



NOTES
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2023
6:30 P.M. BOATWORKS COMMONS COMMUNITY ROOM
4495 LAKE AVENUE SOUTH

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

A. Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members

- Kevin Edberg, City Council (joining remotely)
- Bill Walsh, City Council (absent)
- Jim Berry, Planning Commission Chair
- Ken Baltzer, Planning Commission
- Jan Johnson, White Bear Lake Economic Development Corporation (EDC) & County Road E Corridor Committee
- Sara Markoe-Hanson, Executive Director White Bear Lake Historical Society
- Chris Fry, Environmental Advisory Board & Housing Taskforce
- Sharon Hanifl-Lee, Board Chair & Senior Advising Director Children's Performing Arts & Arts, Cultural & Educational (ACE) Area Study
- Mike Greenbaum, Executive Director at Newtrax
- Nora Slawik, Executive Director of Foundation and Institutional Advancement at Century College

B. City staff

- Jason Lindahl, Community Development Director
- Lindy Crawford, City Manager
- Tracy Shimek, Housing and Economic Development Coordinator
- Ashton Miller, City Planner
- Shea Lawrence, Planning Technician

C. Consultant team

- Leslie Oberholtzer, Codametrics
- Kirk Bishop, Duncan Associates
- Andrew Dresdner, Bolton & Menk
- Haila Maze, Bolton & Menk

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. Team roles

- City Planning Commission and City Council: review, recommend, and approve code
- City Leadership and Staff: direct code update process and review consultant work
- Consultant Team: provide staff support/expertise for update

B. Purpose of Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Represent community interests and perspectives
- Advise on public engagement process
- Review and comment on draft materials
- What the CAC will not do: vote on or approve draft code

C. Project scope and timeline

- The project timeline will cover 12-18 months from kickoff; CAC will be convened throughout process to review progress and provide feedback
- Consultant Leslie Oberholtzer, Codametrics provided an overview of the project scope, which is focused on interpreting guidance in the comprehensive plan to update the city's zoning code and subdivision ordinance

- The project will have two primary components: development of a place typology that builds on the city's comprehensive plan future land use map, and a comprehensive update to zoning and subdivision codes. The code will lead to more predictable development, compatibility with existing context, and alignment with community expectations
- The zoning map and language will be reviewed and areas to update will be identified. Zoning districts will address allowed uses, building regulations, and general development standards; subdivision standards will also be updated
- Questions were raised regarding the availability of the comprehensive plan review. A link to the city's online comprehensive plan <https://www.whitebearlake.org/communitydevelopment/page/comprehensive-plan> will be shared with the CAC, along with other materials.

3. PROJECT AND PROCESS GOALS

A. What would make this project successful?

- User friendly document
- Faster permitting and approvals
- Flexibility in uses, with a blended approach
- Residents and businesses get what they need
- Reexamine relationships between uses, such as practice of buffering residential areas from highways using industrial
- Evaluate cross-section from high density to single family, including transitions between uses
- Clarity regarding expectations and managing change
- Clarity of process and clear community understanding of how they can be involved in and influence development processes
- Keep up with changes regarding uses and development types, including what has become obsolete or outdated
- Community support and buy-in with the result

B. What characteristics of the city are most valued? What raises concern?

- Addressing parking is a concern downtown and elsewhere; interest in meeting public parking needs while still ensuring area is bike and pedestrian friendly
- The arts district has changed greatly in recent years; need to understand guidance for that area and how to link safely to downtown; people are walking across Highway 61
- Maintaining downtown's character – maintain home town feel
- Understanding and balancing preservation and development
- Neighborhoods are valued; be aware that these are family homes
- Lakes and trails are valued; need to align open space with built environment effectively
- There may be infill development options around college campus area

C. What are the biggest challenges and/or opportunities?

- Housing that works for young professionals, including those remote working at home
- A cool urban place to live in the city, so people don't have to commute from Minneapolis
- Possible housing near quaint downtown, such as lofts, in walkable area, even without yards
- Providing multimodal transportation access
- Identifying properties that may redevelop
- Underutilized or vacant sites like post office, closing bank branches
- Thinking about how the world has changed
- Making it easy to go to downtown so that people continue to go there and support the businesses
- People are looking for unique experiences
- Affordable housing and transitional housing for seniors and/or low income households
- Housing options for people transitioning out of single family detached
- Addressing when things have gone out of balance, including affordability – even small units are getting expensive (for example, ~\$300k for a 2 BR ranch home with a 1 stall garage)

- Providing mother-in-law flats (accessory dwelling units)
 - Changing housing types and configurations to fit with the time
 - Naturally occurring affordable housing options
 - Possibility of a wave of housing redevelopment as housing ages
 - More people and activity will shift to downtown when north and south campuses unify
 - Activities for teenagers, which are in short supply
- D. Are there any great examples (here or elsewhere) of what this can look like?
- Sisters, OR – city design standards consistent with area character, supporting downtown including limiting franchise businesses in commercial district
 - Maplewood, MN – consider allowing lot splits of larger properties to allow for infill development

4. PLACE TYPE FRAMEWORK INTRODUCTION

- A. Existing conditions overview
- Consultant Andrew Dresdner, Bolton & Menk provided an overview of the built form of the city, including type and placement of streets, year built, existing land uses, and identified redevelopment areas. These, and other characteristics, will be used to inform the development of place types.
- B. Proposed framework approach
- Place types will be organized into neighborhoods, districts, and centers. These will include identification of buildings and land uses, streets, and open spaces, along with other characteristics. These in turn will be used to inform the development of zoning districts.
- C. Discussion on approach
- Approach will need to cultivate/reinforce areas that already exist, while also adjusting to fit with the times.
 - No concerns were raised about this approach. This will be discussed further at future meetings.

5. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND NEXT STEPS

- A. Planning for public engagement – a plan will be developed prior to the next meeting. The following ideas were identified as options:
- Market Fest in Summer 2024 – share out draft code by that point
 - Word of mouth/networks of CAC members and others
 - Review approach from mobility study outreach process – e.g., social media, QR codes, sidewalk decals
 - Clear and relevant messaging – avoid jargon, focus on the results of zoning, e.g., implementing vision, guiding development appropriately
 - There are many community groups here – could do presentations at group meetings, e.g., on history of planning/zoning
 - Nonprofit network is robust in the city – utilize their networks
 - Develop fact sheets, FAQs, presentations, etc. to feed local conversations
 - School district is a great way to send out information
 - Local newspaper has a dedicated readership
 - Create targeted surveys and send out via nonprofit email networks
 - Presentation at the Rotary Club, maybe later when more content to share
 - White Bear Lake Chamber a good way to reach businesses
 - Don't use Next Door, but can use city's official Facebook page
 - Attending farmer's market, open June-October
- B. Setting up schedule for future CAC meetings
- Next CAC meeting will likely be later this fall
 - Scheduling information to follow
 - This time slot (6:30 PM) seems to work best for most people
 - Note that first open house likely to be scheduled in January 2024
- C. Plan and code review
- Updates to be provided at next meeting

D. Typology framework development

- Draft concept to be provided at next meeting

E. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM