

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2004.

The City of Springfield council met in a work session in the Library Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, October 11, 2004 at 5:32 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Ballew, Fitch, Ralston, Lundberg and Woodrow. Also present were City Manager Mike Kelly, Assistant City Manager Cynthia Pappas, Planning Supervisor Mel Oberst, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Planning Commissioners present were Commission Chair Steve Moe and Commissioners Lee Beyer, Greg Shaver, Frank Cross, Bill Carpenter and David Cole.

1. Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission.

Planning Supervisor Mel Oberst presented the staff report on this item. The City Council meets annually with the Planning Commission to discuss roles, responsibilities, policies and current affairs of the city related to activities of the commission.

Mr. Oberst discussed the agenda for the joint meeting:

1. Streamlining Processes for Development Review (15 Minutes)
 - a. Relegate certain Type III applications to Type II
 - b. Provide a discretionary track for development review giving more flexibility to decision-making.
2. Region 2050 (45 Minutes)
3. Metro Plan (30 Minutes)

1. Streamlining Processes for Development Review.

Commissioner Shaver discussed an issue that goes along with the streamlining process that wasn't mentioned specifically in the memo included in the agenda packet. Some of the reviews are very easy and are never denied by the Planning Commission. He suggested those reviews no longer need to go to the Planning Commission, but could be handled at the staff level. He gave an example of a resolution of a plan zone conflict, which happens when a plan or zone is updated and they don't match. He suggested that these types of issues could be resolved across the counter. One of the criteria in these cases is that services are available. Staff would need to do a quick review to make sure the plan update meets the criteria. It needs to be appealable to the Planning Commission, as would anything the Planning Commission determines they could delegate to staff. He believes the appeal should be free of charge. It would allow public access and public hearing

for a land use decision. The applicant could get their project quicker and the city could resolve the zone plan conflict at less of a cost at the staff level and for the applicant.

Commissioner Beyer said he agreed with Commissioner Shaver regarding these types of changes. He believes the law states the zoning has to be in conformance with the plan. There is little reason to bring these cases forward to the Planning Commission. There are some cases where there is a reason to leave a residential property zoned residential. These could be staff actions unless that is not allowed by state law.

Mr. Leahy said the last time he looked at this the only issue was regarding timing. He has not looked at this in a long time. Another issue discussed at a previous Planning Commission meeting was that if there was an opportunity and notice for an appeal then perhaps the staff could be vested with the authority to make some of those decisions. He hasn't looked at that issue since that meeting.

Commissioner Beyer asked if the council notice given when they take the legislative act on the planning is adequate notice, or if additional notice needs to be given when the zoning change is made to be in conformance with the plan.

Mr. Leahy said he does not know.

Commissioner Beyer said there is a question of cost. It seems that if we only had to take half the steps, the expense could be decreased.

Councilor Ballew said there needs to be research done to insure the plan is correct. She noted that everything costs money and the fee would need to be adjusted to recover the cost. We can't lose revenue or we will lose services.

Councilor Ralston asking about expansion of nonconforming uses.

Commissioner Shaver said this is something different, although they are related. Some expansion of nonconforming uses can be dealt with by the staff. Regarding costs for the first item discussed, he said there could be a charge to the person appealing.

Commissioner Carpenter said the Planning Commission has had discussions on this topic. The appeal process allowed the neighbors to have some comment. A couple of the Planning Commission members had a concern regarding public comment, and the appeal process is a way to accommodate that.

Commissioner Shaver said there are two other issues that are similar. The first is the non-conforming use issue. He gave an example. He thinks criteria could be set for this as well as the other. If it meets the criteria, it could be handled at the staff level with an appeal process. He discussed extension of nonconforming use cases, which often have more gray area. There is room to maneuver in the way the Planning Commission operates that could allow for quicker service, less staff time, and less involvement by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Leahy asked if he was referring to nonconforming use or variance.

Commissioner Shaver said it was nonconforming use, but he would be talking about variance next.

Councilor Ballew said it may not be well received by the surrounding neighbors if someone was running a machine shop and the city allowed it in a residential area.

Commissioner Shaver said that may be one they would not allow staff to decide. He gave another example of a building that was previously a house, is now commercially zoned, but the owner wants to build an additional bedroom. There are some cases that would be easy to handle on the staff level. Something that emits noise, vibration, and smoke may best continue to go through the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Beyer said if council has made a policy decision that there is a nonconforming use, care must be taken in letting that change. The correct action may be for the property to come back to the council stating that council may have made a mistake. There may be some cases that are in between with minor changes, but the more major changes may need to go to council.

Councilor Fitch said she agreed that the first issue regarding matching the zoning to the plan would be no problem as long as we can stay within legal bounds. The issue regarding nonconforming use has too many areas where we would be asking staff to make judgments that should be policy decisions. She suggested tracking these for a year and bringing that information back in the following year.

Commissioner Cross said he would agree. Having staff make those decisions would not allow the due process necessary to anyone in the community.

Councilor Ralston said there will be cases that are obvious. If it saves time, a procedure could be set up that would allow certain types to bypass the Planning Commission and be approved at a staff level. He could see where there could be problems if there were no criteria.

Commissioner Carpenter said if certain cases were downgraded to a director's decision, it is switching the burden of who has to pay assuming someone has to pay. The complaining people attempting to enforce code and go against the variance would then have to pay for the appeal; whereas prior it was applicant seeking the variance paying the fees. That must be factored into the process. He agreed with Councilor Fitch that this should be evaluated for a year.

Mr. Leahy said the Planning Commission had a great discussion on these issues lead by Development Services Director Bill Grile. There is a difference between the variances and the nonconforming uses. In a nonconforming use, the applicant is trying to expand something that shouldn't be there. With a variance, the applicant is trying to make something fit that is allowed there. The criteria are so tough that the idea was to make the criteria better so some things could be put in that were permitted by the code.

Commissioner Shaver further discussed the different situations that might be addressed through this process. He discussed variances. The applicant must prove there is something unusual about

their lot which would require a variance in order to build. He gave examples. Getting a variance is normally very tough. One thing the city could do is craft some 'in lieu ofs' in certain situations. Staff refers to it as performance standards to meet the spirit of the planning code regarding building placement which would allow a little leeway. Technically, they are not granted a variance, but are meeting the performance standard by meeting the goals of the original requirements in spirit by mitigating factors. Those could be handled on the staff level. He gave examples.

Mr. Oberst said there are two processes in the Development Code. One is the Variance. One of the greatest thresholds is that it is not self imposed and there is a uniqueness to the site which makes it impossible to achieve the standards. The other process is Modifications of Provisions, which allows up to a twenty percent deduction in any numeric standard of the code. That is staff administrated. That twenty percent already exists in the code. He gave an example.

Commissioner Shaver gave additional examples that were outside the twenty percent that staff could allow. Some were self imposed. If it fell outside the twenty percent, but met the spirit of what is trying to be accomplished, a second set of standards that could allow more flexibility could help streamline the process and provide assurity and flexibility to the developers. The Planning Commission could have something back to the City Council regarding the plan zone conflict rather quickly. The nonconforming and variance issues would take more staff time and Planning Commission work sessions to research. Ultimately, the development community would be happier, there would be less Planning Commission involvement, and the staff would save time and money in the long run.

Commissioner Beyer said there is something there could be changed in the standards regarding nonconforming uses in residential. There would be more arguments regarding expanding a commercial use. The variance process is legally very difficult to put through. The language is too tight. He is not comfortable in pushing that down beyond the twenty percent to staff, because there is some merit for the opportunity for the Planning Commissioner and City Council to deal with that. The code is very strict and tight and does not allow things to go through. He gave examples and noted that it is often small businesses or homeowners.

Mr. Leahy said they could amend the city's variance criteria to liberalize it a little if that was the direction of the Planning Commission to forward on to the City Council. The affects of Ballot Measure 37 may also need to be considered.

Councilor Ralston said as density increases, and land use becomes more and more constrained, he is always encouraging thinking outside the box and making things work for people. This is a good example of how the city can make the process easier for the development community and the staff.

Councilor Ballew asked if the standards were wrong or if the variances were too difficult. She asked if it was our intent to go around our own standards. We need to be clear about where we are headed with this. Maybe twenty percent is too restrictive regarding a variance. Look at past and current history to know if the percentage should be expanded. It is important to keep in mind why we have standards.

Councilor Fitch said there is an amount allowing staff to deal with minor discrepancies. If the city determines it will go with a performance based, she would suggest looking at the criteria and bringing it back to the Planning Commission after staff has looked at it. This still allows public input. She discussed the Lane Transit District (LTD) station and what they did regarding performance based. There are developers who would like to look at performance based standards. If they were to go outside of the twenty percent, some rules could be written up with the assistance of the City Attorney which could allow for performance based, but would include a check and balance.

Commissioner Shaver said if they did something like that it would grant assurity to the developer. That would be better than doing nothing. The figure could change from twenty to twenty five percent, with anything outside of that brought back to the Planning Commission.

Councilor Ralston said it is important that we are working with property owners and developers to try to make things work out. Anything we can do to show we are being cooperative is a move in the right direction and will go a long ways in solving those problems.

Councilor Woodrow said the first issue regarding matching the zone with the plan is a simple change. The second, regarding nonconformance, could have conflict. Maybe some guidelines could be developed for simple cases allowing staff to handle those. If a case is questionable, there could be a process where it could be sent to the Planning Commission pre-meeting. On the third issue regarding variances, he would be leery, but it could be useful if there were specific guidelines for staff.

Mr. Kelly asked if the City Council or Planning Commission had further discussion on Item 1.A. or 1.B.

Commissioner Moe said the Planning Commission is asking council if they approve of staff and the Planning Commission exploring these options further.

Councilor Lundberg said we are trying to accomplish streamlining, flexibility and mitigation while retaining our standards. She liked the idea of tracking these cases for a year before coming back to council. That would be helpful to the City Council.

Commissioner Moe said they try to do their job so the city is efficient.

Councilor Fitch said council approved of staff and the Planning Commission moving forward on the first issue (matching zone and plan), tracking the second issue (nonconforming) and looking further at the third issue (variance).

Commissioner Cross said there are several communities that have streamlined their Planning Commission processes. He asked if a group could be formed to take a look at several different options to accommodate the streamlining process.

Mayor Leiken referred to a committee that was formed to look at ways to streamline development processes.

Ms. Pappas said the Developer Task Force Committee focused on specific areas and did not do the general research or literature review on other communities. That could, however, occur.

Councilor Fitch said it would be beneficial to look at what other cities have done regarding processes and performance reviews.

Ms. Pappas said research could be done through organizations such as ICMA, APA, etc.

2. Region 2050

Carole Heinkel, Planner from Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) presented a power point presentation on Region 2050. Ms. Heinkel thanked the City Council and the Planning Commission for the opportunity to present this information to them. She said meeting with local elected officials is part of a process with all cities within the region and the Lane County Board of Commissioners. Presentations have been given to all cities other than Creswell and to the Lane County Board of Commissioners, which is scheduled for November 9.

Ms. Heinkel referred to the packet of information on Region 2050 which was included in the agenda packet. During the presentations to the elected officials, she is specifically asking for feedback regarding the public outreach plan that was included in the packet. She gave a brief history of Region 2050. The region is about 1000 square miles including Eugene/Springfield, eight smaller cities surrounding Eugene/Springfield and fifteen rural unincorporated communities. There has been very good participation in the process which started in 1999 by resolutions that were passed in each of the ten cities and the Lane County Board of Commissioners endorsing the concept of a regional growth management strategy. Through these resolutions, LCOG was directed to develop the project. It is a voluntary effort and is designed to create a vision for the region that will be a strategy that everyone can agree to, benefiting each of these communities. She noted other agencies, including utility companies, League of Women Voters and state agencies that have also participated. The process is guided by a Regional Policy Advisory Board, made up of one or two elected officials from each of the eleven local governments. Councilor Lundberg serves on the Advisory Board representing Springfield. The Board meets four or five times a year to provide guidance on the project. A member of the Lane Transit District (LTD) Board also sits on the Advisory Board as well as a member of the Governor's staff.

Councilor Ballew said there was a prior effort for a long-range planning document that did not include the same high level of participation. The study referred to by Ms. Heinkel has included a lot of participation by a lot of agencies.

Ms. Heinkel said the project is staffed by a Regional Technical Advisory Committee made up of planning and management staff from the eleven local governments, plus staff from LTD, the League of Women Voters and most of the local utilities. The project has received funding from a variety of sources at all levels; i.e. local, state and federal. Sponsorship has increased over the years. A lot of work has gone into this project and information on this project can be viewed at

region2050.org, the Policy Board page. The website will be updated as part of the next outreach project.

Ms. Heinkel said the committee is currently evaluating alternative growth scenarios. There will be public outreach on those scenarios, which will lead to a preferred growth scenario with goals, objectives and actions that will improve and sustain the quality of life in the region. Agreement will eventually be reached on a regional growth management strategy. The product is an integrated regional growth strategy. The integrated part addresses the following seven areas: 1) Land Use and Development Patterns; 2) Natural Resources, Open Space, and the Environment; 3) Jobs and the Economy; 4) Housing; 5) Transportation; 6) Community Facilities and Services; and 7) Education.

Ms. Heinkel said the reason for this project is because the region will grow and has already grown a lot over the past one hundred years. She discussed the projected growth which was displayed on the power point presentation. Growth presents challenges and opportunities as outlined in the power point presentation. She discussed each of those challenges and opportunities. It is important to plan ahead for these issues. In this process, they looked at the past, present and future of the region and each of the communities. They developed a base case scenario that projected past trends into the future. They are now in the process of creating a vision for the future that sets the stage for how we want the region to be in fifty years. She discussed the profile for the City of Springfield, including population, economy, and housing. With Eugene, Springfield now forms the second largest metropolitan area in Oregon. Springfield is one of the fastest growing cities in the region. Springfield is focusing on downtown revitalization through the Springfield Renaissance Development Corporation and on redevelopment in Glenwood.

Ms. Heinkel said that although rivers and ridges are geographic barriers for expansion, opportunities for growth are present in neighborhood centers now being planned. The city's location along I-5 and major east-west highways will continue to attract regional trade and services to the city. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will also help ease congestion over time in Springfield and throughout the region. To begin this process of creating a vision for the future, in March 2003 seventy experts in the seven fields were invited to attend an interactive workshop where they allocated fifty years worth of growth onto a map that was constrained lands. She referred to a map outlining the constraints around Springfield. Through the process, seven growth scenario maps were created. A technical analysis was completed of those maps. The technical report is posted on the website. The common elements on those maps and the unique qualities were considered. Through that process, three alternative growth scenarios were created. The scenarios progressed from the Compact Urban Growth Scenario to the Rural Growth Scenario. She referred to and discussed each scenario as shown on the power point presentation. She also referred to a table included in the agenda packet which showed population densities and employment. She described the constraints for urban renewal expansion such as sloped hillsides and rivers.

Ms. Heinkel referred to the Compact Urban Growth Scenario.

Commissioner Shaver asked why the land just east of Goshen was not included in possible growth areas.

Ms. Heinkel said it could be because is it prime agriculture land and the highway would have to be crossed. Another constraint is the river.

Councilor Ballew asked about the different colors on the map and what they represented.

Ms. Heinkel said some were residential, some were businesses and some were nodal. Historically, expansion of the urban growth boundary (UGB) has been considered as sprawl. She explained sprawl and satellite communities.

Commissioner Shaver asked about the density of twenty one and a half units per acre throughout the city.

Ms. Heinkel said that is what would have occurred if all of that growth in the compact scenario happened just within the UGB. They divided the number of housing units by the number of acres.

Commissioner Shaver asked if we would then have to bring it up to the average by including fifty to sixty units per acre in other areas.

Ms. Heinkel said there would be a lot of redevelopment.

Ms. Heinkel discussed the Satellite Communities Scenario. She discussed the areas that would be included in the growth. The communities involved would have options about how they want to grow and meet their future needs. The densities are listed in the table in the agenda packet.

Ms. Heinkel referred to the Rural Growth Scenario. The education group came up with the Rural Growth Scenario based on school attendance. She explained the map showing this scenario. Educators felt if the rural areas were filled with occupants, they would fill the schools. This would not be a scenario that would be allowed under current land use planning law. This is based on the UGB not expanding.

Commissioner Beyer asked if consideration was given to economic s and land prices.

Ms. Heinkel said those are things they would be dealing with.

Councilor Ballew said it may be a combination of these scenarios, not just one.

Ms. Heinkel said the preferred growth scenario will have elements of all three scenarios. Having the scenarios put out before the public is beneficial to see the pros and cons of each.

Councilor Fitch said she assumes each community had their own priority related to each scenario.

Ms. Heinkel said they haven't asked that question yet, but will go to the communities in the spring with that question. They will also come out with the evaluation results to allow for a more informed discussion.

Councilor Fitch said this is a visioning process, and not something to be adopted. She asked about the agreement that would be signed in 2006 and what it would mean to the individual communities, their autonomy and what they do in the future.

Ms. Heinkel said the Policy Board discussed having agreement among the eleven local governments on a preferred growth scenario that allocated the population and employment for the region. Each jurisdiction would agree to serve that population over the next fifty years. In addition, there would be some idea of how the growth would occur, where it would occur, and how it would be served. Agreeing to the strategy has some benefits because it could provide advantages for each participant. This process falls under state statute for regional problem solving. That state law allows state regional problem solving projects such as this one, to provide solutions that allow some flexibility in administrative rules. Solutions that work in our region may not work in other regions around the state. This process allows the state agencies to see how things work in this particular regional context. The strategy would be implemented through each jurisdiction on their own adopting changes to their own comprehensive plan, intergovernmental agreements, facility planning or code. It will not be a framework plan or regional plan that each jurisdiction would have to conform to, but a plan that each jurisdiction could use to accomplish their objectives.

Councilor Ballew said one of the advantages of the study is that a lot of modeling could be done from the data collected.

Ms. Heinkel said the transportation model would be especially beneficial.

Discussion was held regarding densities.

Commissioner Shaver asked about the growth of Coburg.

Ms. Heinkel explained the growth of Coburg in relation to Veneta, Cottage Grove and Creswell. LCOG is in the process of evaluating the scenarios. The evaluations are very technical, particularly the environmental evaluation. All of the evaluation material is available on the website. She referred to the goals and objectives which were included in the agenda packet. The criteria used for the evaluation were based on those goals and objectives. She discussed the evaluation results relating to each scenario. There will be a Resource Lands Committee appointed by the Lane County Board of Commissioners in the next month that will look at the effects of the scenarios on farm and forest productivity. It is required by the Regional Problem Solving statute and is a group of state experts that work with the local ranchers and farmers to determine whether or not there is commercial value for those lands. She discussed areas where that might be an issue. The state has given LCOG funding to develop a regional transportation model. LCOG will develop that model for the first time and will be able to evaluate the effect of land use patterns on the regional transportation systems and develop a list of projects to serve the preferred regional growth scenario. They are conducting evaluations on water and wastewater facilities and have a draft of the education evaluation. The ultimate goal is to create and sustain a legacy of livability in our region over the next fifty years.

Councilor Ballew said the anticipated outcome could depend on where people want to spend their money.

Mr. Beyer said escalating costs of lots and land will be a factor.

Discussion was held regarding the high cost of land and housing.

Mayor Leiken said they may need to reevaluate the rural scenario.

Discussion was held regarding the BRT and congestion.

3. Metro Plan

Commissioner Moe said creating our own plan is something the city should be considering. Both the Planning Commission and the City Council have considered looking at some options.

Mr. Oberst referred to page 2, Attachment 2 included in the agenda packet which summarized this issue. A lot of the discussion has been about the process, expense, duration, and staff time involved. The Planning Commission has had some discussions and would like to pursue this matter further with the City Council. He described several options to be considered as listed in the attachment.

Mr. Kelly said they are not expecting a decision, but a conversation and discussion of issues with the Metro Plan. He said there are advantages and disadvantages in the plan. Upon hearing the Planning Commission and City Council concerns, staff could work with staff from Eugene and Lane County to see if they have similar concerns. This plan is an old document and is cumbersome, but it has been beneficial in some ways over the last twenty years. At any time, the council could instruct staff to frame the advantages and disadvantages of having our own plan or staying with the Metro Plan. Tonight is a chance for discussion, but if there is consensus on one of the alternatives, staff will proceed.

Councilor Woodrow said his initial reaction was for Springfield to have our own plan, but we have to live in the community. The time spent developing our own plan might pay for itself, but after looking through the options, he said he would prefer option number two: "Instruct staff to evaluate amendments to the Metro Plan that would provide more 'home rule' for each city within their respective service boundaries and minimize the need to involve other jurisdictions except on specified regional issues". It makes good sense to find ways to modify the current Metro Plan to make it easier to work with and get things passed. He agreed with Commissioner Moe, but felt we would still have the connections with Eugene and Lane County.

Commissioner Moe said we would still have those links.

Councilor Lundberg said in looking at each of the options, she would prefer spending time looking at establishing a Springfield Comprehensive Plan with the idea that we would have links with the other jurisdictions. Looking at option one, it would still take all jurisdictions to agree with any changes to the plan, which could be complicated. She prefers to evaluate a Springfield Plan with improving the current plans' "home rule" as her second choice.

Commissioner Beyer said creating our own plan may not make the most sense. He said he thought about conflicts that arose over the last year through the Metro Plan process. Legally, Springfield would still have to coordinate with Lane County and the City of Eugene. Given the restraints we are looking at in terms of staffing and the current projects, creating our own plan may not be the best use of our resources. It would be worthwhile to ask staff to take some time to review the conflicts in the past. There may be significant changes in the land use planning laws during the next legislative session which should be considered.

Councilor Ballew said initially it comes down to the amount of money. It appears to cost more to create our own, and realistically it could cost more. Ideally, we would create our own plan, but that will probably not happen. We do well in getting 'home rule' relative to political boundaries, and maybe that needs to be expanded. Regional or metropolitan issues would continue to go through all three jurisdictions. She asked if there was a way to expand putting a regional tier in and define what is within the city's jurisdictional choice.

Councilor Ralston said the principles that went into the Metro Plan were good, but times have changed since it was created. What affects one community can very well affect what happens in another community. If Springfield creates a plan and Eugene creates a plan, Springfield may not like what happens. It should be a regional issue on most things. An expanded 'home rule' would be the best way to go. He suggested making an amendment to the Metro Plan that would allow certain issues to be determined within each jurisdiction.

Commissioner Moe said the Metro Plan was the first made in Oregon where all three jurisdictions shared. There were some assumptions made at that time that are no longer true.

Councilor Ralston said at the time it was created, it was well thought out and revolutionary. It could be modified.

Councilor Fitch said the Metro Plan has become politicized. We may want to find out what the cost would be of creating our own plan. There were a number of agreements which were made because of the Metro Plan and because of different services each municipality brought to the plan. Those agreements need to be looked at to see if those issues are still being addressed and the agreements upheld. That could be a way to address some of the issues, removing it from the arena of politics and putting it back into the document. No document is perfect and is subject to different interpretations. She suggested doing more research on these contracts to see if they are being upheld or need to be updated. It needs to be a very measured and careful response. She does not feel we are at a place where we should look at creating our own plan.

Commissioner Beyer said the plan has always been politicized. Land use and other policies are difficult to get agreement on from different jurisdictions.

Councilor Fitch said this is a Metro Plan that involves two cities and one county. It is sometimes a one way mirror.

Councilor Lundberg said it has been used as a hammer to push a direction.

Councilor Ralston said it is not a perfect model. He discussed options, such as cutting out one of the three jurisdictions, such as the City of Eugene. Lane County would have to weigh in on certain issues.

Discussion was held regarding other metropolitan areas in Oregon and their plans.

Commissioner Shaver said that if Springfield had its own plan, we still couldn't do whatever we wanted. He discussed state law, existing zoning, expectations and the county. If the council wants to proceed with the thought of creating their own plan, he would recommend looking at the problems that have occurred in the past because of the current Metro Plan. He would also suggest performing a cost benefit ratio, comparing costs from the joint plan to one of our own. Past cases when Eugene or Lane County weighed in and were a detriment to our case need to be researched to determine if that would still occur with our own plan. He asked if the modifications we would consider making in our own plan could be made in the existing plan before they become problems. This could enable us to deal with it more cost effectively. He gave some examples. He is not an advocate for creating our own plan, but suggested looking at the benefits we want and try to get those through amending the current plan.

Commissioner Carpenter said there are two facts about Metro Plan. Half of Springfield residents commute to Eugene for work and this is the second largest metropolitan area in the state. He discussed the current Metro Plan and its purpose. We need to determine if creating our own plan would be a good use of our resources at this time. He discussed the Region 2050 plan and how it relates to the plan. We have common boundaries and he doesn't feel we can carry this alone. He suggested looking at the actual problems that have existed with the current plan and what additional staff time has been consumed dealing with metro issues that are recalcitrant with the other two jurisdictions. Revisit this next year with the additional information.

Mayor Leiken said this is a good discussion.

Mr. Leahy said Meg Kieran in the City Attorney's office has looked into this issue. Most of the things discussed tonight relate to the bullets (options) listed in the agenda packet. All options are being considered in different ways. The city is trying to come up with ideas within framework of the options. County coordination does not require the county to supervise the city. The City Council is responsible for the city, not the Lane County Board of Commissioners. The city is looking at that in terms of coordination requirements, the autonomy issue and the forever issue regarding agreements without an end date. Some of those things need to be considered. The City Attorney's office is looking at all of these things and hopes to have some ideas to council in the context of the options or any variance of the options.

Commissioner Beyer said the Metro Plan may have originally been made too detailed. It should be more of a framework document or a land use constitution that allows the individual jurisdictions to focus in and have the changes they want within their jurisdiction. The document is too large to comprehend. The issues of conflict are details that should be left to the communities and to the neighborhoods.

Mayor Leiken agreed. This plan is more complicated than what we would find at the state level. Those in the development community would agree that this is too complicated. He asked Mr. Leahy about the remand to the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) and if that decision stands. No matter the size of development, it is specific to the jurisdiction.

Mr. Leahy said Ms. Kieran has discussed this with the county. There has been some reluctance by the county to embody the Court of Appeals decision in any kind of agreement which would not allow them to have further say in the matter.

Mr. Kelly said he has had discussions with Lane County on this issue. Our views on the decision, which were confirmed by LUBA, are that at least on the PeaceHealth decision, this is a Springfield-only decision. The Planning Directors of the three jurisdictions signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding what that decision means as far as 'home rule' regarding land use issues within each cities. It doesn't speak to 'home rule' generically, but it does speak to the issue of site specific PeaceHealth decision. Part of that is confirmed by consent of the chief planning officials of Eugene and Lane County. The city is looking at all of the options related to the Metro Plan. Some of Springfield's issues are also Eugene and Lane County's issues and that is where we can gain success. If staff cannot resolve Springfield's issues of our preferred future, staff could come back and ask council to direct staff to look at framing the issue of the pros and cons of being more autonomous. It is difficult to get away from relationships in this area. Lane County has a coordinating role and the Lane County Boundary Commission also has a role. Tonight was a chance for discussion to see where consensus points were among the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff will bring this back to council.

Councilor Ralston said he strongly supports option number two.

Commissioner Shaver thanked council for the opportunity to serve council on the Planning Commission and commended the other Planning Commission members.

Mayor Leiken said he appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:

Amy Sowa
City Recorder

