

Hon. Kenneth J. Hopkins
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Public Works Director

Thomas Zidelis
Finance Director

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

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

SPECIAL WORKSHOP MINUTES CITY HALL – 3rd FLOOR, COUNCIL CHAMBER 5:00PM – TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 869 Park Avenue.

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

The following Planning Department members were in attendance: Jason M. Pezzullo, AICP, Planning Director; Beth Ashman, AICP, Asst. Planning Director, and Brianna Valcourt, Senior Planner.

Also in attendance: Stephen Marsella, Assistant City Solicitor.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE - WORKSHOP

(no vote taken)

Chairman Smith invited members of the public, both in-person and online to provide comments on docketed matters.

- Janice Cataldo, 65 Sage Drive – Shared concerns related to residential development in western Cranston, specifically regarding potential changes to the land use and zoning patterns of Alpine Estates.
- Susan Lucci, 67 Sage Drive – Voiced concerns regarding zoning in western Cranston and potential impacts on school capacity, traffic, and infrastructure.
- Marcia Maynard, 35 Milton Avenue – Inquired about specific recreational facilities itemized in the Services and Facilities chapter of the comprehensive plan draft. Ms. Maynard referenced specific inconsistencies and/or typographical errors within the chapter related to inaccessible/private recreational facilities and spaces.

Remote participants of the public hearing via Zoom provided the following comments:

- Annette Cataldo, 33 Belle Isle Way – Request to remove designated land use patterns for specific parcels in Alpine Estates from the comprehensive plan update.
- Drake Patten, 684 Natick Avenue – Inquired about specific itemized listings in the Services and Facilities and Energy chapters of the plan.

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Demographic and Community Profile
- Chapter 3: Implementation Plan
- Chapter 4: Natural Resources
- Chapter 5: Housing
- Chapter 6: Economic Development

- Chapter 7: Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Chapter 8: Services and Facilities

Commissioner Frias proposed specific changes related to inconsistencies with (8.2 – meeting information of boards and commissions, 8.5 and 8-19 – specific language changes related to the Budlong pool).

The Commission debated the inclusion of the Budlong Pool Renovation in the Challenges and Opportunities section (8.3) relative to its appropriateness within the plan. Director Pezzullo stated that the renovation project is a resource for the community, not a challenge or opportunity. Chairman Smith agreed. Commissioner Frias suggested altering the section to include a note that the project has reached the bidding process. Director Pezzullo included a note with such information.

- Chapter 9: Energy

Commissioner Lanphear suggested an edit to the section related to the appeal process of the Natick Avenue solar project.

- Chapter 10: Open Space and Recreation

Commissioner Frias provided clarifying language regarding accessibility.

- Chapter 11: Transportation

Commissioners Frias at the outset stated he was a regular use of public transportation. He proposed that language should be included about the positive aspects of the automobile. He also proposed removal of language in 11-2 regarding demographics and culture. He also disagreed with the description of the factors that lead to suburban development in western Cranston, and the impact of transportation on suburbanization in 11-2.

Commissioner Lanphear questioned the definitive separation of eastern and western communities within the City, as identified in the plan. Director Pezzullo stated that the division between the community is not physically definable. Commissioner Barbieri suggested categorizing groups by neighborhoods, as opposed to directional terms.

- Chapter 12: Natural Hazards and Climate Change
- Chapter 13: Land Use

Commissioner Frias proposed changes which would indicate that most of Cranston has a suburban character. He also suggested changes to 13.4 which would state that constraints to development in Western Cranston is due to goal of maintaining its rural character. He also suggested in 13.5 that Cranston is unique in that it has urban, suburban and rural characteristics, thereby giving residents different choices. Commissioner Lanphear shared comments and suggested edits about infill development where appropriate and other specific language include in specified sections.

Commissioner Frias stated he is contemplating suggesting a change to the comprehensive plan to have three parcels in the Alpine Estates should be switched back to A-80.

ADJOURNMENT

(vote taken)

Upon motion made by Vice Chair Coupe, and seconded by Mr. Barbieri, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously (8-0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:35pm.