated that Nicole Stickney an AHBL representative provided the city with some updates focused on written policies. The city had received them that morning via email that is why the planning commission had not had a chance to look at them. Maria Peña said Nicole Stickney also provided updates to staff about changed elements in the draft plan. With help from Larry Turner (Public Works Director) and Hallie Tuck (Water Operator) they were able to review them and make changes to other elements.

Nicole Stickney mentioned that the working draft of the City of Connell Comprehensive Plan update project was organized the same way as the comprehensive plan. Nicole Stickney began the working draft presentation with the land use goals: Goal 1-to respect property owners' rights in all planning efforts which relates back to the GMA (Growth Management Act). Nicole Stickney had a recommendation for Policy two. The recommendation was to have that periodic update changed from every five years to eight years. The comprehensive plan could be amended on a yearly basis but you could only do it once per year because of state law. Goal two-create and maintain a vibrant, sustainable, family-oriented community through the balanced allocation of land for housing, industry, commerce, recreation, open space, transportation and public facilities, and other appropriate land uses. Nicole Stickney recommended some words be changed for Policy one. Nicole Stickney wanted to highlight Policy three due to what was mentioned in that policy seemed reasonable but might be something the planning commission

along with staff would want to evaluate. In some of those policies there was also strategies that talked about how you would implement at the local level. Goal three-provide for the orderly development of the city. The policies in this goal focused mainly on how the city will work hand in hand with the county on a lot of issues. Commission Member Bruce Blackwell had a question in regards to expansion of city limits. Due to the prison that was within city limits the city was not able to expand fairly easy Bruce Blackwell stated. This was in reference to the race track and the procedures that needed to be taken through the county. Nicole Stickney stated that the state does have some limitations due to the need of each respective city for land. The proper procedures needed to be taken at the local level. Maria Peña clarified that the City of Connell had already put in a request to the county to expand the Urban Growth Area (UGA). Nicole Stickney commented on the topic and stated that if the city would like to expand for residential purposes. The city would certainly need to have the population growth to justify the request. The property needed to be annexed into the UGA before the City of Connell could work with it. This application was at the county level and they had not said no to it. Nicole Stickney said that in other pockets of the state, cities have their land use map go as far as their incorporated boundaries. The county would sometimes make the land use designation because they are the ones responsible for zoning and permitting. However, in Benton and Franklin County's the cities had been making the land use designations first and then the county would do the zoning overlay on that. In Goal three, Policy seven Nicole Stickney wanted to point out that they added complete streets there since the complete streets ordinance had just passed. Goal four-create a well-designed and aesthetically pleasing city. This has to do with the layout and physical configuration of the city. Goal five-maintain the unique character of the city. Maria Peña questioned Strategy A under Policy two, how could we enhance and protect the Washtucna Coulee? The Washtucna Coulee was taken out of the strategy.

#### **Natural Areas Goals and Policies**

Goal one was revised to read differently-preserve the environment and protect environmentally critical areas. Strategies were added to Policy four and five. Added to five: encourage the preservation or protection of habitat corridors. Encourage efficient use of water and Low Impact Development (LID) design. Nicole Stickney had no other suggestions for Natural Areas Goals and Policies but was curious to know if the members present had any input as they had browsed through the remaining goals.

#### **Wellhead Protection Goals and Policies**

The idea was to protect the quality and quantity of the ground water used for public supplies by means of the following policies. Nicole Stickney questioned if there was a trend in the City of Connell for failing septic tanks. Mayor Lee Barrow said the policy was to replace the septic tanks to city sewer once they failed. Maria Peña mentioned to replace the septic with city sewer in areas where there was sewer available. Nicole Stickney asked if there was a specific requirement on the books asking residents to tie into city sewer depending on how far away they were from city sewer access. Maria Peña stated that there used to be a requirement which stated if you were within three hundred feet of the sewer line you were asked to connect. Nicole Stickney read Policy three-develop a spill response plan to cope with potential chemical spills associated with the railroad and highways. That was questioned and Bruce Blackwell commented that the county would handle a spill for the city and each company had their own spill plan. Nicole decided to change the verbiage in Policy three to reflect local industry.

#### **Housing Goals and Policies**

Goal one-preserve and enhance established neighborhoods where consistent with the overall city land use plan. In terms of housing the focus would be our neighborhoods. Nicole Stickney wanted to point out the importance of this goal for all cities no matter the size. Policy three tried to balance the goal which stated maintain the single-family character of the greater Connell area while acknowledging the necessity of providing affordable housing. Commission Chairman Roger Bailie asked if the city had any mixed-use zoning. Maria Peña clarified that the city did have a Residential Mixed Dwelling (RMD) District. The RMD allowed for single family homes and duplexes to be placed within that same district Maria Peña stated. Nicole Stickney said she would look into the code to see what the actual permitted uses were. One thing that a lot of communities were looking at was to be able to provide aging in place options. Nicole Stickney would be interested to look at the CMC to see for example if someone wanted to build an assisted living facility. How hard would it be to get that permitted? Would they be limited to residential areas or could they go to commercial areas as well? Nicole Stickney shared the idea to be able to meet the different needs for everybody at all the stages of life. Roger Bailie questioned Goal Two-Policy Three-Strategy A. Which stated multi-family residential housing may not have more floors than the adjacent and nearby single-family dwellings are permitted. It didn't make sense that they could not be higher than the adjacent single-family dwellings. Nicole Stickney had added "are permitted" to the end of the strategy to have that be clearer. It was recommended to strike out Strategy B. Members agreed to remove Strategy B. Nicole Stickney questioned Strategy C: to require a binding site plan that identifies the scale and location of all buildings, parking areas and driveways, recreational facilities. Building elevations, and landscaping, screening or fencing. Nicole Stickney said a required binding site plan meant to have it recorded at the county level. Bruce Blackwell stated that it was necessary to have that recorded because of multiple steps that tied to constructing those stated in the strategy. Roger Bailie and Bruce Blackwell agreed to leave it as a requirement. Commission Member Vangi Ellwein questioned what binding really meant because to her understanding the meaning was it could not be altered. Nicole Stickney agreed that it did sound that way but it was something that was addressed under the City of Connell subdivision code. That had to do with land division and was something kind of like notes on a plat. The idea was to have it as a legal record. Roger Bailie stated that if a binding site plan had already been recorded and someone else wanted to build at that same location they would need to apply for another. Goal 4-promote a variety of residential densities and housing types. Nicole briefly explained that the goal focused on opportunities for homeownership and different residential types.

#### **Economic Development Goals and Policies**

Nicole Stickney recommended adding a word to Policy six in Goal one. The policy would state permit residential uses in commercial areas only if they are accessory to the primary commercial uses. Goal two-ensure infrastructure support for the orderly and cost-effective development of commercially and industrially zoned land. Policy four-require that commercial and industrial development provide adequate services and public amenities. Maria Peña and Nicole Stickney questioned that. Bruce Blackwell recommended adding "to fit into the character of the neighborhood." Nicole Stickney completed the policy by replacing require to encourage. The policy would reflect: encourage that commercial and industrial development provide adequate services and public amenities to fit into the character of the neighborhood. Goal four-control development of commercial and industrial areas. Nicole Stickney mentioned they just added a little bit of description to Policies one-three to make them clearer. Policy three-develop and establish design and performance standards for new commercial and industrial districts, such as

landscape buffers, architectural features (i.e. awnings, building fenestration or articulation), and street-scape amenities (i.e. benches). Bruce Blackwell said if we were going to have that policy let's get rid of Policy four in Goal two. Nicole Stickney agreed to have it removed.

#### **Municipal Buildings Goals and Policies**

Nicole Stickney wanted to point out Strategy A in Policy two under Goal one. Consider the feasibility of providing a youth center. Vangi Ellwein mentioned this is a certain need for our community. Roger Bailie said at various times there'd been encouragement for a Boys and Girls club. They would need a facility if they were ever to come into town so that was a good goal.

#### **School Goals and Policies**

Nicole Stickney added complete streets to Policy two under Goal one. For Policy three Nicole Stickney took out "have a location for school buses to stop and a turning radius on cul-de-sacs that can accommodate." The policy would state require that residential developments are designed to accommodate school buses.

#### **Essential Public Facilities Goals and Policies**

No comments were made.

#### **Park and Recreation Goals and Policies**

Nicole Stickney mentioned she would double check this one because the City of Connell does have a stand-alone parks and recreation plan. Nicole Stickney recommended moving forward from the Open Space, Electrical, Water, and Wastewater Goals and Policies.

#### **Transportation Element Goals and Policies**

Nicole Stickney mentioned she added to Policy five under Goal two in regards to complete streets. The policy which stated upgrade at grade railroad crossings to provide rubber or concrete crossing materials was recommended to be removed because the city did not have the ability to do that.

#### **Capital Facilities Goals and Policies**

Goal two-establish and maintain the following Level of Service (LOS) standards. Nicole Stickney said this talked about how much parks and open space area you need. Nicole Stickney did not have any suggested changes but said this was a key area. Concurrency issues with land use decisions to see if a project would cause a short fall in LOS. Roger Bailie asked if the City of Connell has enough parks and open space for the population. The City of Connell Comprehensive Plan stated 0.5 acres of Tot Lot per 1,000 population. Bruce Blackwell stated that the city has sufficient parks for the population. Nicole Stickney explained that some cities would specify a tot-lot per half mile walking distance. There are different ways to measure and calibrate in terms of LOS. One thing Nicole Stickney noticed that was not included was the number of trails per capita.

#### **b) Identify locations for lands useful for public purposes**

Roger Bailie said that they had just discussed the City of Connell did not need anymore parks but asked what other public purposes was this was inquiring about. Nicole Stickney mentioned per state law the comprehensive plan needs to identify utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, and so forth. Those public purposes had been worked on and several maps had been generated but were not presented. Nicole Stickney stated that the idea was to think about anything that had not been planned for the next 20 years.

#### **c) Identify locations of lands useful for recreation and other uses**

Nicole Stickney talked about how the City of Connell was exceeding the LOS standard. The comprehensive plan would state that. In terms of wild life habitat, trails, connection of critical areas what would be important was the Esquatzel Coulee and how it serves in that capacity naturally. That alone suffices the LOS for wild life habitat. Nicole Stickney said that the City of Connell did not have wet lands so in the comprehensive plan they could just say we don't need to have migration for the birds to get from one place to another. That would be added to the comprehensive plan. Vangi Ellwein questioned if the Esquatzel Coulee was just a little canal. Commission Member Robert Misener stated that it reached to the Columbia River.

**d) Projection for future meetings**

Staff and commission members agreed for August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Maria Peña had an announcement in regards to Jay Patel resigning his position because he would be out of state from 8 to 16 months. He felt it wouldn't be appropriate to be in that position if he wouldn't be attending any of the future meetings. Maria Peña stated they would advertise the vacant position and mention it in the next council meeting.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Ivan Barragan, Assistant Secretary to Planning Commission