

MEETING MINUTES
Benton County Planning Commission joint meeting with
City of Monroe
April 30, 2024

Benton County Planning Commission Chair Fowler called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. The meeting was open to the public virtually via a published Zoom link.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Nicholas Fowler, *Chair*
Greg Hamann, *Vice Chair*
Catherine Biscoe
Elizabeth Irish
John Wilson
Evelyn Lee
Sara Cash
Andrew Struthers
Ed Fulford

FULL COMMISSION attendance.

STAFF

Petra Schuetz, *Planning Official*
Shannon Bush, *Interim Deputy
Director*
Rick Crager, *Assistant County
Administrator*
Alyssa Thompson, *Recorder*
Linda Ray, *Assistant*

MONROE CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jeannie Cuthbertson, *Council President*
Fred Cuthbertson, *Chair*
Dan Sheets, *Mayor*
Steve Martinenko, *City Administrator*
Nick Ritch, *Councilor*

James Winther, *Councilor*
Cara Williams, *Councilor*
Harry Myers, *Councilor*
Lisa Lindner, *Councilor*
Kristin Strand, *Commissioner*

Chair Fowler - County Long Range Planning and Development Code Updates:

See attached exhibit 1.

Schuetz – Regional Housing and Development Code Phase 1:

Have secured funding for a contractor executed yesterday to help with development code update. Will be meeting in person in the next couple of weeks. They will also bring in a project schedule, work will be done over the next 6-9 months, up to a year. Phase one update will be corrections of errors and conflicts in the language that have come up over years of amendments. Commissioner Hamann is subcommittee chair for this project.

Commissioner Hamman- current policy and code may not fully represent the entire county where we are now and where we were when it was written. Subcommittee will be looking for input from a variety of locations across the county. Will be cleaning up code with legislative updates first.

Schuetz - Periodic Review and Comprehensive Plan Update:

County has secured funding from the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) funding to help start phase one of the voluntary periodic review process. The process will start with the comprehensive plan, for the policy work which will then be added to the second phase of development code update. This contract was signed last week. Shannon Bush will be project lead for that.

Phase one will be addressing Goal 1, which is citizen involvement. Contractor will help create a comprehensive public outreach strategy that has a wide array of stakeholders, beyond councils and planning commissions. We would like to get a nice broad set of brainstorming ideas from community members to make sure the contractor understands the values and local expertise on how to reach out to the local communities. This meeting will be a huge help for this process.

Bush - Community Outreach and Engagement:

Status overview: contract executed two weeks ago with DLCD.

Task 1: define inclusive outreach plan. Subcommittee will be defining what interest areas are throughout the entire geography of Benton County with listening sessions. The consultant will help define how that community outreach should happen. Benton County will be working with DLCD to create a pilot program to help shape a future version of Goal 1, Statewide Land Use Planning, currently called citizen involvement.

Primary goal: meet each community where they are at, so that we can better receive information in a way that we can aggregate it and make sense of it. Meetings are not always accessible to everyone in this format at 6pm. County is looking to make these meetings more accessible for more constituents throughout the community.

Commissioner Fulford - Housing affordability and availability:

Looking at not just Corvallis, but a regional thing, with broad needs. Middle housing, apartments, elderly housing, and price pressures. We are the second most rent burdened county in the state.

We are seeing school enrollment go down. Teachers are having to drive further to get to work. Communities are getting older, which means that school systems have trouble passing bonds so there's a lot of stress on the system. Subcommittee is currently in socialization phase: speaking with HP, school districts, small cities, OSU, Benton County itself.

Chair Fowler: Opened the floor to reactions and questions from Monroe Council and Planning Commission.

Monroe City Council and Planning Commission Questions and Reactions:

- Will community members outside of the Corvallis area be invited to participate in the housing subcommittee?
- Concern that Monroe's voice is understood and not forced into a situation that doesn't match or agree with the community.
- Looking for support for attracting housing, jobs, retail, and mixed-use development
- Needing support for Monroe's Planning Department, Steve Martinenko.
- Who is on the regional committee?
- Has Benton County had a housing needs analysis, and will that be next steps in the process?

- Looking at housing, water quality, and land use-where does the industry tie into all of this? How does the communication fit into this? If it's not being done by these meetings, where is it being done and how are they communicating?

Commissioner Fulford Responses:

- Yes, community will be able to attend meetings and participate in the subcommittee.
- Making this regional is part of making sure that not just one or two communities be the driving force. We need to be able to track conversations and collect from all different communities and start setting priorities.
- Lane, Polk, Marion, Linn counties are on the regional committee. Will be Valley to Coast.

Petra Schuetz Response:

- Voluntary periodic review will have the housing needs analysis as an inherent element in the process. The complexity for counties are the unincorporated communities, of which we have six to eight, five cities in the county as well. There will be an overarching umbrella of policy language and we encourage the other communities to develop unique but consistent policies, to maintain continuity for the entire county. Each community will have a chapter to make all of the connections, then each chapter will have unique features for the needs of that respective community.

Chair Fowler Response:

- If we were to look at the Board of Commissioner's (BOC) list of priorities, that would include economic development, ability to attract and retain employees and workers, which would be on the BOC's calendar. Part of the overall community engagement within those 15 goals, is where everything comes together under the umbrella of the comprehensive plan.
- Goal with this update of the comprehensive plan should reflect what we value within the community. Which is why we need the engagement of our citizens to define what we hold most dear within those values.

Shannon Bush response:

- The reason for community outreach and engagement is to help define what is called the work plan for our Comprehensive Plan update. In the statewide land use planning goals, 15 of the 19 goals apply to Benton County. We want to define community priorities which may vary between unincorporated areas, Philomath, Monroe, Adair, Corvallis, NW Albany etc.

Chair Fowler: Other reactions from planning commission, councilors, or administration? **NONE**

Chair Cuthbertson: Overview of Monroe's Planning and Development Needs

Need support for Steve Martinenko from the county when we have a planning need or question. Martinenko is reviewing our strategy for how decisions are made, and approval for plans and development in the city. There has been some bad advice and bad feelings in the community because we're not getting the support at a county level. We need county support for consistency with customers with what we're saying and what the county is saying. Appears to be a disconnect between county and city of Monroe for permitting.

Martinenko: Land Use Code goes back many years/decades and needs to be updated. Type 1 decision process is almost nonexistent in Monroe. Need more robust type 1 decision making process. If someone needs a county permit, we want to work closely with the county so that we can provide them the basic info they need and then be able to make that process better. How

do we make that process smoother? How do we implement those things so that we don't have to wait a month or two before we get before the commission for action?

Chair Fowler: Option for faster response would be Community Development Round Table (CDRT).

Shannon: CDRT is a group of developers, engineers, real estate professionals, broad variety of stake holders that have participated. Community Development seeks out agenda items and holds morning CDRT meetings typically quarterly.

County has received bids for a project to facilitate dialogue among departments and entities involved in permitting. Community Development is working with consultant, not yet defined, to help navigate this process. It would be valuable and helpful for Monroe to participate.

Steve Martinenko - Highlight Concept for Urban Growth Boundary Amendment:

Martinenko presented the idea of a land swap within the Urban Growth Boundary. Trading the 20 acres known as the "Brick Yard" for 20 acres behind the 2018 Red Hills development.

Questions for the county: What are next steps and how would the process work?

Schuetz response: Land swap is a rare, but legally defensible. Process is a consultation with DLCD to get acknowledgement of the land swap. Then legislation acknowledgement after, within one year. DLCD has planning grants available.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Red Hills resident concerned that public voice won't be heard regarding the land swap idea.
- Concern for flooding/geological issues with development of property behind Red Hills Development.
- Concern not enough water with existing water system to support growing the community.
- How will initiative with long term goals be reaching out for community feedback? Does it/how does it relate to the 2040 core values?
- Some resident support for potential further development with the land swap.
- Comment for community consideration of pros and cons of county versus city control of the development aspect should the land swap be approved.

Chair Fowler: Commissioners and Staff need to understand this part of the county, benefit of having a better context of all corners of the county.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Benton County Planning Commission

Joint Work Session

Nick Fowler, Benton County Planning Commission

April 30, 2024



Goals

1. Engagement
2. Share Long Term Priorities & Solicit Feedback
3. Listen

Long Term Priorities/Goals

- Training & Continuing Education
- County-wide Engagement
- Solid Waste Management
- Housing Affordability and Availability
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Wildfire/Fire Safety
- Water Availability and Quality
- Data Collection, Management & Use
- Telecommunications Planning

Subcommittees

Plan and Code Updates Subcommittee

- Support quick & easy access to BCC
- Update BCC reflecting legislative actions
- Periodic Review
- Assess current code and need for change through public engagement

Regional Housing Subcommittee

Thoughts, feedback, next steps . . .



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