

meeting minutes

From: Charlie Cowell (RDG)
Project No.: R3004.450.00 **File No.(s):** 2.01
Date:
Meeting Date: September 30, 2021; 3:00 p.m. – Oskaloosa Public Library

Project Name: Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update

Subject: Advisory Committee Meeting #1 - Minutes

Copies to: Oskaloosa Plan Advisory Committee and Project Management Team

Agenda

1. Introductions

- a. RDG and Advisory Committee members introduced themselves and answered the question, “What does success mean to you through the process or outcomes of the plan?” Responses included:
 - i. Need daily successes, but big goals
 - ii. Bring more amenities to Oksy
 - iii. Better town than when we started
 - iv. Steady growth
 - v. Foster creative climate, friendly for artists
 - vi. Growth and retention, build on what we have
 - vii. The plan is used and does not sit on the shelf
 - viii. Public involvement through the process
 - ix. Recreation opportunities grow
 - x. The plan shows achievements over time
 - xi. Helps Oskaloosa stand on its own (not be compared to Pella)
 - xii. A succinct plan that is to the point on actions
 - xiii. Included other planning efforts in the city

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. RDG detailed how Committee members should be involved throughout the process. Summarized in the attached meeting slides.

3. Process

- a. RDG informed the Committee on the milestones throughout the planning process, noting that the update to the Zoning Code is a separate process to be started next fall. However, the Comprehensive Plan is closely tied to informing the Zoning Code update.
- b. RDG noted that public engagement events will be planned according to the most recent CDC guidance on public gatherings. We will be flexible and provide virtual options as needed.

4. Priorities

- a. RDG led the Committee through an exercise asking them what the opportunities and challenges for potential plan elements are. The responses included:
 - i. PARKS & TRAILS
 - 1. Opportunities
 - a. Extend trail network



- b. Improvements at Edmundson Park
 - c. Lacey Complex expansion
 - d. More community outings
 - e. Better use of Edmundson – Festivals
 - f. More use of existing parks and public space
 - g. Improve current parks
 - h. Rec trails
 - i. Winter outdoor activities – Cross county skiing, snowshoeing, etc.
 - j. Use of Edmundson Park for Christmas lights
 - k. The amphitheater in U-Park
 - l. Lacey ball complex – more development
 - m. Edmundson! – new playground coming
 - n. Pocket parks
- 2. Challenges
 - a. Bathroom access
 - b. Upgrade pool
 - c. Poor facilities (aging equipment)
 - d. Funding
 - e. More hours at ELC
 - f. Knowledge of existing areas
- ii. HOUSING
 - 1. Opportunities
 - a. Good rental housing – non-income controlled
 - b. Growing businesses – need growing housing opportunities
 - c. Huge demand
 - d. Need more for the community to grow
 - e. New developments
 - f. Code enforcement to create more desirable areas
 - g. Build on demand
 - h. Active subdivisions
 - 2. Challenges
 - a. Space for growth
 - b. More desirable areas in the heart of town
 - c. Hard to find
 - d. Contractors
 - e. Following/updating zoning
 - f. Few developers
 - g. Demand exists but few builders
 - h. “Missing Middle” price homes
 - i. Tear more down
 - j. Housing all types
 - k. Not all low-income
 - l. Not all high cost
 - m. More affordable housing
 - n. Much housing is perpetually run down or rental properties not well kept
- iii. COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 - 1. Opportunities
 - a. Comprehensive plan to make improvements and accountability to see it through
 - b. Park development
 - c. Visitors at Lacey integrating to city
 - d. George Daily Community Theatre – A+
 - 2. Challenges
 - a. Streets and sewer
 - b. Aging without repair
 - c. Aging water/sewer



- d. Cost for new development
- e. Limited area for business to grow
- f. Lacey is accessible to 163 – but very few amenities are visible
- g. More access to the Art Center

iv. TRANSPORTATION

1. Opportunities

- a. Street improvements – on-going
- b. Improve the look of A Avenue
- c. New scooters – Promote!
- d. SE Bypass
- e. Airport area development
- f. Continue to build trail network
- g. Bypass funding
- h. SE Industrial connector
- i. More roundabouts?

2. Challenges

- a. Northwest Bypass (someday)
- b. Access to OES, New YMCA, Lacey Complex
- c. Need a noise ordinance
- d. \$ available for ongoing maintenance
- e. Traffic on South Market
- f. Poor road conditions
- g. Few thoroughfares
- h. Too many trucks thru square
- i. Inadequate capital funding
- j. Congestion/truck traffic
- k. Poor access to Edmundson along 11th St

v. DOWNTOWN

1. Opportunities

- a. Continues façade improvements
- b. “Hallmark town” feel
- c. Update buildings
- d. Housing
- e. Few vacancies = variety
- f. Restaurants and pubs!
- g. Upper story housing
- h. Art, murals, sculptures around town
- i. Festivals, music, fun
- j. Destination city
- k. Events well-publicized
- l. Lighted Christmas parade
- m. More sit-down places to eat

2. Challenges

- a. Keep people shopping Oskey
- b. Poor street condition
- c. Lack of funding for streets and streetscapes
- d. Getting support for new businesses from community (opposition to change)
- e. Programming P.R.
- f. Space for more retail and restaurants
- g. Downtown shopping

vi. CORRIDORS

1. Opportunities

- a. Downtown mapping – Shopping mall-type directory
- b. Commercial area rehab and reuse with space at a premium
- c. Redo all at entrance and exist on Market and A Ave
- d. Men’s clothing options



- e. More restaurants, not just fast food
- f. Keep building up vendor/artists pop-up opportunities
- 2. Challenges
 - a. Are an eyesore
 - b. Don't promote true Oskaloosa
 - c. Limited supply of land zoned with infrastructure
 - d. Utility extensions
 - e. No developers
 - f. Attracting and retaining new business
 - g. Space
 - h. Need to ease up on A Corridor for new businesses
 - i. Interested businesses
 - j. Continue pulling in new food options

vii. GOVERNING

- 1. Opportunities
 - a. P.R. to get the public involved
 - b. Code enforcement
 - c. MORE community involvement
 - d. Good Council and Board members
 - e. Eggs and Issues
- 2. Challenges
 - a. Economics - Payscale
 - b. Too much direction by large corporations
 - c. Code enforcement
 - d. Public knowledge
 - e. New Council
 - f. Relationship with County

viii. EQUITY

- 1. Opportunities
 - a. Allocating improvement funds to all areas of town
 - b. The diversity of William Penn students and faculty
- 2. Challenges
 - a. Not enough funds for blighted area improvement
 - b. Adding diversity
 - c. Hearing from all populations
 - d. Volunteers
 - e. Keeping talented young intellectuals
 - f. Integrating the college students into the rest of the town

ix.

5. Next Steps

- a. The Committee decided the best time to meet is generally the 4th Thursdays of the month at 8:30 a.m.
- b. Locations of future meetings are to be determined
- c. Shawn and RDG will send a draft version of the project website and survey for the Committee members to take.
- d. Next Meetings:
 - i. October 28th, 8:30 a.m. Location TBD
 - ii. December 2nd, 8:30 a.m. Location TBD



Attendance

x	Brant Bollman, FACE, Optimists
x	Joe Caligiuri, City Council
x	Maria DeStefano, Clow Valve
x	Tom Flaherty, Mahaska County
x	Jim Hansen, Musco Lighting
x	Katie Johnston, Business Owner
x	Cody Landgrebe, BOA
	Andy McGuire, Chamber
x	Scott Moore, PZ
x	Emma Rodriguez, Business Owner
x	Linda Russell, PZ
x	Lindsey Thomas, Mahaska County
x	Molly Walker, Business Owner

