

**Long Range Planning Committee**

**of the City of Onalaska**

Thursday, May 5, 2016

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1 The Meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee of the City of Onalaska was called to order  
2 at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 5, 2016. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a  
3 notice posted at City Hall.

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

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8 Also Present: Interim Land Use and Development Director Katie Aspenson

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10 Excused Absence: Gary Lass

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12 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting (February 4, 2016)**

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

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17 On voice vote, motion carried.

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

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

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

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25 **Item 4 – Election of Long Range Committee:**

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27 a. Chair

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29 Motion by Dana, second by Ken, to nominate and re-elect Debbie Clarkin as Chair of the Long  
30 Range Planning Committee.

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32 On voice vote, motion carried.

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34 b. Vice-Chair

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36 Motion by Jim, second by Ken, to nominate and re-elect Kristen Odegaard as Vice-Chair of the  
37 Long Range Planning Committee.

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39 On voice vote, motion carried.

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41 **Item 5 – Discussion regarding Implementation Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan for**  
42 **the next steps of Long Range Planning Committee:**

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a. Review the Form-based Zoning District

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b. Address housing diversity

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c. Meet with School Districts regarding service constraints, future facility needs, partnerships with school districts

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d. Creation of a Public Art Program

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e. Complete a Study regarding City Entranceway Signage/Improvements

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Katie noted that the Common Council had adopted the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update at its March 8 meeting.

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Debbie noted she had attended the February 23 Plan Commission meeting and said Ann Kathan and Carol Overland, who had suggested making changes to the Comprehensive Plan at the January 26 Plan Commission meeting, thanked her for attending the February 23 meeting. They also thanked the Long Range Planning Committee for taking their recommendations and making changes. Debbie said members of the Plan Commission also thanked the Long Range Planning Committee.

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Katie said she is working to produce formal bound copies of the Comprehensive Plan as well as poster plans. Katie asked committee members to turn in their binders within the next couple of weeks, and then she will print off the new plan as it was adopted by the Common Council. Katie said the committee is now ready to address the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Plan, noting that there already are aspects of the plan being started, including:

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- The Great River Landing Project.

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- The Parks and Recreation Department is beginning its Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, which was an action item in the Comprehensive Plan.

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- City staff and the Plan Commission will be working with Brad Hentschel of Short Elliott Hendrickson on updating a section of the Zoning Code to specify a new district for medical facilities.

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Katie said she is bringing forward the five potential topics that are part of Item 5. Katie said she went through Chapter 10 and pulled out some strategies that she believes might be of interest to the community to examine. Katie told the committee it does not have to address all of them, nor does it have to address any of them. One topic may be selected, and the committee may focus its efforts on it for a few months at a time, or perhaps it might become a strategy the committee works on strategically throughout the next few months.

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- **Review the Form-based Zoning District:** Katie said one of the housing goals is to encourage the development of a variety of housing types, styles and price ranges in the city. A strategy was to maintain the characteristics of Onalaska's neighborhoods by reviewing the Form-Based Zoning Code, which is a special overlay district in the city's

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Reviewed 5/10/16 by Katie Aspenson

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85 older neighborhoods. Katie said a question that needs to be answered is if the zoning  
86 rules still are in effect. Katie told committee members she would give each person a  
87 copy of the map and the ordinance if that strategy is chosen. If the committee chooses  
88 this item and begins working on it, it would discuss the standards at its next meeting. If  
89 changes are recommended, the committee would bring them before the Plan  
90 Commission. Katie said the committee may discuss expanding it, making it more  
91 relevant or eliminating it.

92 • **Address housing diversity:** Katie said one of the strategies was to coordinate with area  
93 housing agencies and key target populations to identify key features of diverse  
94 neighborhoods, which include housing type, styles and prices. Katie said the goal would  
95 be to engage different agencies such as the La Crosse County Housing Authority and  
96 Coulee Cap and ask if the city needs more affordable housing or more apartments. Katie  
97 said this topic likely is more longer-term, adding that any actions regarding housing  
98 diversity would be addressed privately and not by the city. Katie said perhaps rental  
99 housing could be a part of a site plan for new housing or a new development. Katie cited  
100 the example of Nathan Hill Estate, which has incorporated senior housing, rental housing,  
101 single-family dwellings and owner-occupied twindos.

102 • **Meet with School Districts regarding service constraints, future facility needs,**  
103 **partnerships with school districts:** Katie said this topic likely would be tied into the  
104 Parks and Recreation Department, which typically has forged a partnership with the  
105 schools in terms of equipment and shared use of resources. Katie said the city could ask  
106 if the school districts wish to expand in the future or enter into additional partnerships.  
107 Katie said a conversation could take place between the city and principals or  
108 superintendents.

109 • **Creation of a Public Art Program:** Katie said the Comprehensive Plan has a specific  
110 strategy that suggests considering a public art program and encouraging performing arts  
111 and galleries. The strategy also calls for the evaluation of city codes to ensure that the  
112 land uses may be provided for. Katie said the city would need to research what other  
113 public art programs exist in the state and nation. Katie said perhaps an outside  
114 organization such as the Rotary Club or Centering Onalaska might be interested in  
115 participating. Katie said the city would not necessarily fund a public art program, but it  
116 would need to be determined if such a program would be a good fit in the city. Katie said  
117 she can investigate the city's ordinances and determine what currently is allowed, and  
118 also if there are steps to making it easier for public art to occur.

119 • **Complete a Study regarding City Entranceway Signage/Improvements:** Katie said  
120 the committee could discuss where the two or three best places in the city are to address  
121 entranceway signage and improvements. Katie referred to the entranceway signage that  
122 can be seen as motorists exit Interstate 90 and turn onto State Trunk Highway 16 by Wal-  
123 Mart and she suggested discussing if similar signage can be placed along U.S. Highway  
124 53 interchange, State Trunk Highway 35, State Trunk Highway 157 or State Trunk  
125 Highway 16 East. Katie admitted that funding is limited, but she suggested that  
126 committee members could choose their favorite sites and then perhaps commission a

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127 study. Katie noted that signage was removed from both the 2015 and 2016 Capital  
128 Improvements Budgets and said perhaps it would be prioritized if committee members  
129 state they believe the city needs proper entranceway signage.

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131 Katie suggested that committee members choose one or two topics in which they are interested,  
132 and then she will work on a topic or topics over the next few months so the committee will have  
133 something to review at its next meeting in August.

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135 Debbie expressed an interest in addressing the public art program because it goes “hand-in-hand”  
136 with the Great River Landing. Debbie said the committee will have plenty of time to gather  
137 concrete information.

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139 Several committee members also expressed an interest in addressing a public art program.

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141 Dana expressed an interest in addressing entranceway signage that motorists would see as they  
142 exit Interstate 90 and enter Onalaska.

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144 Committee members also expressed an interest in addressing city entranceway signage  
145 improvements.

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147 Katie asked committee members how meeting with school districts should be prioritized.

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149 Jim and Dana both said they believe the public art program and entranceway signage  
150 improvements are more important.

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152 Katie asked committee members if housing diversity should be a priority.

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154 Kristen said she considers it to be “medium” priority because it is a longer-range process.  
155 Kristen also said there is limited space in the city and a “great need” in the future for housing.

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157 Dana acknowledged that there is a lack of lower- and middle-income housing in the city and said  
158 there will be a need for such housing due to the incoming Mayo development along Sand Lake  
159 Road.

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161 Katie asked committee members if a Form-Based Zoning District should be a priority.

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163 Committee members said they believe it should be a low priority because something already is in  
164 place.

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166 Debbie asked if two items such as the public art program and entranceway signage  
167 improvements could be done in conjunction.

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169 Katie said yes and suggested limiting the number of topics to address to two. Katie also  
170 suggested starting on one topic and then addressing the other.

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172 Debbie said she agrees with Dana about starting with entranceway signage improvements  
173 because the Great River Landing will not be ready until 2017.

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175 Katie said she will look at entranceway signage improvements, adding that this is timely as staff  
176 will receive the 2017 Capital Improvements Project list within the next couple of months. Katie  
177 said she would speak with City Engineer Jarrod Holter, who is in charge of setting the CIP list.

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179 **Adjournment**

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181 Motion by Jim, second by Dana, to adjourn at 6:05 p.m.

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183 On voice vote, motion carried.

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186 Recorded by:

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188 Kirk Bey