

DRAFT Town of Fairfax Planning Commission Workshop Minutes
Fairfax Women's Club
Thursday, April 8, 2010

Call to Order/Roll Call:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT Terry Goyan
Shelley Hamilton (Vice-Chair)
Brannon Ketcham (Chair)
Peter Lacques,
Shelby LaMotte
Peter Ramsay

Bruce Ackerman, Chair GPAC

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Pam Meigs

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Moore, Planning Director
Larry Kennings, Consultant
Joanne O'Hehir, Minutes-Secretary

Chair Ketcham called the meeting to order at 7.30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

M/S, Goyan/Hamilton, Motion to approve the agenda with the item concerning the Planning Director's Report to follow the public comments period.

AYES: All

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There was no one present from the public to speak.

Planning Director's Report

Planning Director Moore explained the reasons that Commissioner Meigs felt the need to withdraw from the Conservation Element subcommittee and he provided an update on the Committee's work. Mr. Moore discussed the outline of the Conservation Element that had been formulated so far. Mr. Ackerman discussed the timelines for the subcommittee meetings.

Commissioner Ketcham said that he would join the Conservation Element subcommittee subject to confirmation.

Discussion Items.

1. Final consideration of Chapter 4, "Community Preparedness Section" of the draft Safety Element of the General Plan. [Please note: the most recent sub-committee edits of Chapter 4 will be provided by staff either at the meeting, or prior to the meeting, on April 8, 2010].

Commissioner LaMotte introduced Chapter 4, when she provided an overview of the changes the subcommittee had made. She noted that a new program had been drawn up, titled "Infrastructure Hazards", which needed to be considered by the Commissioners.

Planning Director Moore left the meeting for 20 minutes at 7.45 pm to locate an electronic copy of the introduction to the chapter.

General discussion took place on the layout of the chapter and on how information could be distributed to residents.

Minor amendments were made to the programs concerning the provision of information to residents and the program regarding the use of disaster anniversaries.

A new program concerning flood fighting techniques was eliminated because the commissioners considered it to be redundant.

Minor amendments were made to the new program that concerned the training of homeowners to turn off shut-off valves.

The new program that concerned the provision of NOAA weather radios was removed.

A discussion took place on naming specific websites in the General Plan. It was generally agreed that an appendix should be drawn up that would list the websites in the General Plan.

There was general consensus that the program regarding wildfire education was not suitable to include in the chapter.

Amendments were made to the program concerning the development of disaster mitigation materials.

Following general discussion, it was agreed that the new programs regarding the encouragement of business owners to participate in building elevation programs and the provision of information to private business owners on the availability of hazard maps should be struck from the Chapter. An amendment was instead made to the new program regarding the use of materials on the ABAG website.

There was general consensus that the new programs regarding laboratories that handled hazardous materials and the encouragement of joint meetings of security and operations personnel at private employers were irrelevant to Fairfax and should be removed.

A minor amendment was made to the new program regarding the development of a plan to shelter employees.

General consensus was reached that the new program regarding the encouragement of employees in schools to have family disaster plans should be removed and the new program that related to the encouragement of employees to have a family disaster plan was amended to be more inclusive.

Discussion took place on programs that related to safety training and minor amendments were made. It was agreed the program that related to offering SERT training should be removed because responsibility did not lie with the Town of Fairfax.

The safety program that related to basic CERT training through the adult school system was struck because there was general agreement that it was surplus information.

“School District” was removed from the responsibility sections wherever it appeared.

The program regarding the development of continuity of operations and disaster recovery plan was removed and amendments were made to the program regarding the use of schools to reach families through educational materials on hazards, mitigation, and preparedness.

Following discussion, an objective was added to the Geological Hazard Section.

There was general agreement that the programs regarding the provision of disaster preparedness materials and to support and promote post-earthquake self-sufficiency were repetitive and should be removed from the section.

Under the program that concerned the demonstration of projects on common housing types, responsibility was changed from the Fire Department to the Planning and Building Department.

Under the program that concerned the provision of earthquake retrofit classes, responsibility was changed from the Fire Department to the Planning and Building Department.

The new program which pertained to the establishment of a tool-lending library was removed because there was general agreement that it would be too difficult to implement.

The program that related to the provision of financial incentives was amended to read “Identify financial incentives.....earthquake damage”.

There was general agreement that the program that related to helping private building owners recognize that strategies that increased earthquake resistance also decreased damage during an explosion was unnecessary and was removed.

Following discussion, a new goal was written for the Flood Hazard Section.

Under the new program concerning the provision of information for the location of sandbags, Fairfax Volunteers and the Public Works Department were added to the responsibility section and “ongoing” to the schedule.

The program regarding the maintenance of a disaster preparedness website was removed because such a website did not exist.

Under the new program regarding encouraging home and apartment owners to participate in home elevation programs, the Planning and Building Department was added to the responsibility section and “ongoing” to the schedule.

There was general consensus that the programs regarding encouraging home owners to participate in acquisition and relocation programs should be removed.

A minor amendment to the program regarding the monitoring of creek and watercourse flows was made and “County of Marin Flood District 9” was added to the responsibility section.

The objective at the beginning of the Fire Hazard Section was amended.

Under the policy concerning the preparation, response and recovery from fire events, there was general consensus that “Need a recovery plan to replace facilities.....” should be removed.

There was general consensus that the program which concerned installing and operating warning sirens should be removed.

There was general consensus that the program regarding training programs should be removed because it was repetitive information.

There was general agreement that the program regarding the tying of public education on defensible space should be removed because it was considered redundant.

Minor amendments were made to the program regarding model properties showing defensible space and structural survivability during a fire. The Fire Department was allotted responsibility, whilst “ongoing” was added to the schedule.

With regard to the new program about ensuring adequate plans were developed for access in rural residential areas, there was general agreement that “For example, in some areas.....not feasible” should be removed. Planning and Building and the Fire Department were added under the responsibility section and “onwards” was added to the schedule.

There was general agreement that the program regarding working with fire insurance companies to offer discount on insurance premiums should be removed.

“Fairfax Volunteers” was added under the responsibility section and “ongoing” to the schedule, under the program concerning the development of defensible space.

A policy and an objective were added to the section on Infrastructure Hazards.

“Ongoing” was added to the schedule for the program concerning the provision of materials to the public that related to power outages.

The wording “due to disasters” was removed from the new program on providing materials to the public which related to family and personal planning for delays due to traffic or road closures. “Ongoing” was added to the schedule and the Fire Department was given responsibility.

“Work with Marin Municipal Water District” was added to the new program concerning the provision of materials to the public that related to reductions in water supply. The remaining part of the program was removed. The Fire Department was allotted responsibility, whilst ‘ongoing’ was added to the schedule.

An amendment was made to the program relating to the provision of materials to the public regarding disrupted storm drains, which would instead read “Work with the Sanitary District to provide...”. The Fire Department and Public Works Department were allotted responsibility, whilst “ongoing” was added to the schedule.

The program relating to the coordination of emergency preparedness or mitigation materials was removed because it was thought to be repetitive.

The program relating to sponsoring the training of Emergency Response Teams was replaced by “In conjunction with Marin Municipal Water District, evaluate the feasibility of providing emergency drinking water”.

The new programs regarding developing and distributing culturally appropriate materials and to assist in ensuring adequate hazard disclosure by working with real estate agents were removed.

General consensus was reached that editing was still necessary and a discussion took place on where infrastructure hazards should be incorporated in the General Plan.

The introduction was inserted and general discussion on the way forward took place.

2. Commence consideration of the Draft Open Space Element

Due to the lateness of the hour, this item was continued.

3. Commence consideration of the Draft Land Use Element

Due to the lateness of the hour, this item was continued.

Approval of Minutes

4. Minutes from the March 4, 2010 workshop meeting.

“Shelter in place” to replace “meet” or “meeting place” with regard to the Fire Hazard section of the discussions.

Page 2, “instigated” to be changed to “implemented”.

In the Fire Hazard Section, “.....should be a higher standard”, should be changed to “...if based on a points system, should require a higher range of points”.

M/S, Goyan/LaMotte, Motion to approve the amended minutes of the March 4, 2010 workshop meeting.

AYES: Goyan, Hamilton, Lacques, LaMotte, Ramsay

ABSTENTION: Ketcham

Commission Comments and Requests

Chair Ketcham commented on the appendices of the Land Use and Open Space Elements, and a short general discussion took place on the elements. Planning Director Moore said that the Open Space Element would be presented for discussion at the next workshop meeting. He discussed the timelines for the elements.

Commissioner Lacques and Mr. Moore discussed a request that was made for a chiropractic business to open in a commercial retail space.

Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting at 10.40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne O’Hehir