

JOHNSON COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

WORK SESSION - TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023

Vice-Chairman Julie Baker called the meeting of the work session for the Johnson County Planning and Zoning Commission to order January 3, 2023, at 6:06 PM.

In attendance was Julie Baker, Manny Rodriguez, Planner Jim Waller, and County Clerk Jackie Camino. Travis Pearson arrived shortly after meeting started.

Jim Waller discussed the difference between Plan vs Regulation. Current plan is an update to the joint City of Buffalo and Johnson County Plan. The joint plan was based on possible regulation around the city, in the county and a coordinated effort. Then the National Forest Service Plan in early 2000's caused concern about participation with federal entities on federal decisions. The current plan was drafted to update the 1999 information and recognize coordination with the federal entities.

Briefly discussed septic regulations, flood regulations, and addressing policies all which are related to development. The 2005 Plan outlined the land uses which at the time led to the Zoning draft presented to the County Commissioners in 2014.

The Zoning statute is written for counties to follow and create local rules, tailored to the local conditions and community/county needs.

Manny Rodriguez asked about the land use regulation and the land use plan. Are they one in the same or 2 different documents? Brief discussion on the differences; in most cases they are separate.

Density, lot size, lot orientation, setbacks, are mechanisms of zoning and must be adopted by a resolution following Wyoming State Law W.S. 18-5-202. The board has received many concerns about land use and development over the past 10 years. The commission should discuss modest rules but they must be consistent with the zoning law. This could allow some tools to relieve the public concern. However, movement forward must be coordinated with the County Commissioners. Even if the tools are modest, they must be consistent with the state law and the desires of the county.

Planner Waller mentioned remember the November 2022 meeting. This was the controversial final plat review for Yoder Minor Subdivision. The citizens who attended the meeting want to know why a subdivision would be allowed when the will of the community does not desire the additional development along Trabling Road. Brief discussion about meeting and concerns.

Thinking about the Hot Springs County Plan/Regulation, Planner Waller explained this document has relative and absolute polices. Julie Baker expanded on the discussion about the policies and the attempt to make the document clear for what is and is not allowed.

Manny Rodriguez asked about the benefits of updating the plan without rules and a plan with rules? What would be the point of having a plan without rules? Rules appear to be needed to follow the plan. Last meeting, brief discussions on the land use by Lake DeSmet according to the 2005 Land Use Map and what is developed. Would these have been stopped by appropriate rules? Further discussion.

Discussion on the rules and the attempt to stop sprawl in the county. Open space requirements for new development are a topic in Sheridan.

Planner Waller explained water concerns were brought up 18 months ago based on a subdivision. If the county would like to control how or where development occurs, we should define our values for land use.

Planner Waller asked the board, should the county spend the time updating the plan in house? There is a large expense with a plan and concerns about a useable document covering the important aspects of the county.

Not all chapters in the current plan would be subject to update. Chapter 14 identifies the mechanisms to control land use, most of which are the same today.

Discussion on Plan, Zoning, or both. Should we invite the commissioners to a meeting and have a discussion. The 2014, Zoning Draft **did not move** past the commissioners. The governing body may have some input on what they would like to see. How does regulatory environment look if we simply said no more disruption of irrigated lands; similar to Hot Springs County. There is no perfect answer; but the document must be legal to be enforced.

Julie Baker, we should ask the County Commissioners to look at some scenarios to help understand the focus of updating the plan or rules or both? What do they want or expect? We do not want to proceed without support.

Manny Rodriguez mentioned density has come up many times. Maybe the county should have density rules? Can this be done without zoning? Planner Waller explained it comes to water/sewer if we look at it from subdivision. Some land use criteria to assist the board can be beneficial.

Maybe define the Lot Size, Water protections, etc. If the County Commissioners do not feel comfortable, that is a concern.

Planner Waller passed out questions for a survey/questionnaire. Discussion on possibly reaching out to elected officials and appointed boards. Do we send to the board, the elected boards, or all individuals on the boards? Four or five questions with multiple answers is the idea. Brief discussion on the questions presented and the answers listed.

Gerry Spiering asked about federal laws on charging stations, is it possible this could push development? He also questioned the water quality question? We will clarify surface water not ground water. What about the individuals that are against zoning? Should the survey/questionnaire have a question about zoning?

We would like to get a good return from the boards when the questions are sent. Then present data to the County Commissioners and see if they are receptive to the elected/appointed board responses. Good outreach is the best way to get a good response.

Last discussion is development over time and the comparison of subdivisions looking back to the 1970's. It took 5 years (2005-2010) to create the same number of lots that it took to create over 25 years from mid-70's to 2000. Brief discussion on the intensity of development and location of where development has occurred versus what the 2005 Land Use Plan identified.

Julie Baker mentioned how many subdivisions are on the irrigated lands? Loss of irrigation land is more alarming than the number of lots created. If we are an ag county, the county should think about protecting the productive irrigated crop lands.

Chairman Pearson asked do we need any action. Waller responded, no this is only a work session for discussion and ideas. As we move forward, and action will be on your regular agenda. Brief discussion about the costs some Wyoming Counties are spending on updating a plan. Briefly discussed best use of the funding to moving forward.

No further comments.

Work session adjourned at 7:01p.m.

Respectfully,

Travis D. Pearson
Chairman, Travis Pearson

02-07-23
Date

Attest: Jackie Camino
Jackie Camino, County Clerk