



City of Elkins

Planning Commission Meeting

August 8, 2024
3:30 PM
401 Davis Avenue
Council Chamber, 2nd Floor

AGENDA

- 1. Call to order and roll call**
- 2. Public comment**
- 3. Minutes**
 - a. Proposed minutes for the meeting of May 9, 2024
- 4. New business**
 - a. Comprehensive Plan update
- 5. Announcements**
- 6. Adjournment**



CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	August 8, 2024
Section:	Minutes
Category:	Action Item
Agenda Item Name:	Proposed minutes for the meeting of May 9, 2024
Recommended By:	
Summary:	
Fiscal Impact:	
Recommendation:	
Attachments:	1. planning commission - 2024_05_09 - minutes_proposed

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

***401 Davis Avenue
Council Chamber
May 9, 2024
3:30 p.m.***

Present were members: P. Kolsun (chair), K. Somers, B. Woods, V. Jackson, J. Marco, and A. Carroll. D. Talbott was absent.

Also present: S. Stokes (City Clerk, recording secretary), G. Roberts (City Attorney).

MINUTES

Marco MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2024. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Kris Hennig, 220 Boundary Avenue, presented his case for amending the Zoning Ordinance's limit on height of accessory buildings (currently 18 feet).

Marco MOVED RECOMMENDING THAT COUNCIL AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE HEIGHT OF ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AS FOLLOWS: NO HIGHER THAN 75 PERCENT OF HEIGHT OF PRINCIPAL STRUCTURE. Kolsun MOVED TO AMEND THE ORIGINAL MOTION AS FOLLOWS: "NO HIGHER THAN THE HEIGHT OF A SINGLE-STORY PRINCIPAL STRUCTURE; FOR ALL OTHER PRINCIPAL STRUCTURES, UP TO 75% OF THE HEIGHT OF THE PRINCIPAL STRUCTURE, BUT IN ALL CASES NEVER TO EXCEED 25 FEET." The motion to amend carried. The amended motion carried.

Woods MOVED RECOMMENDING THAT COUNCIL AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ADD THE USE "CLINIC" BY RIGHT TO THE INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT. The motion carried.

Jackson MOVED RECOMMENDING THAT COUNCIL AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE'S DEFINITION OF "CLINIC" TO ADD THE PHRASE "OR ANY OTHER HUMAN REHABILITATION SERVICE." The motion carried.

Marco MOVED APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING DRAFT VISION STATEMENT FOR THE UPDATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: "QUALITY OF LIFE IS CULTIVATED FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH OPPORTUNITIES IN TECHNOLOGY, RECREATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORTED BY COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN ARTS, EDUCATION, AND HEALTHCARE." The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Name & Title

Signature



CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date:	August 8, 2024
Section:	New business
Category:	Action Item
Agenda Item Name:	Comprehensive Plan update
Recommended By:	
Summary:	
Fiscal Impact:	
Recommendation:	
Attachments:	1. Attachment 1 - goals and objectives work 2. Attachment 2 - Goals and Objectives Handout

Planning Commission

Goals and Objectives Work

Per state code, a comprehensive plan must include “a statement of goals and objectives for the governing body, concerning its present and future land development.” As you know, state code also stipulates certain topics that must be covered, but those can be addressed later, once goals and objectives are worked out.

Step 1: Identify critical issues

To create effective goals and objectives, you must first identify the most critical issues facing Elkins.

In 2015, the commission identified four critical issues:

1. Public Safety
2. Transportation
3. Economic Development
4. Land Use

What should the issues be for 2025? To help answer this, please review the Goals and Objectives handout from Christy. There you will find the list of “updated issues identified during planning process” (from the interviews, survey, and your own SWOT analysis). Based on that information, answer the following questions:

1. Should the list of critical issues from 2015 be changed?
2. What do you think will be the most critical issues facing Elkins in the years 2025-2035?

Step 2: Create goals based on the above critical issues

Now that you have identified the most critical issues facing Elkins, it is time to create goals to address those issues.

For example, in 2015, the commission identified “Public Safety” as a critical issue. The related goal was: “Further strengthen public safety services to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses.” You can review the other goals in Christy’s Goals and Objectives handout.

Based on your identified critical issues, above, what should the related broad goals be?

Step 3: Create objectives under each goal

Now that you have identified broad goals to address each critical issue, it is time to create objectives under each goal. Objectives help break goals down into achievable steps. For example, under the public safety goal mentioned above, the 2015 Planning Commission identified objectives related to achieving high quality police/fire departments, establishing disaster protection policies, and providing drug education.

Based on your goals, what objectives will help accomplish them?

##

Updated vision statement:

Quality of life is cultivated for all individuals with opportunities in technology, recreation, and economic development and supported by community investment in arts, education, and healthcare.

2015 Critical Issues

- Public Safety
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use

Updated issues identified during planning process (Planning Commission SWOT, stakeholder interviews, public online survey)

- SWOT
 - Tygart River
 - Stormwater drainage
 - Abandoned and dilapidated buildings
 - Limited housing stock
 - Unsafe intersections
 - Aging infrastructure
 - Consolidation of schools
 - Recreation (Potential to expand parks, trails, community center, etc)
 - Make downtown Elkins more bicycle friendly
 - Connections with D&E (support of students, connecting D&E with downtown)
 - Public/private partnerships
- Online Survey
 - Walkability
 - Safe access to pedestrian street crossings
 - Condition of streets and sidewalks
 - Street lighting
 - Accessibility for those with challenges
 - Level of traffic
 - Parking for visitors
 - Safe access to outside roads
 - Access to public transit
 - Retaining young people
 - Lack of job opportunities
 - Availability of mental health and addiction services
 - Availability of high-speed internet
 - Abandoned and dilapidated buildings

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

- o Activities for young children
- o Keeping streets safe (homeless people, drugs, etc)
- o Dog park needed
- o Beautification of city
- o Infrastructure concerns (age and cost)
- o Need affordable housing
- o Online survey respondents would like to see additional retail, single family housing, and recreation facilities
- Stakeholder Interviews:
 - o The city could provide incentives for businesses to operate in downtown Elkins
 - o Convert some of those yellow lines to handicap parking
 - o Local government could create a means by which business owners could peacefully and regularly communicate with the city about issues and support needed
 - o Local government could actively promote small local businesses on social media
 - o Guidelines for making alcohol permissible for downtown community events while lessening prohibitive guidelines
 - o Fund the creation of the part-time “beautification” or landscape specialist
 - o Need a Glendale dog park
 - o Upgrade of playground equipment in neighborhood parks
 - o Renovation of the main pavilion of City Park
 - o Security at parks
 - o Tennis courts, additional pickleball courts
 - o Continue to promote tourism, events, fairs/festivals for the county, as well as be a prominent hub for surrounding counties
 - o Continue to beautify downtown
 - o Sidewalk restoration and adding better footpaths
 - o Promote new businesses
 - o Develop areas of river front for recreation
 - o Rising costs of rent (commercial and residential)
 - o Community/business leaders reluctance to work together for the greater good
 - o Age of school buildings
 - o Drugs
 - o Old Four Seasons Hotel reimagined
 - o Additional parking
 - o Lack of historic preservation regulations
 - o Lack of affordable housing
 - o Lack of senior housing
 - o Lack of ability to annex additional area

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

- o Bad sidewalks and bad law that makes the property owner responsible for replacement along with poor or missing handicapped sidewalks at crossings
- o Lack of signage for businesses and tourist attractions
- o Retention of a young and educated workforce
- o The current housing stock is limited and aging
- o Benches for Town Square/Streetscape improvements
- o Elkins specific marketing
- o Lacking number and spacing on fire hydrants outside of city on PSD systems
- o Difficulty with visibility at some intersections
- o Lack of appropriate traffic control signs and systems
- o Second fire station
- o Recruitment and retention of fire volunteers-lack of volunteers will require additional paid positions
- o VFD training facility
- o City has parks and the normal community sports leagues, but what do we have for kids outside of that? There seems to be very little community or civic involvement from the youth.
- o Educating the community on how each city department functions, why they function that way, and how it benefits the community.

2015 Goals

Goal 1: Further strengthen public safety services to meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses

- Objective 1: Ensure residents are served with a high quality police and fire department
- Objective 2: Establish policies to help protect the public from disasters and make the community more resilient
- Objective 3: Provide residents and students with information regarding the effects of drug use

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- Police has hired more staff, purchased body armor and cameras, two canines. There is paid fireman and fire fee. Petty crime can be an issue with completion of Corridor H.

Goal 2: Improve traffic and pedestrian circulation to provide a safer and more accessible transportation network for residents

- Objective 1: Improve the walkability of the City
- Objective 2: Investigate parking options in the downtown business district
- Objective 3: Alleviate congestion in the City of Elkins

Elkins Comprehensive Plan Update
Goals and Objectives-July 2024

Notes from Dec 2023 meeting- traffic on Randolph Ave. is still an issue, wayfinding is still important, sidewalks/pedestrian infrastructure is still needed, traffic calming. Refer to streetscape master plan.

Goal 3: Provide opportunities for increased economic development

- Objective 1: Identify areas for re-development and new development to increase the tax base
- Objective 2: Capitalize on visitors to the ~~American Mountain Theater~~ and Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad
- Objective 1: Improve functions of city government

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- TIFF district can help with streetscape/signs. Big Timber and Tygart Hotel open will spur development around those places. Would still like to annex. City charter has been updated.

Goal 4: Enhance and protect the character of the City through land use planning

- Objective 1: Protect the natural and historic character of the City through zoning
- Objective 1: Encourage the beautification of the City to entice visitors
- Objective 2: Establish policies to protect neighborhoods throughout Elkins

Notes from Dec. 2023 meeting- Don't want 250 N to look like out towards Walmart. Not in city limits but concerned with corridor H and new development. Regulations have been modernized. Fine-tuning new zoning and stepped-up enforcement. Historic preservation has improved.