



STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: Steve Langdon, Planning Manager

HEARING DATE: January 30, 2019

APPLICATION NO.: PC 2015-1

RELATED CASES: None

APPLICANT: City of Longview

REQUEST: Proposed Comprehensive Plan Update

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

The City's began the process to update the *City of Longview Comprehensive Plan 2006* in late 2015. Since then the Planning Commission has held numerous workshops on the update including one with the City Council on November 1, 2018. The City Council has received regular updates on the plan update process. The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments was retained to assist in the development of the update.

At the beginning of the process the Planning Commission recommended four emphasis areas be considered during the update. These were presented to the Council and they agreed with them and added a fifth emphasis area; the former West Longview Lagoons. The five emphasis areas are:

- 1st and 3rd Avenue (SR 411) corridor
- Barlow Point
- West Longview Lagoons
- 36th Avenue south of Ocean Beach Highway, and
- Highlands Neighborhood and Oregon Way

During the update process, public outreach was conducted. An open house was held on each of the emphasis areas. In addition, an open house was held on overall comprehensive plan update in September 2017. City staff also gave presentations to various organizations.

The comprehensive plan consists of three components: background text; goals, objectives and policies and a future land use map (FLUM). During the update process changes to the land use map has drawn the most interest. Consequently the below text begins with discussion on that component.

In February 2018 the Planning Commission considered staff recommendations regarding the emphasis areas and some other requests for Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments. The Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation as a starting point for the public hearing process. The recommendations for the emphasis areas and FLUM map amendments are given below.

1st and 3rd Avenues (SR411) corridor

The current FLUM classification for the area is:

North of Hudson Street – primarily High Density Residential

South of Hudson Street – primarily Light Industrial

Initial Planning Commission recommendation:

Keep the current classifications

Note: In November 2017 Council adopted an ordinance allowing “personal service establishments” in the area north of Hudson Street resolving one of the issues for that area.

Barlow Point

The current FLUM Classification for the area is:

Outside City limits – Mixed Use –Residential/Commercial

Inside City limits – primarily Heavy Industrial

Initial Planning Commission recommendation:

Classify the area as Heavy Industrial

Note: In March 2017 Council adopted an ordinance changing the classification for inside city limits (except for one lot) from Mixed Use – Residential Commercial to Heavy Industrial.

Note: Outside of City limits 110± acres were recently purchased for wetland mitigation

West Longview Lagoons

The current FLUM Classification for the area is:

Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional

Initial Planning Commission recommendation:

Keep current classification

Note: The council is undergoing a process to determine the best use for the lagoon property

36th Avenue south of Ocean Beach Highway

The current FLUM Classification for the area is Regional Commercial.

Initial Planning Commission recommendation:
Keep current classification

Highlands Neighborhood & Oregon Way

The current FLUM Classification for the area is:

Highlands Neighborhood – High Density Residential & Low Density Residential
Oregon Way (west side) - Community Commercial

Initial Planning Commission recommendation:
Highlands Neighborhood – develop a new classification and zoning designation specifically for that neighborhood
Oregon Way – keep current classification

The following are the initial Planning Commission recommendations for the requested Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments.

Longview Presbyterian Church

This property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of 38th Avenue and Pennsylvania Street. The portion of the property near 38th Avenue has a church building and parking. The back part of the lot is a field. The church would like to see the property eventually developed into apartments. They would like to change the classification from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential.

Initial Planning Commission recommendation: Allow the classification change.

Area south of the south ends of 42nd thru 48th Avenues (northern edge of Mt. Solo)

This area is classified as Traditional Neighborhood Residential and Low Density Residential. This property is constrained by wetlands and landslide hazard areas. The property owners would like to site apartment building on the non-constrained portions of the properties. They would like to change the classifications to High Density Residential.

Initial Planning Commission recommendation: Allow the classification change although there are concerns about impacts to local streets.

Pacific Fibre Property

Most of the Pacific Fibre property is classified as Heavy Industrial. A strip of land along the western portion of the log pond has a classification of Light Industrial. This strip of land contains their main office building. Pacific Fibre Products would like all of their land to be classified as Heavy Industry.

Initial Planning Commission recommendation: Allow the classification change.

Exhibit A is the proposed FLUM map with recommended amendments incorporated. Exhibit B contains maps of the requested FLUM amendments.

In addition one FLUM amendment was requested after the Planning Commission made their initial recommendations. The Planning Commission decided to consider the request during the public hearing process. Anthony White is requesting that his property located at 5721 Mt Solo Road (directly south of the Baker's Corner Store). This 1.9± acre parcel is currently classified as Medium Density Residential. The property owner is requesting that it be classified as High Density Residential. There is no initial Planning Commission or staff recommendation yet.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The goals and policies, for the most part, were kept. However, some were reworded for clarification and some were eliminated because they were redundant. A “track changes version” of the goals, objectives and policies was not kept. The objectives give guidance on what should be accomplished during the lifetime of the plan. Many of the objectives in the 2006 plan were accomplished so they were eliminated. Others that were eliminated were either redundant or just not likely to be accomplished. Exhibit C contains the draft objectives. Exhibit D contains the objectives that were eliminated.

Background Information

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Government developed the background information which was reviewed and edited by relevant staff (e.g. Transportation Element information was reviewed by Traffic Engineer). The different elements were drafted at different times so information in one element may be older than the information in another element.

SEPA DETERMINATION

A completed Environmental Checklist was filed with the City of Longview. The City issued a determination of non-significance (DNS). The DNS and Checklist was circulated for agency review and comment on January 15, 2019. The comment period closes on January 29, 2019 [Application No. E 2019-2].

As of this writing, no comments have been received. The SEPA documents are attached as Exhibit E.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2006

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan included an objective to update the comprehensive plan regularly. See below.

Chapter 2: Land Use Element

Objective LU-A.1

Establish a process to comprehensively review and revise the Comprehensive Plan and land development regulations no less frequently than every 7 years. Allow for individual area specific requests more frequently to adapt to changing conditions.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The City of Longview Comprehensive Plan 2006 was a major update of the 1993 plan. The Planning Area Boundary (PAB) was substantially reduced (Beacon Hill & Lexington areas were eliminated). New map classifications were created. It was determined that the Ocean Beach corridor should be developed at nodes instead of strip development. Other ideas were considered and were either accepted or rejected. The 2006 plan was drafted during a period of economic upturn (housing boom). In 2008, the housing boom crashed which led to the Great Recession. The Cowlitz County area has not fully recovered from the Great Recession. Only very recently, for first time in about 10 years, has the City approved a preliminary plat subdivision.

The draft 2018 Comprehensive Plan is not a major update. The PAB is remaining the same size. The only recommendation regarding FLUM classifications is to create a new classification in the future for the Highlands Neighborhood. For the emphasis areas, so far, only the classification for the Barlow Point area is recommended to change. The 2018 update, in my mind, is more of a reaffirmation of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan in the light of a different economic climate.

The City of Longview is not fully subject to the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). Communities not fully planning under GMA are still required to prepare a comprehensive plan for the orderly physical development of the jurisdiction. At a minimum, a land use element and a circulation element must be prepared (RCW 35A.63.061). The proposed comprehensive plan update meets and greatly exceeds those requirements.

STAFF FINDINGS

1. Extensive public outreach was conducted during the Comprehensive Plan update process. The Planning Commission held numerous workshops in the process of reviewing and updating the 2006 comprehensive plan. The City Council also held workshops and were informed and consulted on the update.
2. Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review for the Comprehensive Plan update was conducted and a DNS was issued on January 15, 2019.
3. The City of Longview is not fully subject to the Growth Management Act. Per RCW 35A.63.061, Longview is required to prepare a comprehensive plan for the orderly physical development of the city. The comprehensive plan must have a land use element and a circulation element. The proposed comprehensive plan meets the requirement in that it has the two required elements and exceeds the requirement in that it has six other elements.

RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council that the draft 2018 Comprehensive Plan be adopted.

EXHIBITS

- A. Proposed Future Land Use Map (FLUM)
- B. Maps of requested FLUM amendments

- C. Draft Comprehensive Plan objectives
- D. 2006 Comprehensive Plan objectives that were eliminated
- E. SEPA Documentation

Note: The text of the draft Comprehensive Plan was given to Planning Commission members previously.

Staff Report Date: January 23, 2019