

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL AND
PLANNING COMMISSION HELD
MONDAY, March 11, 2008

The City of Springfield Council and Planning Commission met in a work session in the Library Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 11, 2008 at 6:00p.m., with Council President Christine Lundberg presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Councilors Lundberg, Wylie, Ballew, Ralston, Woodrow, and Pishioneri. Planning Commissioners Chair Cross, Vice Chair Kirschenmann, Carpenter, Beyer, Smith, Leezer and Moore. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, Planning Commission Recorder Brenda Jones and members of the staff.

Councilor Lundberg called the meeting of the City Council to order. Commissioner Cross called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order.

1. CIBL/GOAL 14 Kickoff Meeting

In 2006, The City of Springfield began work on the Residential lands Study (RLS), which includes both an inventory and needs analysis of residential lands within Springfield's portion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). In 2007, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 3337 which requires Springfield to establish a separate Urban Growth Boundary within sufficient buildable lands.

Planning Manager Greg Mott introduced the item, anticipating that the joint meeting would be the first of many in the process mandated by the State. He hoped to complete the process by December 31, 2009. He briefly noted the history of the item.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Beyer about the need for a new Commercial Lands Study given how recently one had been done, Mr. Mott said that study would inform the proposed analysis. He recalled the past study had been an analysis of the current inventory and the demand that continued development patterns would create on the inventory, which indicated a need for approximately 200 acres of additional commercial land. There was no economic opportunities analysis or economic development strategies. The new study would also respond to changes to Goal 9 and recognized that the community would have its own urban growth boundary.

Gary Winterowd and Robert Conrad of ECONorthwest, consultants for the project, were also present. Mr. Winterowd solicited the council and commission's expectations for the study, their key concerns, what they would like to see out of it, and what would make the study successful. He indicated several similar meetings were scheduled throughout the process and the consultants would also work with a stakeholder committee.

Mr. Winterowd briefly reviewed the steps in the process of establishing a new urban growth boundary.

Commissioner Kirschenmann asked the process for identifying commercial property. Mr. Winterowd indicated it was a two-step process, an inventory of existing land and a site needs analysis. He said the State required that the site needs analysis to be based on the community's economic development strategy. He believed that the City had a strategy but it was not necessarily articulated in policy, and part of the project was to articulate that policy to determine what types of sites future businesses will need to locate in Springfield.

Responding to a follow-up question from Commissioner Kirschenmann, Mr. Winterowd explained that the consultants began with the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) database and aerial photographs and matched that information with permits. The process also included field verification of sites.

Commissioner Beyer wanted to spend the least amount possible to meet State goals and reach the community's goals. He believed that the City already had a good sense of its commercial areas and noted the discussions the council had about its vision for Glenwood, downtown, Gateway, and Mohawk. In regard to the industrial land supply, Commissioner Beyer wanted to have a better sense of what was actually available. He questioned, for example, how much potential still remained for the industrially designated land near Jasper Road given the amount of residential development that occurred and the wetlands the area contained.

Commissioner Beyer was inclined to focus on the technical aspects of the study. He suggested that the Metro Partnership be consulted about the nature of the businesses making inquiries both locally and elsewhere and attempt to see if the community had land to meet that demand. He wanted to have as much land available as the City could reasonably serve that provided people opportunities to have jobs. He expressed concern about the future of the remaining wood products industry and said the community must consider where new jobs would come from.

Commissioner Beyer acknowledged the potential of land re-use but said that was often difficult to do. If selected as a strategy, the community as represented by the council would have to decide how much it was willing to invest to make that happen. He noted the investments made in Glenwood and downtown, which could use all the money available.

Commissioner Beyer wanted the examination to be broad, quick, and cost-effective.

Councilor Ballew concurred with the remarks of Commissioner Beyer. She wanted to ensure the study was designed so the community did not have to "reinvent the wheel."

Commissioner Carpenter wanted to know if the industry the community had today would be anything like the industry that could be anticipated in the future. Although a soft dollar could bring more manufacturing back to the area, he did not think that could be counted on, and did not anticipate any heavy industry locating to Eugene-Springfield at all. He thought people needed to be careful when claiming they needed "really big parcels of land near waterways or railroads anymore."

Commissioner Leezer asked how the study encompassed current economic conditions. Mr. Winterowd pointed out the study did not have to consider short-term housing or business cycles because it had a 20-year planning horizon. He acknowledged that it was very challenging to look 20 years out and consider land use and infrastructure needs for a changing world but suggested there was merit to thinking longer term than 20 years because of the enormous capital obligations created by new infrastructure.

Responding to a question from Ms. Moore about how uses such as Peace Health were classified, Mr. Winterowd said that the lines between commercial and industrial uses were becoming more blurred, particularly in a more service-oriented economy. Strictly speaking, Peace Health was considered a commercial use, although in some communities it was classified as an institutional use. He anticipated that in the coming discussion of economic strategies, the community would talk both about what businesses it wanted and which it wanted to discourage.

Commissioner Beyer recalled his past contention that the City's industrial and commercial zones made no sense anymore in regard to what businesses wanted. He believed that some businesses wanted to locate near railroads or in less aesthetically pleasing locations and did not require or want to pay for pleasant industrial parks while others, whether they were manufactures or call centers, wanted to be an business park. He suggested the aesthetic background a business needed or desired was an emerging distinction. Mr. Winterowd agreed. Many industries were seeking high amenity sites. Commissioner Beyer did not believe the community's business parks compared well to those in the greater Portland and Seattle areas.

Councilor Woodrow wanted to know what industries were currently located in Springfield. He said until Springfield knew what it had he questioned how it could know what it wanted to have in the future. Mr. Winterowd again emphasized the long-term nature of the study. He said the State did not make distinctions about site availability in terms of proximity to transportation, for example, and considered all sites available in the long-term. Commissioner Beyer added that the State considered the planning context rather than the market context in regard to whether a site was available; the State considered whether a site was in the plan, and if it could be made available.

Commissioner Cross questioned whether there was a formula the consultants used to determine the amount of land needed in each category given the changing economy. Mr. Winterowd said the State had modified the process to allow communities to tie their site needs to their economic visions. That gave communities flexibility to "err" on the side of having more land available. The consultants would go through that analysis using some proven methodologies that met State planning requirements. He suggested that to some degree, the issue was one of self-determination, which was why the consultants wanted to know what the community wanted. ECONorthwest would help facilitate that dialogue with the community.

Commissioner Beyer suggested that precedent for the project existed in the lands inventory established by Eugene and Springfield for the Metropolitan Area General Plan. He said that generally, the lands identified had been used for the purpose intended, although he acknowledged many wetlands identified for industrial use had been removed from the inventory.

Mr. Conrad acknowledged the difficulty of projecting future needs but suggested part of the "art" of the process was identifying sites that could be used by a wide range of uses and avoiding

being tied down by tightly written codes. He said that Eugene and Springfield had correctly identified the emergence of high tech industries, as evidenced by the location of Sony to Springfield. However, Sony had gone away and now the site was occupied by a call center for high tech products. He pointed out that Junction City was seeing new development in the form of a prison, which had not been on anyone's radar screen in the 1980s. Mr. Conrad said that one of the first things the consultant did was check with the Metro Partnership on what inquiries it was receiving. The consultants then inventoried such sites both inside and outside the urban growth boundary.

Councilor Ralston did not believe that Springfield could reasonably say what would happen in 20 years, but pointed out the City had supported House Bill 3337 because the council thought it important to expand the urban growth boundary to allow for less expensive future development to occur. He believed the goal of the process was to make the case to Eugene and Lane County for expanding the boundary, and he did not care about the details. He did not want to micro-manage the results.

Responding to a question from Councilor Ballew about who would approve any expansion of the UGB, Mr. Grile believed that the Department of Land Conservation and Development would have to approve the expansion after it was adopted by the Springfield City Council and Board of County Commissioners. He said that decision could be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals, so it was important to ensure the study was accurate.

Councilor Pishioneri wanted Springfield to be able to anticipate the areas of the study on which it would be attacked. He agreed with Councilor Ralston that he did not want to get bogged down in details. He called for a process that was short and cost-effective. Mr. Winterowd concurred. He said the consultants' goal was to give the best information possible to the commission and council so they can make the best decision possible.

City Attorney Joe Leahy reminded the council and commission that Springfield hired ECONorthwest to do an independent study. The goal of the study was not to expand the UGB, but to collect information so Springfield could determine if that was necessary. The consultant must provide sufficient information to stand behind their recommendations.

Commissioner Smith asked if the consultants or staff already had a sense of where it made the most sense to expand. He asked what the data was showing that could be considered a "no brainer." Mr. Winterowd emphasized that the study was a planning process and it was easy to get bogged down in numbers and lose sight of the greater goal. He believed the technical analysis would provide more information about whether a UGB expansion was justified. He invited input into the topic of potential expansion areas, and noted an evaluation of whether such areas could be served and how that was funded must also occur. Mr. Winterowd believed it would be a challenge to the consultants to communicate the results of the technical analysis and tradeoffs involved to the council and commission, and encouraged continued questions.

Commissioner Beyer asked the consultants to provide information about communities that had managed to preserve its large industrial sites from being subdivided. Mr. Conrad said that was a very difficult issue from the policy perspective. He anticipated the consultants would respond to the City's input with a list of site needs, some of which would be large. He suggested that there might be a need to reserve some large sites with the option to allow them to become smaller sites

as market conditions changed. Perhaps the City could also look more long-term to renew the supply of larger sites. He said that business parks could also have large site needs. Responding to a follow-up question from Commissioner Beyer, Mr. Conrad confirmed that the consultants would share examples of trends with the council and commission. Commissioner Beyer requested that information in graphic form when possible.

Councilor Pishioneri wanted data on the cost of providing services to new development as opposed to the revenues received.

Mr. Winterowd observed that cities engaged in business recruitment and economic development to create a better economic balance. He emphasized the importance of considering Springfield in a larger regional context and for Springfield to have a clear vision of what it wanted in the future. He did not think it would be difficult to articulate an economic development vision for Springfield, adding the consultants had a good idea of the community's values and would continue to test that interpretation with the council and commission.

Commissioner Moore wanted the consultants to remember what a fantastic and unique place Springfield was. She said that the geography of the community was one of those factors. It was a great place to live and grow and have a business, and she hoped that things would come through and be reinforced in the study. Mr. Winterowd said that those elements were addressed in the analysis as "comparative advantages," and Springfield had comparative advantages that drew businesses to it.

Councilor Lundberg emphasized the importance of family wage jobs to the City Council. She also cited the importance of anchor businesses such as Peace Health, which had drawn in other businesses and which helped to establish Springfield as a regional medical center and became part of its image over time. She emphasized the importance of flexibility and creating the potential for land redevelopment and reuse. She thought that flexibility was important to the changing vision of Springfield from a small town to a more recognizable metropolitan area.

Councilor Lundberg also thought it important to know why companies did not locate in Springfield.

Councilor Ralston emphasized the importance of ensuring affordable housing was included in the community's vision.

Commissioner Carpenter asked how the consultants accounted for constrained industrial parcels, such as brownfields. He also asked how sites that become available in the future would be accounted for. Mr. Winterowd said the Goal 9 rule provided a liberal definition of what was considered buildable, and Springfield could decide if it wanted to include such sites in the inventory. He said that was another reason why it was important for Springfield to articulate an economic development vision. In regard to transitioning sites, he agreed that those were a big consideration and there were strategies the community could use to facilitate their transition to another use, such as commercial, or distinguish in the code between retail commercial and non-retail commercial, each of which had a different land use impact. He said it was important how those uses were organized spatially in the community.

Councilor Ballew suggested that Springfield might not know what it wanted because it did not know what to hope for. She thought it might be helpful if the council and commission had a model of the cost-benefit of commercial or industrial uses and the associated public expenditure. She asked what commercial businesses wanted in sites compared to what they did not want. Mr. Winterowd suggested it depended on the commercial business involved. He said that it was a challenge when considering the many potential businesses involved.

Councilor Lundberg called for a brief meeting break.

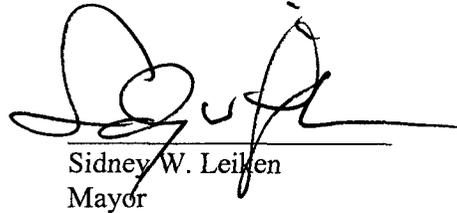
Following the break, the consultants provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Springfield UGB Planning*. The presentation included the study goals, an overview of the two-track work program, key issues, and the State policy context for the study. Councilors and commissioners asked questions clarifying the information presented.

Those present briefly discussed the composition of the stakeholders committee. Staff provided a brief overview of the recruitment process and noted that the Planning Commission, acting as the Citizen Involvement Committee, would consider the membership on March 18. .

ADJOURNMENT

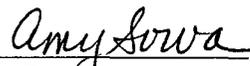
The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm

Minutes Recorder – Brenda Jones



Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa
City Recorder