City of Kenmore
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission Members – In Attendance (the meeting was held onsite and virtually using the Zoom online platform)

Dwight Thompson, Chair
Mike Vanderlinde, Vice Chair
Tracy Banaszynski
Saad Qadri (Joined over Zoom)
Derek Wyckoff

Excused: Nathan Loutsis

Staff

Debbie Bent, Community Development Director
Todd Hall, Principal Planner
Shannon Tipple-Leen, Planning Commission Clerk
Michelle Kang, Co-Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Thompson at 7:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 5, 2023 Meeting minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

4. AGENDA

Todd Hall introduced the Economic Development Element.

Commissioners had many questions and/or comments. A summary is provided below:

- A discussion about where are densities are going in this Element and others.

- Will there be more current data used than the 2021 and 2018 data used.
-Staff said these data sources are all that is available at this time.

- On Table ED-13 commercial/industrial job land numbers says it could support 3,000 new jobs which is identical to the target of 3,000 jobs created in the city. So it is saying that if we want to come close to that we have to reach 100% of the growth. Does that include Lakepointe and to what extent does Lakepointe influence these numbers?

- Are these numbers saying in order to reach these commercial targets do we have to reduce the number of residential?

- Regarding the jobs to housing ratio Table ED-14, how relevant are these numbers and is it real to have these numbers influencing our goals?

- On Table ED-15, given our small commercial base, does this include the attribution of where sales generate? For instance, from internet sales. What kind of commercial industry could generate extra revenue?

- How is the City administration capturing the tax revenue in the city? Is there thought that there are some businesses escaping the tax net?
- Staff said questions will be sent to the Finance Director.

- The last time the City did an Economic Analysis update was 2018 and it was a priority with more money being funneled to it. How will the city do it now with less resources.
- Rather than spending money on a consultant, the city has taken a 3-pronged approach to it now with three equally shared values - Be A Well-Run City, Seize Strategic Opportunities & Focus on Key Partnerships

- Does Kenmore have a B&O tax? If not, why not.
- There is no B&O Tax in Kenmore. It has been rejected by City Council in the past.

- Would like to know who is paying taxes and where is the money going? If not having a B&O tax an incentive to small business or it is just a source of lost revenue? How do we balance revenue sharing between business and residences and moreover between small and large businesses.

- Businesses are known to set up in Kenmore because the city is easy to work with not because it doesn’t have a B&O tax.

- A B&O tax makes sense because we provide Public Services and roads to

businesses.

- Staff said questions will be sent to the Finance Director.

- If retail brick and mortar are on the decline, should the city rethink multiuse? Should the city rethink coding?

- Are there studies that show what areas of the city are lacking in businesses?

- We are going to have to rely on staff to make sure we have consistent messaging through the elements.

- What is the city doing to address the numbers on Tables ED-5 and ED-6 regarding Poverty?

- Businesses need affordable housing in order to have employees to work for them. If we have a city with that then people will want to live here and will desire to work near their home.

- Regarding the 6 goals of the Economic Strategy – we need to be mindful about what we bring into our community and not always just office space. We need to find ways to create more spaces for small businesses to connect.

- There was a percentage of vacant buildings in Table ED-13. How many of them are livable and how many are condemnable? Where in the city are they?

- Page 4F-12 – How much of the retail in this chart is leakage?

- Can we really call it leakage if the world has changed? Ecommerce is here to stay. What is the vision for the city and what are we going to do about it. What are the services people looking for that we build into the plan?

- Green business focus policy is addressed in ED-7.

- Surprised the industrial waterfront is not listed as a challenge.

- Rename SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats) to SCOT (Strength, Challenges, Opportunity, Threats)?

- At what point do we come to terms with the fact that Lakepointe will never happen? The last time we did this update we had representatives from the lake front companies and they said they are not going to leave.

- We should not be relying on the 2018 analysis and using it as a guide. It is not relevant to today and it is misleading, but something needs to go there that

illustrates those.

- We need help understanding what the options could be for getting these numbers.

- Would be interested to learn what was learned from when the business incubator was shut down to craft this.

- Some of the statements are not relevant for the current period we are in. We should qualify some of the numbers with what we know like the pandemic and economy.

- If we make major changes to any of the exhibits, put the old one in an appendix to have a reference for the work done in 2018.

MOTION: Commissioner Vanderlinde moved to cancel the Nov 7th meeting because it is election night. Chair Thompson seconded the motion.
VOTE: 6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain. Motion Carried.

An update on the search for new Planning Commissioners was given. There are four open positions, and the city has received fourteen applications. The City Council has the applications and will select applicants for interviews during the November 13th City Council meeting.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for November 21st.

Begin work on the Downtown Plan in January 2024.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 9:19 PM

Shannon Tipple-Leen
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Planning Commission
Approved by Planning Commission on: 11/21/2023