



CITY OF WHITE SALMON
Special Joint Meeting City Council and Planning Commission
Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Council, Planning Commission and Administrative Personnel Present

Council Members:

Marla Keethler
Ashley Post
Donna Heimke

Staff Present:

Ken Woodrich, City Attorney
Erika Castro-Guzman, Associate Planner
Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer

Planning Commission Members:

Ross Henry
David Lindley
Anne Medenbach
Michael Morneault
Tom Stevenson

1. Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Lindley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. There were approximately 5 people present.

Between 5:30 p.m. and 5:50 p.m., Marla Keethler was absent from the meeting. There was a not a quorum of the city council during that time.

2. Presentation

Scott Keillor, WSP Inc. provided an overview of the community outreach process conducted during the summer. Steve Faust, 3J Consulting, provided an overview of the draft 2040 vision. Faust noted that the vision is written from the perspective of what White Salmon looks like in 2040.

David Lindley said he feels the vision is part statement, part prescriptive and part aspiration.

Ken Woodrich said the vision is meant to be aspirational and the planning commission and city council will then formulate policies to reach those aspirations.

Council members discussed the vision and four elements of the vision and provided the comments:

- Discuss the need for access to the Columbia River
- Focus on connectivity and accessibility of parks and recreation and need for additional parks versus focusing on the existing parks and recreation opportunities that already exist but include preserving and improving existing opportunities
- Needs to have more specificity about the size and character of White Salmon, what is unique about White Salmon such as the ability to care for each, and the ability to care for the amenities that are important in White Salmon
- Finding words to replace “small” as a descriptor of White Salmon such as “cozy.”
- Instead of using “small character” elaborate to the personal human nature or heart of the community.
- Focusing business development on meeting the needs of the residents of White Salmon
- Focus on local residents who should be in control, want the outside to come and be part of our community.
- Highlighting the need to create more green space and provide access to green space with new developments.
- Realizing that because of the size of White Salmon every new development has an impact on the city.
- There is a tension due to supply and demand for the housing area -- there needs to be an income strata and that all the residents cannot be at the top to have a sufficient community.
- The need to watch what is happening in areas around White Salmon and then put a structure in place that is adaptable.
- The need to be proactive versus reactive.

Tom Stevenson provided to the city council, planning commission and consultants a copy of a City of Carmel document titled “Land Use and Community Character Element” noting that he feels a lot of what is in the document could be used by White Salmon.

Council and planning commissioner members noted that they like the format and layout of the vision and four elements.

3. Public Comment

Tao Berman, White Salmon said that everyone made excellent points. He said he continues to see contradiction in statements but that it is possible have both of some of the things causing contradiction. Berman said that the people who make White Salmon special are not only those who live here but those who came to visit. He said he wants to share White Salmon and be inclusive. Berman said that when discussing keeping local residents in control or focusing on local residents it is important to understand how that might come across to visitors. He said that in order to have more affordable housing, smaller lots with larger developments is going to be necessary. Berman said he also feels the city needs to work on things such as how existing structures look. He said he is happy with what the city council and planning commission are doing.

Ruth Olin, White Salmon said there needs to be a variety of housing types and income levels in White Salmon. She said the mix is what makes White Salmon who we are. Olin said there are a lot of examples of places that are doing things right and that she hopes the city council and planning commission will look at what those areas are doing. She said there is a need for “wild places.” Olin said it will be our kids who are saying either “what were you thinking” or “thank you for what you did.” She said that she wants to see habitat brought back and landscaping put into commercial areas.


Ken Woodrich noted that the City of Portland had a vision many years ago in constructing the Bull Run Water Reservoir and preserving Forest Park both of which continue today.


4. Next Steps

The city council and planning commission agreed to provide comments to Erika Castro Guzman by Monday, October 7th at 5:00 p.m. The consultants will then take those comments and reformulate the vision and four elements. A joint work session of the city council and planning commission will be scheduled in October to meet with the consultants to refine the language of the vision and four elements.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.


David Poucher, Mayor


Jan Brending, Clerk-Treasurer