

CITY OF MOUNT VERNON  
2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING  
MAY 12, 2014

The meeting was held at Mount Vernon City Hall at 6:30 p.m. Chad Sands welcomed the committee members and two members of the public in the audience. Upon motions duly made and seconded, the agenda for the meeting was approved, and the Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

The members present included Matt Siders, Bill Niemi, Jay Johnson, Sonja Redman, Dean Borg, Dick Peterson and Guy Booth. The meeting was chaired by Chad Sands. Subcommittee reports were presented.

Land Use was presented by Matt Siders. He indicated that there has not been a subcommittee meeting since our last general committee meeting, but the subcommittee will be meeting within the next several weeks.

Economic Development was presented by Sonya Redman. The committee has been doing a market analysis in conjunction with CDG. This is a customer intercept survey asking people what do you like about Mount Vernon, and what do we need in addition to what we have in town. The survey has been handed out to people at business establishments and at events. There have been 150 responses thus far. Sonya indicates her group will be doing a business survey before the next meeting.

Sonya also had with her a downtown Mount Vernon market snapshot. The market snapshot was funded by a grant from USDA. It contains substantial information about the economic basis of the population of Mount Vernon. This report will be emailed to all of the commission members.

Jay Johnson discussed how often the plan should be reviewed, or if studies that are incorporated in the plan should be reviewed. This led to a lengthy discussion about the purposes and scope of the plan and whether it should be revised on a regular basis, or whether this plan was long-term planning with frequent enough overview to make sure the plan was accomplishing the objectives of the plan, taking into account any substantial change that was happening in the community. Different opinions were generated.

The Housing subcommittee indicated they are gathering data from local citizens as well as agencies to better understand the future housing needs of the community. They will complete their study for the next general meeting.

Transportation and Infrastructure presented the first draft of their portion of the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, they stressed that when plans are developed, such as the Westside Transportation Plan, the Trails Plan, and the Downtown Streetscape Plan, that they should be approved by the City Council and implemented with a schedule for completion. The Committee will continue to work on a final draft of the section that is entitled Transportation and Infrastructure.

Public Facilities was presented by Dick Peterson. The committee is looking for collaboration and cooperation in determining the needs of public facilities within the community. This includes facilities that have been recently completed, all facilities that need some modification, and facilities that should be planned for the future. The committee also suggested that there should be a proactive approach to identifying property (real estate) that will be needed for public facilities in the future, and to get control of the properties so they will be available for public use.

The Quality of Life subcommittee had been unable to meet in the past month. They will be preparing their first draft and have it ready for the next general meeting.

An interesting discussion also developed regarding establishing an authority within the City that would be a central agency or group to see that there is collaboration between the many stakeholders. Currently, CBG has quarterly meetings for business leaders and members of Cornell, the school districts, and City Hall. It was suggested that a more formal committee could establish regular meetings between collaborating stakeholders in the community which would assist the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, and to keep the community focused on the goals of the plan as they relate to issues that may arise within the community from time to time. The identification of some central group will be discussed more in the future.

Chad announced that the next meeting will be June 9 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. He hopes that all of the first drafts of reports will be submitted prior to the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.