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Finance Director

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

City Hall – 3rd Floor, Room 309
869 Park Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING:

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE - PUBLIC CHARETTE WORKSHOP

**CRANSTON SENIOR CENTER (TRAFICANTE ENRICHMENT CENTER)
1070 CRANSTON STREET – CRANSTON, RI 02920
6:00PM – THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Cranston Senior Center, 1070 Cranston Street.

The following Commissioners were in attendance for the meeting: Chairman Michael Smith, Thomas Zidelis, David Exter, Thomas Barbieri, Steven Frias, Kathleen Lanphear, Lisa Mancini, Robert Coupe and Justin Mateus.

The following members of the City Planning Department were in attendance: Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP, Planning Director; Kenneth R. Kirkland, AICP, Asst. Planning Director; Gregory Guertin, Senior Planner; and Amelia A. Lavallee, Interim Planner Technician/Planning Intern

Also in attendance: Ashley Sweet, Project Manager, Weston & Sampson

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE: PUBLIC WORKSHOP

(no vote taken)

- Introductory presentation by Ashley Sweet of Consultant Weston & Sampson

Ms. Sweet, Project Manager, Weston & Sampson, consultant representative for the comprehensive plan update provided a brief presentation explaining the objective of the workshop and how meeting attendees will participate.

Ms. Sweet described the plan overview and purpose, the proposed project schedule, public engagement plan, and the categories for discussion by the public.

Ms. Sweet stated that participants will be provided the opportunity to discuss the following topics: transportation/services/facilities, natural resources/natural hazards/climate change, housing, land use, economic development, cultural and historic resources/open space/recreation. Ms. Sweet explained that participants will be able to engage with a topic of choice through a small group discussion facilitated by the project consultant and members of planning staff.

Ms. Sweet shared online resources for further discussion and comments to be made part of the record.

Ms. Sweet provided instructions for participants to organize into small groups based on topic preference.

Meeting attendees dispersed into small groups facilitated by planning staff.

Director Pezzullo facilitated small group discussion virtually, via Zoom.

- Break-out groups for individual discussions regarding Existing Conditions

Director Pezzullo introduced each topic to the virtual participants on Zoom. Mr. Pezzullo explained that participants may respond to each prompt by using the “unmute” option on the Zoom application. Mr. Pezzullo clarified that each topic would be discussed in 15-minute intervals, in line with the concurrent in-person discussions. Mr. Pezzullo also clarified that participants also have the ability to comment using the “chat function” on Zoom, to be included as part of the record.

Virtual participants raised the following points of discussion relevant to each topic:

- **Transportation/Service/Facilities:** impacts of development on schools and services, traffic flow on Comstock Parkway, over enrollment of elementary schools, residential zoning (A-80/A-20) in Alpine Estates, commercial development concerns on traffic safety on Oaklawn Avenue, interest in additional pedestrian walkways, maintenance of existing bike paths and parks (Brayton Park), pedestrian safety concerns on Phoenix and Atwood Avenue, increased fire apparatus/services in western Cranston
- **Natural resources/natural hazards/climate change:** flooding hazards (Amanda Court), land conservation and protection of farmland in western Cranston, encouraging voluntary buyouts of properties located in floodplains/floodways, increased energy efficiency, protect green space, encourage transit-oriented development, mitigating effects of channelization and expanded wetlands
- **Housing:** inquiries regarding transit accessibility in western Cranston in relation to affordable housing development and the development of a village center, shared concerns about increased residential density in relation to expand services and facilities to accommodate residents
- **Land use:** maintaining rural neighborhoods, as identified in the existing comprehensive plan,
- **Economic development:** inquired about “Costco” development proposal, shared concerns about vacant storefronts, underutilized/under optimized real estate, suggestions about repurposing vacant commercial spaces, commercial to residential conversion opportunities, amending zoning requirements for parking to allow for increased density
- **Cultural and historic resources/open space/recreation:** maintenance of public parks and bicycle pathways, potential funding opportunities for land conservation, forge a city land trust, support historic preservation efforts (Oaklawn Village)

Additional comments made by both virtual and in-person workshop participants have been recorded and made available for viewing online.

A summation of in-person public comment/discussion is forthcoming which may be added to these minutes at the appropriate time.

ADJOURNMENT

(vote taken)

Next Meeting | Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 6:30PM – **Regular Meeting**
City Hall – 3rd Floor, Council Chamber – 869 Park Avenue