

Submitted March 6, 2019
Approved March 13, 2019

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 1-2019
Saturday, January 5, 2019**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session in the Mayor and Council Chambers at 9:00 a.m.
Saturday, January 5, 2019

PRESENT

Gail Sherman – Chair

Anne Goodman	Charles Littlefield
Don Hadley	Sarah Miller
John Tyner II	Rev. Jane Wood

Present: Ricky Barker, Director of Community Planning and Development Services
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Zoning
David Levy, Chief of Long Range Planning
Cindy Kebba, Principal Planner
Andrea Gilles, Principal Planner
Barry Gore, Principal Planner
Clark Larson, GIS Specialist

I. DISCUSSION

A. Rockville 2040: Review of the Initial Staff Draft of the Comprehensive Plan

Ricky Barker noted the significance of the Comprehensive Plan draft document, being a culmination of a significant effort that ultimately will create the Rockville that the community wants. David Levy outlined the upcoming review schedule and expectations. Today's session is to review the vision and principles in the draft plan.

He also clarified that the draft being reviewed is the staff draft that is provided for review by the Planning Commission so that the commission may review it and make changes as the commission sees fit, resulting in a public hearing draft.

Vision and Principles

Cindy Kebba reviewed the Vision of the staff draft of the Master Plan. Commissioners provided the following comments on the draft vision statement:

- The vision statement should say more about inclusiveness, including cultural and ethnic diversity.
- The style of wording for the vision should be clear about present vs. future.
- Vision needs to be concise.

- The vision should be tied more closely to the principles.
- The vision should emphasize employment and housing, rather than using the words like suburban and urbanism.
- The addition of a glossary should be considered.

The Commission reviewed the draft Plan Principles, and offered the following comments:

- The principles should invite active community involvement and indicate that the city listens, not just that the community is involved.
- The environment should be protected and enhanced.
- The Economic Development principle should “create conditions necessary for equitable economic growth and opportunities.”
- Should the Town Center be called “downtown”? While Town Center sounds very 2019, it is important for Rockville to have a “downtown” and have it called out.
- Rockville’s own Plan Principles should be differentiated from state principles as currently listed in the plan.
- Diversity should be included in the principles, as should engagement and listening to the public.
- Plan should include a list of terms, if some of the terminology is going to change.
- For housing, the term “high quality” should be adjusted to emphasize more livability and quality of life.
- For the environment, should be more than protected.
- Should other centers be emphasized, in addition to Town Center, such as Twinbrook, while retaining the strong central “town” for Rockville.
- The Plan should use the term “multicultural” rather than “inclusive”
- Commissioner Tyner noted that one function of the Plan is to be a public relations document. When a business is interested in coming, or someone is interested in investing, they will look at the plan to determine if Rockville is a place they want to come.

Land Use

Barry Gore led the commissioners through the Land Use chapter, during which commissioners offered the following comments.

- Some commissioners supported the need to incorporate “affordability” into the Goals for Land Use
- Commissioner Sherman felt that the Shady Grove and Piccard Drive area should be one planning area instead of 2, while north and south of Redland could be two distinct areas.
- Commissioner Littlefield wanted to add examples of what the design guidelines would be for the Accessory Dwelling Units, to include mention of tiny homes and modular units.

- Policy 4 regarding 50 dwelling units/acre should be clarified as to location, and maybe should be considered an action.
- Chair Sherman stated that, in policy 5.5, that “outdoor space” should be defined or taken out.
- Commissioner Littlefield stated that balconies could potentially be an exchange, where provision of balconies could replace some of the required outdoor space for private use.
- Commissioner Goodman suggested that there should be a reference to affordability in the Land Use goals.
- Commissioner Hadley suggested that more specificity is needed when we say that “Town Center is a success.”
- Commissioner Tyner suggested that all land uses on Halpine Road should be Residential Attached (RA), including the existing church property.
- Commissioner Goodman suggested that the Plan should highlight significant changes that will impact neighborhoods and make a list for people to refer to. Commissioner Littlefield suggested that people should know in general that religious institutions are allowed anywhere by right, and that a letter at the front of the chapter or a cover letter from the Commission could let people know what they should keep an eye out for.
- The Commission discussed the Intro section to “Let’s Walk Rockville!” and that the document should mention that more detail is provided in the Transportation Element, clarifying the ability for access to the pedestrian infrastructure for people of all mobility capabilities. A cross-reference of the issues in Land Use and walkability to other sections with applicable elements would be appropriate.
- Commissioner Tyner suggested text be added about maintaining the sidewalks, city-owned infrastructure and the design of sidewalks, for all types of mobility.
- Chair Sherman stated that the Twinbrook Land Use map could remain as it currently is recommended, but that the message needs to be clear that the map recommendation as it currently exists is for public comment, and that all of the Residential Attached on Veirs Mill Road may not necessarily happen, but it could happen. Commissioner Tyner agreed, and noted that the City needs to deal with the impacts of BRT. Commissioner Littlefield stated that parking should be highlighted within the policies, and that it needs to be addressed if the Twinbrook Land Use recommendations are implemented.
- Commissioner Miller noted the importance of having affordable office for small businesses and entrepreneurs, and felt that the text for the Piccard Drive area was too heavy handed toward transition away from office.
- Commissioner Littlefield stated that the business policies with should be cross-referenced with the Economic Development policies, and that the term amenity-rich should be defined.
- The Commission agreed to remove Policy 22.2 on Business Improvement Districts but to retain in the Planning Areas or Economic Development sections.
- Commissioners Goodman and Littlefield agreed that a definition of floating zone should be added.
- Commissioner Littlefield stated that there should be a policy for the golf courses.
- Commissioner Tyner suggested there should be a mention of conservation districts.

The Commission agreed to review the Land Use Map at the meeting of January 9, while the review of the Transportation, Water Resources and Environment elements would occur at the January 23 meeting. David Levy will poll the Commission on other future meeting dates in February.

II. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Hadley moved, seconded by Commissioner Littlefield, to adjourn the meeting at 2:13 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. James Haselak

Commission Liaison