



## **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Workshop Meeting Notes August 24, 2017**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **a. Members in Attendance:**

- Christine Maefsky, Mayor
- Neil Soltis, City Administrator
- Julie Ruddy, Citizen Representative
- Jan Hogle, Planning Commission
- Dustin Heglend, Parks and Recreation Commission
- Dominic Mitchell, Citizen Representative
- Dan Squyres, Planning Commission
- Steve Kronmiller, Economic Development Authority
- Jane Kansier, Bolton & Menk
- Ryan Goodman, Bolton & Menk
- Sarah Strain, Bolton & Menk

#### **b. Purpose of meeting**

- Review Community Survey and focus groups results
- Discuss Metropolitan Council Community Designation and potential changes, overall vision and goals for the Comprehensive Plan, and element specific goals and policies
- Discuss next steps and timeline

### **2. Review of Community Survey and Focus Group**

- a. Clarification of 1 survey mailed per household
- b. Distinction in survey of wanting commercial development but lacking overall interest in economic development – more interest in small/local businesses to fit community needs

### **3. Community Designation Discussion**

#### **a. Rural Center Designation**

- Main difference between rural center and rural residential is sewer availability
- Rural residential doesn't make sense financially or as a land use, does not fit with future of Scandia
- Scandia is like a rural center in the Village Center/downtown area but is more diversified rural everywhere else
- Not as agricultural as other areas and not as urban/rural center as City was before incorporation – don't really fit either designation well (diversified rural or rural residential)

#### **b. Meeting Community Needs**

- Can meet population and household projections keeping status quo and current land use

1. Committee felt that would be short-sighted. See potential to be locked in by development in the future (unable to further divide large lots, expense of that type of development, etc.)
  2. Doesn't allow for future growth
  3. Higher density for better/more affordable services
- Create stronger land use controls in agricultural areas to guide toward desired development density?
    1. Lot averaging and cluster development already in place in zoning code
    2. Current options are 2.5 acre, 5 acre, and 20 acre - confusion if 10 acre lots are an option anymore.
    3. Will need to review ordinance to ensure language supports the land use/open space preservation the community desires and clarifies if lots can/will be grandfathered in (i.e. allow current 10 acre lots to remain 10 acre lots or require them to conform to current acreage allowances)
  - Recognition that future change is hard – people get used to how things are and don't like change.

c. Rural Center Locations

- Village Center
- Interest in designating southwest corner of Scandia as rural center, west of Big Marine Lake, given higher densities and commercial potential
  1. Shoreland constraints around lake will influence the types of density and development that can take place.
  2. Concern about developing along the western edge of the City
    - a. Potential for faster development, away from Village Center
    - b. Concern about school boundaries – determined the area would still go to Scandia School unless district closed schools and redrew boundaries
    - c. Closer to Forest Lake for commuters
  3. Area around lake is on community sewer, which needs major work regardless of whether additional development occurs
    - a. Could ask Council to connect to sewer system through Forest Lake
    - b. Would get Scandia out of the sewer business
    - c. MUSA boundary limits
- Want to look at having two Rural Centers, one at the current Village Center/downtown Scandia and one west of Big Marine Lake

4. Goals and Policies

a. Overall Vision/Goals

- Need to make “development in specific areas” more clear

- All goals applicable
- b. Land Use Goals
  - Reword: “provide for a wide range of land uses that can coexist within a rural setting”. “Wide range” is too open. Simply say “range of land uses” that will be further defined in the zoning ordinance
  - Can implement performance standards for aggregate resources
  - Desire for pocket of commercial land use at 95/97 intersection for bring people into Village Center
    1. Setbacks and right-of-way expansion makes development near that area almost impossible. Left with very small lots
- c. Natural Resources
  - “recognizing and enhancing publically-owned lands and other lands permanently protected from development and improve public access to such lands where appropriate” – a big focus for the city
    1. Access to St. Croix limited
- d. Utilities/Infrastructure
  - “Utility” may not apply to all goals, focus on infrastructure
- e. Resilience
  - How can we word goals and policies to encourage renewable energy but discourage industrial “solar farms” or similar arrays?
  - What do we need to do in the comprehensive planning process to stay within our GreenStep City goals?
    1. Want more commitment from the City in this area, want something in the comp plan with teeth
    2. City is only Step 1
    3. Allow wiggle room to not commit tons of money/resources City doesn’t have
    4. “Will explore” program and opportunities – City Council has done this already
- f. Economic Development
  - Include support for small scale agricultural businesses
  - “Community-scale”, “home and farm based” businesses
  - “Concentrate on retaining and expanding local businesses in and around the Village Center” is a way to accomplish #1 goal of “Reinforce the Village Center as the social and economic focal point of the community”. Moving former to objective/policy.
- g. Parks and Trails
  - Will reorganize goal #4 to objective/policy since it supports goals #1, 2, and 3
  - “City residents” should add “and visitors” to include tourism

- Take out “non-motorized trails” to keep option of a motorized trail in the future?

5. Next Steps

- a. Attending Taco Daze on September 9 – community engagement and input on higher level/big picture goals of comprehensive plan
- b. Will schedule meeting with City Council
- c. Continue to work of draft of plan, incorporating focus group, community survey, and steering committee insights
- d. Will schedule public open house to review draft plan