

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Committee Members Present:

Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Gonzalez, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Chair Zelle

Committee Members Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Zelle called the regular meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:03 p.m. on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 on the following roll call vote:

Aye: 17 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Chair Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 4 Gonzalez, Lindstrom, Wulff, Zeran

Not Recorded: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Vento, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2021 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried** on the following roll call:

Aye: 17 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Fredson, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Chair Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 4 Gonzalez, Lindstrom, Wulff, Zeran

Not Recorded: 0

INFORMATION

1. Comprehensive Plan Composite (Angela R. Torres, 651-602-1566; Michael Larson, 651-602-1407)

Angela Torres, Manager, Local Planning Assistance, and Michael Larson, Planning Analyst, Local Planning Assistance, gave a presentation on the initial takeaways from the 2040 local comprehensive plans (comp plans). Torres began with a comprehensive plan status update. Local Planning Assistance (LPA) is still in the Local Comp Plan review process and 162 of 168 plans have been received for review. 138 plans have been authorized by the Council. The information that local governments have shared in their 2040 comp plans will influence the development of the next metropolitan development guide. The Council uses the

information from comprehensive plans to lay the foundation of future policy development.

Larson shared an overview of planning for residential growth. Regional forecasts for 2040 are lower overall but the change in forecasts is not uniform across the region. Some cities are growing faster while other cities have excess capacity. Overall, communities in the region have been planning for a lower level of growth for 2040 than was anticipated for 2030 ten years ago. This change reflects a regional economy that, although strong, is lagging behind many of its peers. Larson emphasized that the Council honors previously authorized plans for growth and adapts to changing development trends over time. A few high-level observations are: overall plans have identified fewer acres, though still much more than needed for forecasted growth; density ranges are shifting higher to support increased development of multi-family housing projects; and communities are increasingly using mixed-use guiding land to support development.

Housing policy staff also reviewed the housing chapters of 199 communities' comp plans. The overall themes were: widespread focus on housing for aging populations; frequent use of mixed-use land use categories to guide sufficient land for affordable housing; a new focus on environmentally-friendly housing in some communities; and wide variability in identifying local housing needs. With regard to transportation, 45% of comp plans identified new roadways that are not currently funded in the Transportation Policy Plan. Additionally, all 181 cities and townships are required to submit local surface water plan updates as a part of the comp plans. So far LPA has received and reviewed plans for 177 communities. There are also 126 community wastewater plans that are required to be reviewed and approved by the Council. As of March this year, all but 23 have been reviewed and approved. For regional parks and trails, 86% of communities have at least one existing, planned or proposed unit of the Regional Park System. 16 plans included parks and trails content that exceeded expectations or went above and beyond the minimums. The most frequently addressed topic regarding natural resources was tree canopy and urban forestry. Communities often stated efforts to preserve and enhance the local tree canopy through urban forest or tree preservation policies.

Council staff also reviewed 136 comprehensive plans authorized by the Metropolitan Council on or before December 23rd, 2020 for explicit mention of equity terms. These terms include: equity, equitable, inequity, inequitable, equities, and inequities. Of the 136 plans, 52 explicitly included equity terms, 40 minimally included equity terms, and 44 did not include equity terms. Most of the communities that did not mention equity terms in their plans are designated as Suburban, Diversified Rural, and Agricultural. Most communities that explicitly mention equity terms in their plan are designated as Urban Center, Urban, Suburban, Suburban Edge, and Emerging Suburban Edge.

Council Members had questions and comments about tracking the cost of land at the time of sale and land availability of land, affordable housing availability, tracking tax rate and tax amounts around the different communities, and public participation in the comp plan process. Council Member Vento also suggested getting the community involved in the process earlier rather than later. Chair Zelle suggested that the Council use the comprehensive planning process as an opportunity to advance the Council's goals of housing affordability, equity, climate, and interconnected transportation.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Bridget Toskey
Recording Secretary