

City of Mount Vernon
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes from May 3, 2016

Chairperson Tom Waller called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Planning Commission members Adair Orr, Shelley Acero, Chris Bollinger and Fred Clark. Staff members Bob Hyde and Rebecca Lowell were also present. Planning Commission members Linda Piazza and Al Lyon were absent.

There were also five citizens in the audience.

Minutes:

Mr. Bollinger moved, second by Adair Orr, to approve the minutes from April 5, 2016. Motion carried.

Vision Statement:

The City Council and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) have reviewed the draft statement and offered the following suggestions: replace the word tantalizing and focus on Mount Vernon as a whole, not just the downtown. Following a brief discussion Mr. Orr moved, second by Mr. Bollinger, to table the vision statement for further adjustments. Motion carried.

Land Use Element & Buildable Lands (Discussion Only):

Mrs. Lowell provided highlights from previous reports given to the Planning Commission. These reports explained how the data provided by the Office of Financial Management and the Employment Security Office are used to project growth, population distribution, jobs distribution and buildable lands over the next twenty years.

Mr. Orr inquired about the lands encumbered with wetlands or steep slopes. Mrs. Lowell stated there are properties, typical in western Washington, with those types of challenges making it cost prohibitive to develop. A brief discussion ensued on how sustainable the current development style is. Mrs. Lowell stated there is an opportunity for a different type of infill that can be integrated into the land use element.

Transportation Element:

The transportation element identifies transportation impacts and proposes mitigation to those impacts. This will be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

Miscellaneous:

Mrs. Lowell provided a briefing on the housing crisis. She clarified the market housing rate is guided by profit driven developers; subsidized housing is guided by mission driven agencies or organizations. There are areas as such as downtown and the hospital district where it would be appropriate to increase density, but just not everywhere. Affordable housing and homelessness are separate issues and mitigation will differ for both of these issues. Policies that include on site services and design guidelines need to be part of the Comprehensive Plan.

There being no further business Mrs. Acero moved, second by Mr. Orr, to adjourn. Motion carried.