

**JOINT MAHTOMEDI CITY COUNCIL  
AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 23, 2018**

Mayor Jud Marshall convened the joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop meeting at 5:30 p.m. with the following Council members in attendance: Richard Brainerd, Steve Wolgamot, Tim Deans and Jeff Ledermann. Planning Commission members in attendance were Dan Soler, Susan Stewart, Mike Hedquist, Tracy Jones and Brandon Sampair. Also in attendance were City Administrator Scott Neilson, City Planner Erin Perdu, City Engineer John Sachi, Public Works Director Bob Goebel and City Clerk Mary Solie.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Marshall called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was approved as presented.

**2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION**

City Planner Erin Perdu said the Plan is the culmination of a planning process that began in early 2016 and included opportunities for community input at small workshops and large events like the Rite of Spring and Punkin Mania. That input, along with the hard work of the Steering Committee, formed the basis of the goals and strategies found in the chapters of the Plan. It is the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan to form the City's long term policy direction from now until 2040. The Plan will assist the City in determining priorities for the Capital Improvements Plan, annual City budget, zoning ordinance amendments, and land use applications that come before the Planning Commission and City Council.

**Changes Since 2030**

The Metropolitan Council's Regional Plan, Thrive 2040, has set out a new policy direction for the upcoming planning horizon. Some areas of emphasis that are a change from the last round of comprehensive plans include:

- Non-motorized transportation, including transit and regional bike and trail networks
- Affordable housing, and each city meeting its share of the region's projected need
- Concentration of population growth in or near existing urban centers
- More emphasis on sustainability, resilience to climate change, and renewable energy

Mahtomedi's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is a completely new document but is rooted in the vision and goals from the 2030 Plan. Changes were made to the goals and objectives from the 2030 Plan based on input from the community (including the 2017 citywide survey). Some significant areas of change to note include:

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- Land use: specific areas identified as likely to develop or redevelop; mixed use areas identified along Wildwood Road and Century Ave.; density increases in the multi-family residential and mixed use categories.

Commission Stewart asked to include the 2030 land use map in the Plan to use for comparison.

Commissioner Jones asked how many double lots are in the city and asked if there could be some kind of inventory taken and put on a map to see where exactly they are.

Council member Ledermann asked if there is anything the City can do to keep teardowns affordable.

Planner Perdu said there are ways to do that, but you need to be careful in telling people how to use their property.

Council member Ledermann said he is not comfortable with the wording that refers to random parcels “that do not serve any purpose or contribution to the overall park and trail system”. He said all open space has some benefit as wildlife habitat, water infiltration or possible youth play space and wants the negative language removed in the plan.

- Housing: targeted areas for potential multi-family and/or affordable housing at Lakeside Club site and mixed use areas on Wildwood Road and Century Ave.; detailed analysis of housing needs and tools the City is willing to use to meet those needs

There was considerable discussion about the need for affordable housing. It was noted there are a lot of small older homes on smaller lots, which are affordable now, but if sold they would most likely be torn down and rebuilt.

Council member Brainerd said the land along Century Avenue has a lot of potential for both housing and retail.

Planner Perdu was asked if there has been any more interest in the Lakeside Club, and she said she has met with several interested developers, but no plans have been brought forward at this time.

Planner Perdu said there are a number of programs to help with affordable housing but there are strict guidelines when using grants or other funds and some developers either can't or won't use them when looking at a building project.

- Economic Development: additional tools focused on entrepreneurship and connecting small businesses with the Mahtomedi School District and Century College; connections with the newly formed Washington County CDA

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Planner Perdu said the Economic Development portion of the Plan is tied into the Land Use Chapter. She said there is little available vacant land for new businesses.

The area along Century Avenue was again discussed as an area for redevelopment for both commercial and housing.

The Washington County CDA is willing to work with the City to help with finding developers for both commercial and housing project.

- Transportation: additional multi-modal transportation strategies; non-motorized transport design considerations

Council member Wolgamot said the City needs to be more committed to not having neighborhoods be isolated, by creating more pedestrian friendly walk ways.

- Parks and Trails: Completely new Parks and Trails chapter which is linked to a new Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan for the City (separate document). This chapter includes an up-to-date inventory of all parks and open spaces in the city as well as strategies for enhancing parks and trail connections.

Council member Ledermann said he would like to see additional media outlets used to promote Mahtomedi and the parks and trails. He would also like a Dark Sky policy, which is keeping the lights from shining up into the sky at night. It was noted the City has a lighting section in Chapter 11 which addresses how lights need to be used.

Council member Ledermann also wants the plan to include efforts to reduce the amount of mowing and pesticide use on city properties.

- Sustainability: updates including the City's work in the GreenStep Cities program over the past decade; inclusion of the American Planning Association's Sustainability Framework; emphasis on energy infrastructure and efficiency, renewable resources, environmental assets, and healthy communities. When the draft plan was submitted to the Metropolitan Council for preliminary review, this chapter was singled out as a model for other communities in the region.

Planner Perdu said the draft Plan was sent to the Met Council for preliminary review (a step they offer prior to their formal review) in December. The feedback we received was overall very positive. Revisions that need to be made to the Plan are minor, and generally relate to missing maps or correcting some tables. There is a small mis-match between the population and household forecasts in the land use and transportation chapters that we will rectify as well.

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The Met Council suggested some policy tools be considered in a few sections of the Plan, including the Housing and Transportation chapters. In these cases, the Met Council requests that the tools be acknowledged and explained why they would or would not be considered as appropriate in Mahtomedi.

As mentioned above, the Sustainability chapter (which the Met Council refers to as “Resilience”) was singled out for praise by the Met Council. The comment letter stated in part that save for a minor solar calculation that needs to be added, “The City excels in all other components required to be complete and compliant in its comprehensive plan per the Resilience Section. Thank you very much for your great work integrating solar and sustainability considerations, policies, and goals throughout your comprehensive plan.” In a follow-up email from the council’s reviewer in this area, they stated that they would like to use our chapter on their website as a benchmark example for other communities to use as they draft their plans.

Council member Ledermann said stronger language is needed to encourage roof top solar on homes. He also wants to see more recycling along with organic curbside pickup in the City. He is also in favor of investigating organized waste collection. He would like to see electric vehicle charging stations somewhere in the City too.

Engineer Sachi briefed the group on the DNR lawsuit and the changes that maybe coming to how Mahtomedi uses water in the City, such as a complete residential sprinkling ban. The City’s Water Supply Plan is being updated at this time and will be presented at a future City meeting.

Planner Perdu said the public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan will most likely be in March at the March Planning Commission meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The workshop was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**ATTESTED:**

**APPROVED:**

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**MARY SOLIE, CITY CLERK**

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**JUD MARSHALL, MAYOR**

