MINUTES

Eugene City Council
McNutt Room—City Hall
777 Pearl Street—Eugene, Oregon

February 9, 2011
Noon

COUNCILORS PRESENT:	Betty Taylor, George Brown, George Poling, Mike Clark, Chris Pryor, Alan Zelenka, Pat Farr.
COUNCILORS ABSENT:	Andrea Ortiz.
COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:	Heidi Bierle, Chair; Jeffrey Mills, Vice Chair; Randy Hledik, Richard Duncan, Jon Belcher, William Randall.
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:	Lisa Warnes.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the February 9, 2011, joint work session of the Eugene City Council and Eugene Planning Commission to order. City Manager Jon Ruiz, Assistant City Manager/Interim Planning and Development Director Manager Sarah Medary, City Attorney Glenn Klein, Deputy City Attorney Emily Jerome, Planning Director Lisa Gardner, and Planning Division staff members Terri Harding, Carolyn Weiss, Alissa Hansen, and Jason Dedrick were also present for the item.

A. JOINT WORK SESSION WITH PLANNING COMMISSION: Envision Eugene Strategies and Tactics

Ms. Weiss led the council and commission through the strategies and tactics associated with the Seven Pillars developed for the Envision Eugene process, commencing with the pillar entitled ***Promote compact urban development and efficient transportation options***. Meeting participants asked questions clarifying the information presented.

> *Strategy 1: Meet all of the 20-year multi-family housing and commercial (office and retail) lands needs within the existing UGB, through development of vacant lands and also focusing new development and redevelopment in core commercial areas, corridor areas, and downtown.*

Councilors and commissioners offered the following thoughts on Strategy 1:

- Underscore the need for supportive multi-family and commercial zoning in any urban growth boundary (UGB) expansion area. (Duncan)
- Strongly support denser development along transportation corridors. (Randall)
- Maps can have unintended consequences in that areas identified for development imply development was not wanted in areas where it was not identified. Maps could reduce the number of opportunities to realize the process goals. Want to send the message that the City still wants to

talk to people if their project meets its goals, even if not in a location identified on a map. (Belcher)
- Concur that existing core areas and core areas, particularly downtown, are the right places to focus attention. (Zelenka)

Strategy 2: Transform key transportation corridors and core commercial areas as mixed-use neighborhoods that foster active, walkable, community living by providing a mix of residential, commercial, retail, and public uses in close proximity to one another—in many cases within a single building.

Councilors and commissioners offered the following thoughts on Strategy 2:

- Hope there was an opportunity for closer examination of the streetscape to improve the walking environment. (Bierle)
- Concerned that if City was not prepared to act quickly in its area planning, it could slow the process of redevelopment down. Recall the example of Oakway Mall, which spurred further redevelopment along Coburg Road. (Duncan)

Strategy 3: Protect adjacent neighborhoods and provide housing options by creating transition areas between commercial and higher density residential uses and lower density, single-family neighborhoods in accordance with the goals and recommendations of the infill Compatibility Standards and Opportunity Siting Task Teams.

Councilors and commissioners offered the following thoughts on Strategy 3:

- This strategy of creating a transition area was very important because it would help the City find ambiguities that exist in the current Growth Management Policies. Over the past few years the council and commission have heard how density was impacting existing neighborhoods, and believe that continuing the two initiatives mentioned would bring opportunities to correct some issues that have arisen. (Hledik)
- Not a totally resolved issue—in reality, the transition zone will be in the commercial zone, the residential zone, or both, and at some point that must be resolved. (Belcher)
- A caveat—much great work has been done on Opportunity Siting and it is a promising tool that should be included in the plan, but work needed to be done to fully define what it was, how it would work, and what mechanisms it would employ. (Mills)
- Agree about transition areas—like the idea of having transition zones that include transition heights that were higher in the commercial area and lower in the residential area, which eased people's anxiety about the impact of such development on residential neighborhoods. Such issues would come up as the City tried to create 20-minute neighborhoods. (Zelenka)
- Suggest that remarks about transition heights reflect where the City had been going with the form-based code, with a focus on the way things look and how they impacted the neighborhood. Opportunity siting gave developers the opportunity to identify the next locations for higher density development, counterbalanced by neighborhood involvement so that the negative impacts of higher density could be addressed and resolved collaboratively. (Hledik)

Strategy 4: Make compact urban development of core commercial areas and corridors easier.

Councilors and commissioners offered the following thoughts on Strategy 4:

- A traffic impact analysis (TIA) was often expensive and frequently the first developer "through the door" had to pay the bulk of the cost, although the TIA benefited future development as well. Suggest that if the City sought to create more density in an area, it initiative the TIA and collect the costs of the TIA from development as it occurred. Another suggestion was that systems development charges (SDCs) be back-end loaded so that the developer did not have to pay for the whole cost the day constructed started, but rather when they began to collect income from the project. (Duncan)
- Need to be as intentional about what the City was trying to preserve as we are about what we are trying to develop. (Piercy)
- Agree with remarks about TIA but question how City would pay for it, and how the City would allocate the costs in the absence of certainty about the development to occur. (Zelenka)
- Concerned about possible use of tax increment financing to support Compact Urban Development Districts. (Brown)
- Concerned about discussion of eliminating TIAs or reducing parking requirements in the context of neighborhood livability. Most neighborhood livability issues are traffic and parking issues, particularly in transition areas between residential and commercial uses. Reduced parking requirements did not mean fewer people drove their cars, which was problematic and directly impacted livability. Avoid unintended consequences in this area. Suggest rewording tactic to read "Transform the way TIAs are done and financed." (Zelenka)
- Support concept of Compact Urban Development Districts and creative financing approaches that did not necessarily involve tax increment financing. (Zelenka)
- Regarding the incentives discussed in the tactics, need to be creative and find new ways to realize the City's goals while avoiding the creation of phantom system capacity. (Zelenka)
- Increased densities required increased infrastructure and reconstruction costs might be more than the costs of new construction. (Clark)
- Concur about the need to be careful about reduced parking requirements. (Clark)
- Support recommendation for publicly funded TIAs because of the City density requirements. (Clark)
- Concur about variable SDCs and publicly funded TIAs if a means could be found to pay for them. (Farr)
- Agree that urban renewal has been controversial but it had also been used successfully in Eugene. (Farr)
- Believe the pillar needs more text related to the preservation of local cultural resources. Concerned that the document does not speak to the need to preserve community authenticity. A vibrant Eugene required a mix of the good, the bad, and the ugly, and that should be considered, particularly in consideration of the transition areas. (Bierle)
- Believe that additional demand on existing infrastructure warranted the payment of an SDC. See some point to a delayed SDC, but question what happened if someone started and then abandoned a project. (Taylor)

Strategy 5: Conduct a pilot project, incorporating strategies 2, 3, and 4, to demonstrate how builders, neighbors, and the City can come together to foster best outcomes.

There were no comments about the strategy.

Strategy 6: Assess the need for additional parks in core commercial areas and corridors as densities increase.

Councilors and commissioners offered the following thoughts on Strategy 6:

- Regarding the scale of the pilot project, suggest such a project does not need to be large, and areas such as that around Irwin and Barger create an opportunity for redevelopment that could foster a 20-minute neighborhood in that area. (Farr)
- West University Neighborhood park example—people complain that the existing park felt closed in and that open spaces in the neighborhood were not sufficiently integrated into the residential area. Review of the Walnut Station plans included discussion of more "hardscaped" areas that had planters and trees and provided open space relief, and would like to see more such spaces as well as open space incorporated into building designs. (Zelenka)
- Consider how open space and landscaping created places for people to be where one wanted them to be, as opposed to where one wanted them to be—speaks to neighborhood livability. (Piercy)
- Emphasize the need to act intentionally and soon while the City could still secure the open space needed; consider the example of Central Park. (Pryor)

The council and commission moved on to the next pillar under discussion, ***Protect, repair, and enhance neighborhood livability.*** Ms. Weiss reviewed the strategies and tactics associated with the pillar.

> *Strategy 1: Do not increase densities in neighborhoods above those allowed by existing regulations, or undertake new strategies that impact neighborhoods unless they are in accordance with the goals and recommendations of the Infill Compatibility Standards and Opportunity Siting Task Teams.*

- Recommend the strategy be reworded more positively, e.g., "Protect current densities." (Bierle)
- Recollection of CRG discussion was to protect existing neighborhoods with the caveat that there were locations where neighborhoods would see an allowed increase. For example, R-1 allows up to ten units per acre, but few existing R-1 neighborhoods achieve that density. Concur with assessment by Ms. Gardner that the strategy was not intended to assign additional densities to the existing neighborhoods. (Duncan)
- People do not know what the codes allow; they see their neighborhood as it is, like it, and want to protect it. (Zelenka)
- See this as a key pillar of the process. (Brown)

> *Strategy 2: Complete the Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS) project to achieve the goals of ICS, preventing negative impacts and promoting positive impacts of residential infill development on neighborhoods.*

There were no comments about this strategy.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the work session at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Forrest

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)