

MINUTES

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

June 11, 2012
5:30 p.m.

COUNCILORS PRESENT: George Brown, Pat Farr, Betty Taylor, Andrea Ortiz, George Poling, Alan Zelenka, Chris Pryor, Mike Clark.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the June 11, 2012, work session of the Eugene City Council to order.

Police Chief Pete Kerns updated the council on downtown police-related activity and downtown police staffing levels.

A. UPDATE:
2012 Olympic Trials – Track and Field

Waste Prevention/Green Building Program Manager Ethan Nelson and Recreation Services Director Craig Smith joined the council and led it through a PowerPoint presentation about the 2012 Olympic Trials with a focus on sustainability-related efforts and efforts to increase access and equity. The presentation also included information about related community programs and initiatives, many with a focus on youth, arts, and natural spaces. Mayor Piercy thanked staff for the exciting presentation and the focus on sustainability. Ms. Ortiz commended the mayor's leadership in making Eugene a more sustainable community.

B. WORK SESSION:
Envision Eugene

Planning Director Lisa Gardner and Community/Metro Planning Manager Carolyn Burke were present for the item.

Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Farr, moved to direct the City Manager to prepare, for a formal adoption process, planning documents to establish a new Urban Growth Boundary based on recommendations in the Technical Components Document (Attachment A), and that carry forward the pillars and strategies described in the Envision Eugene Draft Proposal, March 14, 2012.

At Mr. Brown's request, City Attorney Emily Jerome reviewed the next steps in the process, which included submittal of the plan to the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development for final review. She anticipated it was possible staff could return to the council if further investigation determined that lands proposed to be brought inside the urban growth boundary (UGB) were found unsuitable.

Industrial lands

Mr. Brown reminded the council of the motion he offered at the last meeting, which had been tabled. The motion was taken from the table:

Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Taylor, moved to amend the motion to remove all references to the Clear Lake Road area from Attachment A.

Mr. Brown reiterated the concerns he expressed on May 30 regarding the unique nature of the agricultural and hydric soils in the Clear Lake Road area. He believed they were unsuitable for development.

Mr. Clark did not support the amendment because the recommendation was the result of a unique and inclusive public process designed by the City Manager to bring residents to a compromise.

Mr. Farr agreed with Mr. Clark. He observed that Eugene was surrounded by precious lands of all types. He determined from City Attorney Jerome that if the council passed the main motion, City staff would do further analysis of the feasibility of the lands proposed for inclusion in the UGB. Mr. Farr asked staff to comment on the relative quality of the Clear Lake Road area in comparison to other areas. Senior Planner Alissa Hansen indicated that farm lands in the Clear Lake Road area were considered to less high value than the farmlands in the River Road area, for example. While still considered high value, they were impacted by wetlands, forest soils, and steep slopes. She said the community was surrounded by natural constraints of one form or another and staff had to consider many factors when identifying possible expansion lands. The Community Resource Group placed a higher value on the farmland to the north.

Mr. Zelenka asked if Mr. Brown intended to substitute another area for the Clear Lake area or if he proposed that the City not expand the UGB for industrial purposes. Mr. Brown believed the City Council had accounted for its industrial land need by adding the Russell Creek basin. Mr. Zelenka did not think that area had much industrial potential. Ms. Gardner agreed. She said the City had focused on the residential potential of that area. Associate Planner Jason Dedrick added that staff examined the area for its industrial potential but found only four parcels larger than eight acres. In addition, the area contained extensive wetlands. The area in the Russell Creek basin closest to Goshen might have some industrial potential.

Mr. Brown reiterated his previous arguments about the nature of the soils in the Clear Lake Road area and the importance of food production. While he acknowledged it was more expensive, Mr. Brown pointed out that housing could be built on hills.

Ms. Taylor agreed with Mr. Brown. She did not think the community needed to add land for either industrial or residential purposes. She recommended that the City cooperate with the County and work to locate more industrial uses in Goshen and further recommended that the City have input into the types of industry that located there.

The motion failed, 6:2; Ms. Taylor and Mr. Brown voting yes.

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Mr. Poling, moved to amend the motion to add to Attachment A under Land for Industrial Jobs a box labeled 3C that would direct staff to include consideration of compatibility issues between industrial and residential uses in expansion areas and direct staff to include consideration of environmental justice impacts of industrial uses in expansion areas.

Mr. Clark believed many of the values expressed in the motion were already reflected in the Seven Pillars that constituted the planning and implementation framework. He called for more emphasis on increasing the community's tax base and jobs.

Ms. Ortiz wanted to establish thresholds for new businesses locating in the expansion areas to ensure they were compatible with nearby residential uses and suggested the possibility of annexing the industries that now existed to ensure they reported to the City's Toxics Right-to-Know Program.

Mr. Farr agreed Mr. Clark that the Seven Pillars incorporated the concerns expressed by the motion.

Mr. Poling agreed with Mr. Clark but pointed out that things were constantly changing and no one had a crystal ball. He thought the concepts mentioned by Mr. Clark were also encompassed by the Seven Pillars and did not know how to more explicitly incorporate them into the plan.

The motion passed unanimously, 8:0.

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Mr. Pryor, moved to amend the motion to revise the section titled Land for Parks and Schools in Attachment A to direct staff to, if legally possible, include the airport in the proposed UGB expansion. The motion passed unanimously, 8:0.

Housing mix

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Brown, moved to amend the motion to direct the City Manager to bring back for council consideration a revised proposal that used a future housing mix of 45 percent single-family and 55 percent multi-family.

Ms. Taylor said her motion ensured the City would not need to expand its UGB for housing at all, in keeping with national housing trends. It would allow the community to use its land more wisely.

Mr. Poling did not support the amendment. He referred to a survey that indicated that a 60 percent single-family ratio was the national trend. He said many compromises had been made on the mix from both sides. He believed the ratio proposed by the manager was most appropriate mix, and feared that changing it now would "draw a line in the sand" and divide the community.

Mr. Zelenka asserted that national and local trends argued for a lower single-family ratio. He believed that younger residents preferred multi-family living and older residents were downsizing to live in multi-family housing. Mr. Zelenka acknowledged that the market would largely drive the mix but believed the City Council should send a message that was "more inclusive of the trends."

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, moved to amend the amendment to change the ratio to 52 percent for single-family housing and 48 percent for multi-family.

Mr. Brown also believed recent local trends supported a lower single-family housing ratio. He did not anticipate those trends would change before the council's first review of the ratio.

Mr. Clark opposed the amendment. He recommended that the council consider the entire market area when it discussed trends. He said people were moving to outlying communities with lower housing costs and they were buying single-family houses in single-family neighborhoods. He anticipated the motion

would result in more such development in those communities and higher transportation costs for those residents because they would work in Eugene. Mr. Clark suggested that those costs would be reduced if Eugene grew more incrementally toward those communities.

Mr. Pryor believed the housing trend was toward more multi-family but believed the ratio proposed in the amendment was not supported by data; instead, it represented an article of faith, or where some of the council wanted to go. He thought the manager's proposal was a prudent move toward more multi-family housing. He feared the result of the amendment would be to increase densities in existing neighborhoods and that would adversely affect neighborhood character. He believed the manager's proposal was an attempt to preserve neighborhood character while avoiding sprawl. He was not willing to risk neighborhood character. He agreed that the issue could be revisited in a few years.

Mr. Farr agreed with Mr. Clark and Mr. Pryor. He said people did not want increased density in their neighborhoods and the City would create opposition by attempting to force it. He pointed out that communities such as Junction City, whose city limits were very proximate to Eugene, were welcoming additional single-family development. He believed it would be most prudent to accommodate the type of residential growth people wanted inside Eugene. People wanted single-family residences, and if it was affordable they could remain in Eugene-Springfield rather than move to Creswell, Veneta, or Cottage Grove.

Ms. Ortiz agreed that the market would ultimately drive the ratio. She preferred a 50:50 single-family/multi-family ratio.

Mr. Brown believed that many residents welcomed multi-family developments in their neighborhood. He welcomed more high-rise development in the central area. He believed that many people preferred to live more densely. Speaking to the issue of leap frog sprawl, Mr. Brown maintained that Eugene's land would always be more expensive than land in outlying communities and housing would always be cheaper there, no matter what Eugene did. He agreed with Mr. Zelenka that senior citizens wanted to downsize, which would free up many single-family houses.

Mayor Piercy suggested that the increased multi-family ratio spoke to the City's intention to require more density, particularly along transit corridors. She did not think the City was talking about increasing density in existing neighborhoods unless they welcomed such housing.

Mr. Clark continued to prefer the recommendation that came out of the process established by the City Manager, which was intended to find community compromise.

Ms. Taylor agreed the market would dictate what happened, but the council could do what it thought best to avoid sprawl.

City Manager Ruiz said his recommendation was intended to be aggressive without artificially constraining the market. He did not believe that a lower single-family ratio created enough area for people to build in a way that allowed the market to work. He said such artificial constraints added to housing affordability issues and could affect neighborhood livability. In addition, increased vehicle miles traveled had an environmental impact that needed to be considered.

The vote on the motion was 5:3; Mr. Poling, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Pryor voting no.

Residential expansion areas

Responding to a question from Mr. Poling about the lack of analysis that occurred in regard to the DAG Trust Partnership property, Ms. Hansen said the State required that the City first look at County lands designated for development; the property in question was zoned for forestry uses.

Mr. Poling, seconded by Ms. Ortiz, moved to include the DAG Trust Partnership property in Attachment A.

Councilors briefly discussed the practical impact of the motion. Ms. Hansen recommended that staff follow-up on the cost implications of including the property in the Goal 5 analysis and report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Poling withdrew his motion and Ms. Ortiz withdrew her second.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)