

**City of Columbus**  
**Public Hearing – 2040 Comprehensive Plan (PC 18-112)**  
**May 16, 2018**

The May 16, 2018 Public Hearing to receive testimony to consider a recommending approval of the City of Columbus 2040 Comprehensive Plan for release and formal review by affected jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Council, was called to order at 7:25 p.m. by Chair Garth Sternberg at the City Hall. Present were Commission members: James Watson, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko; Planner Dean Johnson; and Recording Secretary Rochelle Busch.

Also in attendance were Mayor Dave Povolny, City Council members Denny Peterson, Jeff Duraine; Haila Maze of Bolton & Menk; Ryan McMonigal, Fannie Pen, and Elwin Berg

**Sternberg:** So we are going to, have a public hearing and discussion for the 2040 comprehensive plan pages 33 and enclosure. And at this time I would like to ask the recording secretary to read the notice as published.

Notice was read at this time by the recording secretary.

**Sternberg:** Thank you.

**Maze:** I don't know if you want to hear a presentation first or do you want to hear from the public?

**Sternberg:** I think the presentation should probably come first, and then if the public has questions they can, during the open, public open, they can speak.

**Maze:** Well I have a series of boards here. Which are kind of old school. But you have copies of all this in the plan. I think we distributed a copy of the plan last time we met with you to the planning commission. So if you are trying to play spot the difference, not much has changed since last time. I am going to go through the highlights of the plan, especially for those who have not been involved in the process as much. And then I guess if there's questions, or other opportunities to talk through and then we'll answer them.

So, as you know the reason we are doing a comp plan update right this moment is because of the Met Councils timeline. Every 10 years they require all cities in the twin cities area, actually it's under state statute to follow the instructions of the Met Council and update the plan process. Of course we want to do the plan for the City of Columbus and not just for Met Councils check the box. But you read through the plan, look through it and think there's a lot of stuff in here, why is this in here? It's probably required. That's probably why it's in there. We really need to focus on the main points the most important points pretty quickly and go from there in terms of any discussions about that. And of course all this represents the good work that's been done by the folks in this room and others, just to spotlight what's important and how you want to grow as a community. As mentioned, this is from the discussion I understand has been very long in the comings, since you've had councilmen involved, is the community designations. Currently and

in the discussion that has been for some time is too classified as diversified rural which reflects larger than the character that's going on here now. We had a lot of discussion, I think a better part of a year, to say is that the right decision. Are we wanting to be designated, is this the right thing? This is the closest map between what the city wants to see and what Met Council wants. After a long path, were back where we started in terms of that. Met Council has acknowledged the flexibility of this district and the needs, it's not a once size fits all, they understand, to a certain degree, making the best case what the city is, what it wants to be, is for most part consistent. We're staying with, as we've had a long discussion around, 5 acre minimum, with the understanding that some time with the way lot averaging works could be a little bit less often a little bit more large and consistent with what the city has done to date. And that's come directly from the conversation from the public. Majority of the folks seems to prefer that as to allowing these small small lots city wide. The designation hasn't changed, though there is more language if you read about how that this surplus (unintelligible). Of course one of the major things as I'm understanding is on ground right now, it doesn't shock anyone who knows the city that we have a great deal of wetlands. We did a lot of analysis that talked through what are the different areas that are most suitable to build it the strengths there are, what special provisions we need to protect those areas, while still allowing for maximum possibility of real properties. Of course most of our time is spent in the freeway district, because that is where most opportunity for development can occur. The development and strengths that we look at, of course extensively as we just heard, are the wetlands, wet areas. Those will be mapped out carefully just because were not planning on top of areas, at least at the plan level that are showing as wet, or showing as undevelopable. Of course as we just heard, this doesn't include going back and having these detailed discussions and detailed lobby for, this will not replace the wetland (unintelligible) but hopefully it will just flag on the front end, areas that need detailed consideration, or aren't currently suitable for development.

However a big part of the plan is the need Economy growth development for the City. Looking at the amount of development that is planned through 2040, escalation in total household, that is a modest amount, considering the size of the city but in terms of course develop ability, it's not out of scale for what's to be expected. Like a lot of cities for 2030, were scaled back and again, that wasn't picking on Columbus that is the reason why a lot of the plans that were on the plate 10 years ago are less. So now as were getting to this part of the process, there's less development planned, less dense in certain areas, more concentration in the freeway district, and also, very specifically less space, with more concentration around the interchange. That is really probably the biggest distinctive feature. Again take this and compare it to your 2030 map, it's going to look not much different, overall there's not a huge amount of change, in terms of the lay of the land overall. We spent time talking to property owners in the freeway district, looking at where, what areas, are the most suitable for your complexing pieces, contracting commercial area, because the idea was the bigger market setting, that we want to make sure that proposing best space for merchants to be, and really thrive around the interchange, there's more visible sight to accommodate for that, and having light industrial and other (unintelligible) uses a bit farther away.

The other big add for this freeway district and if you look at your map you can see, we do have a space that is specifically for Suburban Residential. Right now under the current plan, Suburban Edge Residential was only allowed as an overlay. This doesn't have its own designation strip. In the case of this map, there's now a small area in the northwest corner, smallish about 40 acres

total, so not tiny, but not a huge part of the city. That can be directly designed and valued as residential specifically the idea of that is to create a new neighborhood. It's really more (unintelligible) part of the freeway district. And can also accommodate more density than the rest of the city. One of our recommendations of the plan is to discuss last time I think is to also up the density of that district to 15/16 units per acre. That would allow town homes, maybe even some low-rise mix use development. Again, not so much to say that that has to be a development, but to give more options for the housing in this area, to give more options for people to get value out of their land if they sell it, more options for people that want to live in the city, that can't otherwise afford here. Like seniors, or new home owners, maybe kids that have lived here, or the people who need assistant living, different household types, different options. And again, that's why flexibility and more intensity more capped space in these strips. We of course still are allowing some suburban residential overlay in your other districts as well. So you have that option throughout the freeway district but that area isn't really called out. One of the plans that isn't on the board, just to let you know is housing is a modest fair small number of affordable units is expected of the community, I say expected because there's no mandate recommended from the Met Council. I will add that this area, small scale apartments could easily meet that requirement, without (unintelligible) it's less about subsidized and more just being priced in a way that is affordable. Again, the one change in your map if you look really closely, we had a request at the last meeting, again the City Council affirmed this request, was to change a portion of the industrial property, Mr. Stenke was the name of the, who specifically requests the change to light industrial as oppose to commercial we had made that change, it doesn't change your numbers as much but it's your, it was a specific request at the last meeting. We also did a little bit of clean up, that is just reflecting a few errors in here, we are not bringing any other changes, if there are other changes we would appreciate attention to that. This is where it is now, and for those of you that are familiar with it if something new, or inconsistent with this, or another proposal, we would have to amend the Comprehensive Plan to reflect that.

There's also a staging element, which if you on the Planning Commission are scratching your head why do you have staging in the freeway district, that's a met council requirement. It's largely a paper exercise, and doesn't really reflect beyond that. But again it's checking the boxes to say, that we acknowledge the way this is running out and of course very obvious the freeway district we have how to efficiently and effectively install and extend out sewer and water. We don't want development that's leap frogging or that's far out, when its noncontiguous, because that's just expensive and to have to run more lines out in the end, add more lines, dead end lines, more complicating issues and have things that don't work. So again the idea is, at least in the areas that sewer, is directly compact and contiguous. You're not just sending, extending lines way out for service. Of course with that the land use component is a part that you'll probably as a city keep going back to again and again because it's the part that we've all had a lot of dedication to, over the course (unintelligible).

The parks and fields element is very straight forward. A lot of cities they spent a lot of time on this. We didn't spend a lot of time on this one because we understood we're not showing any new park land, you folks have open space in abundance. We also don't show any new plans for trails, because again the rural character, doesn't necessarily need separate facilities we have general language to say, development comes in they want to build sidewalks, that's great, you can work with the property owner, you can work with the developer and make that happen, but there's not a specific ending around, developing a networks anywhere. The one thing you will

see on the map, is the long corridor for the county regional trail work study, corridor study along the western edge. All that plan is basically said that this plan exists, the county wants to work on it, were here, we will cooperate. That's the level of commitment, it doesn't say, we will build it or officiate it just that were available. And again that's the regional park and individual trail system that isn't an important part of the plan as far as compliance. They just want to make sure you understand who they are.

Ok, the transportation component, again one of those things thanks to your rural character, we don't have to dig into in great detail. But I will talk through where we are with that, and the recommendations in the freeway corridor. The projected traffic lines, of course you can't read it here, but you don't need to because you can see the color. Anoka County like most of the counties in the area, took that model and fixed it up, and made it work better at a local level, they did forecast county wide. And when I talk with the county engineer he said, nothing going on in Columbus. There's no congestion and the green means no congestion forecasted for the next 2040. With one exception, you'll see a little yellow that shows up on the 35w, actually this is 35, the 35 corridor. It just talks about it being borderline capacity. Again note that's the interstate system, it's not really your issue to solve, the region will look at that. This doesn't mean they are going to widen the interstate at this location, but it means they are planning to watch that segment, if they think they need to add capacity or need to make some improvements to that interchange, at some point in the future. That's really, as far as the transportation recommendations, pretty straight forward. Transit, check the box, that you have a park and ride, I don't expect any changes. And of course freight, just acknowledging that there's truck routes and freight moving through the community and that the priority should be to do that as efficiently as possible and minimizing a negative impact. So pretty straight forward. There's only one road that they are calling out as an incomplete road and this does not mean that it's the only road that's going to be built, it's the only one that's going to beyond this local access. This plan of course doesn't address if there's a little lane to serve a property, you don't need all that on here, that's too fine detailed. What we talked about was an improvement, a parallel route along Lyons and another connecting route along the western side of the freeway corridor, I'm sorry eastern side of the freeway corridor, just to provide access to those properties better. As everything develops, I think that there will be a demand or pressure for those of you that travel that area, to improve the road from two lanes, showing the business developed area. That is along the route, you listen to the plan before (unintelligible). The county again said no major improvements will be happening in this area. The one thing that we do know that's kind of on the horizon, and we don't have it mapped, because it seems, my understanding was there's not a decision about where it should land. The future freeway interchange located at 170<sup>th</sup> 180<sup>th</sup> somewhere else, Forest Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Columbus that's been part of their discussion recently and my understanding of the discussion it's still forthcoming. The way the plan is worded now, again we want to make sure we are getting it just right, says the city would be comfortable with either 170<sup>th</sup> or 180<sup>th</sup> as the location for the interchange. Again, we don't even map it because it's not really in the city except for the maybe in the southern corner. Just know that your open for discussion, you want to be at the table, you want to be part of the discussion, you want an influence in that but you're not, picking a favorite right now. Forest Lakes plan does pick 180<sup>th</sup> they have actually even a drawing that they have complete of interchange intersection, that's located right there, that's in their plan. We could include that but it sounds like, what I've heard, no were not going to do that.

That really is the extent of the content of the plan. Again, we have cut through that for a while. We're just making tweaks at this point, again were still open for discussion. I should mention the one piece of the plan that I didn't present because we didn't really offer it, the water resources, the service water main, and the water supply plan. We're going to incorporate them as appendixes into this plan, as with the completed and that will be part of the documentation as well. Most of those are being managed, indirectly handled through the DNR, and some other agencies so there a lot of being compliance of the systems. You'll probably get a presentation at some point of those.

In terms of the timing of where we are now, were right at the point this is a formal hearing, if anyone wants to make a comment, that's a great time to do so. This plan is going, I understand, assuming everything's ok, goes to the next group to your City Council. That would be the, at that point will be, the continued action will be approval of, to reals ease the plan for 6 months, jurisdictional review, starting the clock, that would end us, if they started right away, that's about November, the 6 months is over. Again, the cities, all your jurisdictions could finish before then, but we can't force them to, so we have to plan on the 6 months. It could end sooner, we don't know that. As according to them, bring it back to the city, see if there are any changes that came up in that time, we give them and the other jurisdictions or in this case itself, we may need to do some housekeep, as its brought to your attention when your reading it over and over again for the next 6 months, which I really hope nobody does that, it will be out there for everybody to read, everybody to review, and you can come back and are there are any little changes you need to make before we finalize it, and send it to Met Council. They need it by December 31, aka 60 days or up to 120 days, there call to review and give responses back. That's the process to move, to move along the track. I've talked long enough, Are there specific questions about this?

**Krebs:** On the appendixes are they included in this hearing tonight? We just don't have all the details? I mean because they all have to be before hearing, right?

**Johnson:** The distribution of the plan for adjacent community review, does not technically require the storm water management plan, water supply plan. It must include the land use component, which we have. We also would be attaching, a resolution that authorizes this distribution that doesn't have to go out for this review. A question that Elizabeth and I haven't even talked about, whether there is a desire to have public hearing on the 3 storm water plans that are being done by TKDA that is not a requirement by law that I've ever determined. Nor is there a requirement on the water supply, which is mainly a DNR data update on your system that can certainly be done. When we submit the plan to the Metropolitan Council, at the end of the local review, it must include all of those exhibits. So, I skirted around your question, my position is, it isn't necessary to have those appendixes for our purposes on the land use plan at the public hearing.

**Krebs:** Okay.

**Maze:** They have also have their own set of parallel review structure that happens to coincide and sink with this process, there sort of independent. Even if comp plans weren't required, they kind of are required to the use of those. They are not required in the state of the plan.

**Sternberg:** Any other questions?

**Krebs:** I do, on the proposed, where the, you were talking about 170<sup>th</sup> or 180<sup>th</sup>, is there a reason why we wouldn't write that in for strength, as long as Forest Lake has a strong plan, and even design kind of you said, that we wouldn't kind of go with that as well?

**Johnson:** It was my understanding, that at the last council meeting, and I stand to be corrected, because there was not a unanimous position between the four communities, City Council thought it was better to support either location, rather than picking one over the other. And if I'm wrong, in that, that's the information I portrayed to Haila for this plan. We didn't include the Forest Lake plan, we simply said, we support either location. We can change that, but that's what I understood happened at the last meeting.

**Mursko:** That was the motion for the Washington County Plan.

**Povolny:** I believe, what I understood of it was we have a preference of 180<sup>th</sup> but we will put that first and OR 170<sup>th</sup>. Not 170<sup>th</sup> or 180<sup>th</sup>, we want 180<sup>th</sup> preferred over 170<sup>th</sup>. I believe that was it. We have a preference, but not just that. We would take 170<sup>th</sup> at the end of the day.

**Maze:** Ok so I hear to include them both but indicate some priority for that, that 180<sup>th</sup> would be preferable, but you're not ruling out the other one if that's where were ending.

**Povolny:** Right.

**Maze:** we could make that correction.

**Sternberg:** Any other questions? Well hearing none I'm going to open the hearing to the public. Anyone from the public want to come up and speak? Or ask a question? Any one from the public? Ok I'm going to close the hearing with the right to reopen.

*Motion* by Krebs to recommend to the City Council for an approval of the City of Columbus 2040 Comprehensive Plan for release and formal review by affected jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Council. Seconded by Sternberg. Motion carried unanimously.

At this time Chair Sternberg closed the Public Hearing. Hearing closed at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Rochelle Busch, Recording Secretary