

**Long Range Planning Committee**

**of the City of Onalaska**

Thursday, April 2, 2015

1

1 The Meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order  
2 at 5:35 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2015. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and  
3 a notice posted at City Hall.

4  
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Debbie Clarkin, Gary Lass, Dana  
6 Fredrickson, Ken Schmocker, Jim Warren, Jennifer Brown

7  
8 Also Present: Ald. Harvey Bertrand, Planner/Zoning Inspector Katie Meyer, Land Use and  
9 Development Director Brea Grace, Brad Hentschel of Short Elliott Hendrickson

10  
11 Excused Absence: Kristen Odegaard

12  
13 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from previous meeting**

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15 Motion by Jim, second by Jennifer, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, as printed  
16 and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

17  
18 On voice vote, motion carried.

19  
20 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual)**

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22 As there was no one from the public present, Item 4 was addressed next.

23  
24 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

25  
26 **Item 4 – Review and discussion of the following documents for the 2015 Comprehensive**  
27 **Plan Update:**

- 28  
29 a. Chapter 6: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Update:  
30 o Comments from Historic Preservation Commission  
31 o Comments from Plan Commission  
32 o Comments from Parks and Recreation Board  
33 o Comments from Tourism Commission  
34

35 Katie noted that the above-mentioned committees had reviewed Chapter 6 and said overall they  
36 all had approved of the chapter.

- 37  
38 b. Chapter 7: Economic Development Update:  
39 o Comments from Community Development Authority  
40 o Comments from Plan Commission  
41 o Comments from Tourism Commission  
42

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43 Brea said the CDA had discussed alternate funding sources at its March 27 meeting, noting there  
44 currently is a proposal for the State of Wisconsin to eliminate personal property taxes. Brea said  
45 doing so would impact the City of Onalaska negatively, noting that the city has caps on its levy  
46 limits. Brea said the CDA had questioned whether the city possibly could impose a gasoline tax  
47 or a sales tax and would attempt to draft language on how the city can be proactive in exploring  
48 possible alternate funding sources in the comprehensive plan.

49  
50 Brea noted that one of Chapter 7's goals is encouraging home occupational uses and said CDA  
51 members expressed some reservations over utilizing the word "encourage." Brea said there is a  
52 balance between allowing startups and allowing citizens to work from home, and also said there  
53 is a point where the use might become more intensive, thus potentially degrading a  
54 neighborhood. Brea said the focus should be on building a "commercial core" and would draft  
55 language to modify this goal. Brea noted the CDA also had discussed creating revolving loan  
56 programs either to assist the city's businesses or low to moderate income households. Brea  
57 noted there also are some owner-occupied housing situations where the owners cannot afford to,  
58 for example, replace the roof and wondered if a revolving loan program could assist with these  
59 types of situations.

60  
61 c. Review of new Comprehensive Plan chapter maps, Onalaska High School public  
62 participation, and planning for Public Meeting(s) for Land Use Chapter

63  
64 Katie noted that on March 20 she and planning/zoning Intern Stephanie Holt had gone to  
65 Onalaska High School and visited with seven physical education classes. Katie estimated there  
66 were approximately 50 students in each of the classes (freshmen, sophomores and juniors) and  
67 noted that the [comprehensive plan] public participation plan called for interaction with Onalaska  
68 High School as well as elementary school-aged students in the district. Katie said she and  
69 Stephanie asked the students questions related to housing, transportation, community facilities  
70 (primary focus on the city's parks), and land use. Land use had come with a "cluster of random  
71 topics" such as removal of ash trees and the significant number of banks located within the city.

72  
73 Katie highlighted the following points from the Onalaska High School visit:

- 74
- 75 • Most of the students who participated reside in single-family dwellings, but some reside  
76 in duplexes. Nearly all of the students expressed their desire to one day reside in single-  
77 family houses.
  - 78 • The freshmen who participated expressed their desire to be in close proximity to their  
79 neighbors, while the sophomores and juniors favored "wide open spaces" and delineating  
80 property boundaries so they have more privacy. Nearly all the students said they want to  
81 construct and customize their own homes, and reside in single-family suburbs.
  - 82 • Nearly every student surveyed possesses a driver's license. Most of those who do not yet  
83 have a driver's license plan to eventually obtain one and also purchase an automobile.
  - 84 • A significant number of participants (primarily freshmen) utilize a bicycle for

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- 85 transportation. The freshmen and some of the sophomores who have not yet obtained a  
86 driver's license said they feel comfortable and safe riding a bicycle on the city's streets.  
87 However, the sophomores and juniors who have a driver's license said they feel less safe  
88 riding a bicycle on the city's streets.
- 89 • Some of the students referred to areas of the city lacking sidewalks and called for more  
90 sidewalk continuity. Some students requested more trails and said they enjoy the Sand  
91 Lake off-road trails compared to bicycle lanes because motorists utilize these lanes as  
92 turn lanes.
  - 93 • Some of the students utilize MTU. The students also expressed a desire to see more bus  
94 shelters constructed. Some of the desired locations to visit include Onalaska High  
95 School, Valley View Mall and various locations throughout the Cities of La Crosse and  
96 Onalaska.
  - 97 • Students with disabilities are being promoted to utilize more transit. These students  
98 noted that cost is a prohibiting factor for them. The students also said they want to see a  
99 higher frequency of bus trips so they may utilize the system more.
  - 100 • In addition to the Pralle Road intersection, students also tend to avoid the Green Coulee  
101 intersection, State Trunk Highway 16, and State Trunk Highway 35.
  - 102 • Nearly all the students surveyed had visited a park within the last week or month. They  
103 enjoy walking dogs, play basketball, utilize park facilities, and work with younger  
104 students. The students' favorite parks include the Elmwood Hills Park, Holiday Heights  
105 Park, and Pierce Park. All the students said they live within at least a 10-minute walk of  
106 a park.
  - 107 • Students had suggested making improvements to the city parks. Most were sports  
108 related, such as increasing the number of soccer nets and basketball hoops, more disc  
109 golfing, and adding on to the skate park. All the students expressed a wish to see more  
110 drinking fountains, both for human and canine consumption, and barbeque pits. Students  
111 said they enjoy the workout station located next to the children's play area and expressed  
112 a desire to see more created. The students also want to see playground equipment  
113 updated, more trees planted and more public art on display.
  - 114 • The students said they typically go shopping or visit YMCA North. State Trunk  
115 Highway 16 is the primary area in which they spend a majority of their time. The  
116 students were surprised to learn that Valley View Mall is located in the City of La Crosse  
117 and not the City of Onalaska, and there were conversations regarding land use  
118 boundaries.

119  
120 Brea asked Katie if the students' wish to leave the city was related to recreational purposes or  
121 because they had graduated.

122  
123 Katie said the students wanted to leave the city either to attend college, join the Armed Forces or  
124 seek employment.

125

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126 Ald. Bertrand asked Katie if she believes the input she received from the students is a positive  
127 sign that they will be good stewards of the city's resources.

128

129 Katie said the goal is to obtain as much public feedback as possible and noted that she had  
130 brought up the Great River Landing to the students, who expressed a desire to see it come to  
131 fruition.

132

133 Ald. Bertrand said he is happy to learn that young adults still utilize the city's parks.

134

135 Katie said the students expressed a desire to see the city continue investing in its parks,  
136 particularly in activities for young adults. Katie estimated that nearly 350 students,  
137 approximately half the student body at Onalaska High School, had participated in the discussion  
138 and said the information will be placed in Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Plan.

139

140 Jim noted that students who have graduated from Onalaska High School still utilize the city's  
141 facilities when they return home to visit.

142

143 Jim said he would like the city to take the approach that parks are not solely for young children,  
144 citing disc golf courses as an example.

145

146 Katie said the students would like to see disc golf courses established in locations such as  
147 Sandalwood and Holiday Heights. Katie also noted that there will be a tree replanting project at  
148 City Hall where 10 different trees will be planted in late April. Katie said it is possible between  
149 20 and 100 elementary school-aged children could participate in the planting. Katie also noted  
150 that the City of Onalaska has been designated "Tree City, USA" for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

151

152 Brea said she had taken notice of the students' desire for more recreational opportunities and that  
153 she would like to find ways to work with new development to attempt to fill that need. Brea  
154 suggested formulating a goal that can be included in the Economic Development chapter.

155

156 Ald. Bertrand inquired about the trail at Green Coulee.

157

158 Katie said that while the teachers had mentioned it, the students have not yet been out there.  
159 Katie said the Onalaska School District appears to utilize several community facilities and  
160 natural lands, noting the physical education instructors are the same ones whose students utilize  
161 the Waterfront for fishing and kayaking.

162

163 Brad noted the Land Use chapter will be the next chapter to be discussed, but said discussion  
164 regarding this chapter will be delayed due to an impending decision regarding the north-south  
165 corridor. Brad said tonight he wants the committee to reexamine maps it already has seen in  
166 other chapters. Brad referred to the Onalaska Bicycle-Friendly Routes map included in  
167 committee members' packets and noted it had been created by the OnaBike Association. The

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168 green lines represent roads the association deems comfortable for bicycle riders of all ages. Brad  
169 said this map may be altered and asked if there are areas the committee wants to discuss. Brad  
170 noted OnaBike's standards include road widths, whether or not there is vehicle parking, or  
171 whether there is an off-street trail.

172  
173 Katie said the routes represent first-hand knowledge from the OnaBike Association members and  
174 noted this map is on the City's web-site under the "Onalaska Bike Friendly" page. Katie noted  
175 this map was created for the city's "Bike Friendly" application because there really had not been  
176 any maps showing where the bicycle-friendly routes were. This map is intended for individuals  
177 who have learned that the City of Onalaska is a bicycle-friendly community. Katie said it would  
178 be possible to add the state bicycle trail to this map.

179  
180 Jim noted he frequently rides his bicycle and said he does not consider the route from the  
181 intersection of Green Coulee Road to STH 16 to be bicycle-friendly as there are four lanes and  
182 significant traffic along this corridor. Jim said that both he and the majority of individuals he  
183 encounters ride their bicycles on the sidewalk in this area. Jim asked that perhaps OnaBike  
184 reconsider designating this area as bicycle-friendly.

185  
186 Dana noted that County Road OT is designated as bicycle-friendly and said he does not consider  
187 this route to be such.

188  
189 Debbie said she does not consider the stretch of Sand Lake Road going to the Golf Club at Cedar  
190 Creek to be bicycle-friendly.

191  
192 Katie said any modifications made to the map will be updated on the city's website.

193  
194 Brad inquired about Theater Road.

195  
196 Katie noted that "sharrows" had been added and said this area had been improved with the new  
197 intersection.

198  
199 Ald. Bertrand asked if there is published criterion for determining how a road can be designated  
200 bicycle-friendly.

201  
202 Brea referred to the map on the next page, which includes information pertaining to bicycle trails  
203 and bicycle lanes, and said there are very specific design standards for them.

204  
205 Jennifer suggested that a note be included on the OnaBike map that it had been created by the  
206 association.

207  
208 Katie referred to the next map, which was created by the city and incorporates information from  
209 the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, and noted this map includes bicycle amenities such as

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210 bicycle shops, clinics, bicycle parking, public water fountains, restrooms, the trailhead, and  
211 additional bicycle trails.

212

213 Jim referred to the Green Coulee Road bicycle trail, noting there is a sidewalk along the Coulee  
214 Golf Bowl and the residential section. Jim noted the bicycle trail begins at the location on the  
215 map where there is a “T” (for trailhead).

216

217 Dana said he believes the official name is a multiuse trail because it is wider than a sidewalk.

218

219 Brad referred to the Transit System Map and said it is designed to show where the existing MTU  
220 route goes through the city. Brad this map is primarily for informational purposes and must be  
221 included in the Comprehensive Plan. Brad referred to the Wisconsin Railroads & Harbors Map,  
222 which also must be included in the Comprehensive Plan. Brad referred to the Wisconsin Long  
223 Truck Operators Map, which shows where truckers are driving in the city, and noted that there  
224 are local truck routes. Brad referred to the Storm Utilities Map, which shows the storm water  
225 infrastructure in the city, and said this is crucial for future development in knowing how the  
226 storm water that is created by pavement and construction can be conveyed and treated, when and  
227 where appropriate. Brad referred to the Sanitary Utilities Map and noted certain types of  
228 infrastructure such as lift stations and forcemains might be needed to serve areas where future  
229 development will occur.

230

231 Debbie inquired about private manholes, asking if businesses have had to install them for  
232 drainage.

233

234 Brea said yes, stating she believes all the private manholes are located on private property. Brea  
235 cited the example of private manholes located at the Mayo Clinic site at Theater Road and  
236 Midwest Drive.

237

238 Brad noted the Comprehensive Plan discusses water rates and referred to the Water Bill  
239 Comparison Map created by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Brad noted that the  
240 City of Onalaska’s water rates (quarterly bills for 18,750 gallons range from \$24.65 to \$61.13)  
241 are competitive with surrounding areas and said installing water mains is relatively inexpensive  
242 compared to constructing wells. Brad noted the amount listed does not include a storm water  
243 fee. It would include the meter charge, volume charge, and public fire protection.

244

245 Brad referred to the Watershed Map, which shows how water drains and which water bodies are  
246 affected. Brad referred to the Vegetative Cover Map, which shows what natural communities are  
247 present and dominate the landscape. This is crucial information to know when planting trees and  
248 landscaping. Brad referred to the Topographic Map, which shows slopes. Development is not  
249 allowed on the 30-percent slopes or greater. Brad referred to the NRCS Soil Classifications  
250 Map, which shows the best soils to utilize if agriculture is going to occur. Brad referred to a map  
251 created by GIS Technician Joe Barstow that includes areas located outside the city’s boundaries

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252 where development might occur and what uses might be appropriate. Brad referred to the FEMA  
253 Flood Data & Wetlands Map, and noted that if there is development in wetlands it is necessary to  
254 mitigate and trade wetlands elsewhere – preferably as close as possible to the site. Brad said that  
255 while development may occur in the floodplain it usually becomes very expensive and it  
256 becomes necessary to carry additional insurance. Brad said it is difficult to create new  
257 development in a floodplain.

258

259 Brea noted that most of the city's new development will occur along the Sand Lake Road  
260 corridor. Brea referred to the storm water pond and the new developments along Krause Road  
261 and said the holding capacity of the storm water pond had been increased, and there also were  
262 some slope changes. Some of the lands were brought out of the floodplain as a result.

263

264 Brad referred to a map that shows the jurisdictional boundaries of the communities surrounding  
265 the City of Onalaska and noted the red line represents a one-mile buffer. Brad referred to the  
266 Future Land Use Map, which the committee soon will be discussing in greater detail. Brad  
267 referred to the Existing Land Use Map, which will be reproduced with updated data. Brad  
268 referred to a map that shows the functional classification of the roadways and noted that the red  
269 routes (or arterials) represent the primary regional highways. Minor arterials are more local  
270 routes, but meant for vehicle movements. Collector routes guide individuals from their  
271 driveways onto major highways. Local streets are residential streets that are less traveled. Brad  
272 referred to a map showing school district boundaries. Brad referred to the Points of Interest  
273 Map, which shows the city's parks and how the city relates to hospitals, clinics and airports. The  
274 map also shows municipal buildings such as the Omni Center and the Aquatic Center. Brad  
275 referred to the Water Utilities Map.

276

277 In response to a question by Ald. Bertrand, Brea noted the Comprehensive Plan will include an  
278 implementation chapter and said the plan is meant to be a 20-year guide.

279

280 Katie said the goal for the May 7 Long Range Planning Committee meeting is to address the  
281 Land Use Chapter, with the objective being to project what the City of Onalaska will look like 20  
282 years from now. Katie noted a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan will be held at the  
283 Plan Commission level once the Long Range Planning Committee has completed the plan. From  
284 there, the plan will go before the Common Council for final approval. Katie said the next major  
285 step is to obtain additional feedback on the Land Use Chapter.

286

287 Brad said he envisions an open house including a 15- to 20-minute presentation and maps for the  
288 public to view. The map that will attract the most attention is the Future Land Use Map, which  
289 has yet to be completed. Brad said he would like to set up two stations with Future Land Use  
290 Maps and place other maps around the room. The public would then provide feedback.

291

292 In response to a question by Ald. Bertrand, Brea said the OnaBike Association would be  
293 welcome to participate in the process.

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294  
295 Brad said he would like to hold the open house separate from the public hearing. This way, any  
296 changes that need to be made could be done prior to the public hearing.

297  
298 Katie noted the Land Use and Implementation chapters will be addressed by the Long Range  
299 Planning Committee in May and June, respectively, prior to the open house and the public  
300 hearing.

301  
302 Brea noted that the information will be on cityofonalaska.com and said staff could create  
303 questionnaires. Brea said she would like city staff and Long Range Planning Committee  
304 members to attend the open house, answer questions and take feedback.

305  
306 Katie said staff can put out press releases for local news media and noted staff also has the  
307 stakeholder list that includes approximately 550 email addresses obtained via the Community  
308 Survey. Katie said she envisions the open house and public hearing being held in July, with the  
309 Comprehensive Plan being adopted in August/September.

310  
311 Brea predicted the open house and public hearing will attract a significant number of citizens if  
312 Mayo Clinic announces its plans for its site on Sand Lake Road and files a rezoning application.

313  
314 **Item 5 – Pay Estimates: Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.**

315  
316 **LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
317 **MONTHLY ESTIMATES**

318  
319 **April 2, 2015**

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Original Contract Amount</u>	<u>Change Orders</u>	<u>Paid to Date</u>	<u>Due this Estimate</u>
1. <b>SEH INC.</b> Comprehensive Plan Update	\$ 39,500.00	\$ -	\$ 31,231.14	\$ 2,241.84

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329 Motion by Dana, second by Ken, to approve the pay estimate of \$2,241.84.

330  
331  
332 On voice vote, motion carried.

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335 **Adjournment**

336

337 Motion by Ken, second by Jennifer, to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.

338

339 On voice vote, motion carried.

340

341

342 Recorded By:

343

344 Kirk Bey