



Marion County OREGON

PLANNING COMMISSION

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George Grabenhorst - Chair
Mike Fischer - Vice Chair
Stanley Birch
Ryan Evenson
Mike Long
Carla Mikkelson
Gary Monders
Bill Sanders, Jr.

AGENDA

DATE: May 5, 2009

TIME: 6:30 p.m.

PLACE: Senator Hearing Room, Courthouse Square Bldg.

Present: Planning Commission members Grabenhorst, Fischer, Long, Birch, Monders, Evenson and Sanders

Absent: Planning Commission member Mikkelson

1. Election of 2009 Chair and Vice-Chair

Chair Grabenhorst suggested elections be postponed until the next scheduled meeting so as to include Ms. Mikkelson and possibly a new member. A motion to that effect was made and seconded and unanimously approved.

2. Work Session:

- Review Proposed 2030 Population Forecast Information in preparation for possible June 16, 2009 public hearing.

Brandon Reich, Associate Planner, briefly explained the next step in this project is for the PC to hold a public hearing, take testimony, and provide feedback to the Board of Commissioners. He then explained the last large-scale population forecast was done in 1998 and the information is out-of-date whereas this project will provide data for 2010 to 2030. Brandon reminded the PC that the County had hired Portland State University, with extensive experience in population forecasting. All county cities have reviewed the draft projections and only a few have indicated any issues, including possibly Keizer. Brandon indicated staff has conducted extensive outreach over the past few months with the cities. He then reviewed the methodology and statistics used including building permits, school records, etc. and reviewed factors that affected various cities including infrastructure projects or lack thereof. Brandon concluded by explaining the Comprehensive Plan Population History and Projections sections will be updated when this project is finished.

- Fees and Charges

Sterling Anderson, Planning Director, reviewed the project having been assigned by the Board of Commissioners. The Board would like the PC to review fees and charges affecting development – is there anything the county can do, such as waive or defer fees, to help stimulate the local economy, specifically the housing industry? He then went through various documents including Planning and Engineering fees, building permit fees and charges, and news articles and information from other jurisdictions. Mr. Anderson also indicated the PC should look at efficiency measures and suggestions for improving the development process including access charges, road improvement requirements, etc. He suggested staff contact stakeholders to solicit comment on what's working or not, are there better ways to work with developers and streamline the process.

Chair Grabenhorst commented he feels the fees are ok as-is but is interested in how and when these are collected and to look into offering a payment plan or deferral of payment until a property is sold. He would also like to look at the service provided, do people understand what they need to do, and if there are fees that can be waived, should they be waived and the service provided for that fee be provided by the PC? Chair Grabenhorst concluded anything changed should include a sunset or review clause. The group then discussed various fees, in particular plan review fees, and various other methods of accessing that value and fee. Mr. Monders stated comments he's heard about the development process is customers not being told, up front, all of the fees and requirements needed for a project, and too many trips downtown with lack of parking. Several members concurred. Mr. Fischer added permits can be obtained via email, internet, and fax and Mr. Anderson added a phone system is available to schedule inspections, too. Mr. Sanders asked for information on what other cities and counties are doing similar to this project. Mr. Anderson replied a few counties and cities have discussed this but he is aware of only one that actually has and referred to the news article. He added he will get an update for the next meeting. Mr. Sanders commented deferring fees for a few months doesn't seem very effective. Mr. Evenson commented on whether, given the economic climate and inventory of vacant lots and empty homes, the county should be encouraging more home building possibly creating a glut and actually lowering prices further. The group briefly discussed this issue and agreed most property owners and/or builders will not take advantage of reduced or waived fees unless they were planning to build. Mr. Anderson also commented the fee waiver program, in other jurisdictions, has caused problems for those who had already obtained a permit and paid the full fee. Mr. Monders reiterated most of the complaints he hears is about the process taking too much time and too many unknowns but not really the cost of fees. Mr. Anderson commented one improvement in the process was the relocation of part of the engineering section downtown, in the same office as Building Inspection and Planning. This has improved communication between customers and staff.

Chair Grabenhorst asked the PC to review the information to discuss at another work session June 2nd. Mr. Long asked about implementing fee options for expansion of existing commercial or industrial businesses? He indicated SDC charges for those types of projects are often exorbitant and incentives for these might encourage development. Mr. Anderson replied he will include that in checking with other cities and counties. Chair Grabenhorst reminded the PC elections will be held at the next meeting.

4. Adjournment.

There being no further questions or comments the meeting was adjourned.