

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

*Committee Meeting – Thursday, January 16, 2025 – 5:00 PM*

Branson Convention Center – Roark Creek Room – 200 S. Sycamore St – Branson, MO

*Where Values are the Difference*

JANUARY: Vision – Planning for the future and encouraging growth

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# **MINUTES**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mark Colussy, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator for the City of Branson, calls the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m. after dinner is served. Mark announces that there is no public comment time during these meetings. There will be future opportunities for public comment at specifically designed public meetings. Any members of the public who would like to provide comments can specifically reach out to Mark to provide comments. Mark also encouraged members of the public to reach out to anyone on the committee outside the meeting to provide input.

## **ROLL CALL**

After reviewing the sign-in sheet, Mark announces that the quorum is met.

Present: Ruth Denham, Gary Groman, Matthew Adkins, Dr. Brad Johnson, Mindy Honey, Taylor Clark, Billy Ong, Alex Williams, Cherry Webster, Matthew Kendrick, Bill Skains, Cris Bohinc, Kirk Elmquist, Lisa Marshall, Glenn Schulz, Rick Johnson (obo Cassie Cunningham/WRVEC). Absent: Pamela Yancey, William Mahoney, Dr. Mike Dawson, Chad Meadows, Cassie Cunningham.

COB Staff: Alex Girard, Mark Colussy, Cheyenne Stull, Jennifer Luna-Thompson, Nikki Ashmore, Curtis Copeland. SMCOG Staff: Jason Ray, Aishwarya Shrestha.

## **REGULAR AGENDA:**

### **1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION OF STAFF, SMCOG, AND CPC MEMBERS**

Alex explains the reason for this committee and its goals, asks members to share their visions, ideas, and journeys. Alex formally introduces Mark.

COB Staff that are in attendance introduce themselves per Mark's prompting, Mark explains the three-pronged team.

Jason Ray (SMCOG) introduces himself and his coworker, Aishwarya Shrestha, and explains what they do. Ray describes who and what SMCOG is and how they help the local governments in development. He explains grant writing and other types of help that they provide. Jason tells the committee that SMCOG is here to guide them with planning and researching any questions that might come up during the process.

Mark asks committee members to introduce themselves, what business or entity they represent, what gets them excited, as well as one thing they'd like to get out of the comprehensive planning process. Of the introductions, the items the members indicated they'd like to see included is a unity of effort, public transportation, the replacement of the 2030 plan with a shorter timeframe to execute, ensuring that all people (the workforce) have the things that makes the workforce want to stay here, the authenticity of bringing quality to this market that makes Branson High School graduates want to stay and open a business in Taney County, have a plan puts the puzzle pieces together with actionable items with big ideas, not a cookie-cutter plan since every city is unique and open our eyes and ears to the needs, avoid falling into the trap of plans lacking vision or commitment, finding the right people to help us grow the right way, a plan that is organic and can be taken off the shelf and implemented and able to be continuously updated, being able to collaborate on other planning efforts, an action plan to address the key issues in the community like transportation and blight while striking a balance between residents and visitors, the development of an action plan that can be executed, a plan that promotes adequate buffers and lot sizes, a more conservative approach to balancing single family residential development with economic development, maintaining and preserving the unique characteristics of Branson such as Faith/Family/Flag, research ways to expand housing in the area and expand the water project in Branson West to improve water pressure, preserving single family households from the invasion of nightly rentals, the preservation of public safety including safe driving speeds through neighborhoods, as well as exploring ways to connect parks and neighborhoods with sidewalks.

Mark recapped the items that the committee members wanted to get out of the process by highlighting that almost half of the responses were related to the desire to develop a plan that has an action plan that could be implemented. Mark complimented the group because this is one of the primary objectives of the plan development process. A Comprehensive Plan needs to be a living document that can be used, and not put on a shelf to collect dust.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS & CPC ROLE

Mark provided a presentation on 'What is Comprehensive Planning', and how that will tie into the role of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. He highlighted that though a Comprehensive Plan is not a law, it does indeed provide the basis for land use regulations going forward. It is critical that high-quality feedback is garnered throughout the process of updating the plan, which includes updates to the following subjects: Community Vision, Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, and Community Facilities. The plan will culminate in a set of implementation tools to bring the plan to life.

After the overview of the comprehensive planning process concluded, the floor was opened for committee questions:

Gary Groman: What is the roadmap and objectives of this committee, specifically?

Mark: Answers that SMCOG will be explaining more in a moment, but to expect about seven meetings throughout the year. Each meeting will have a specific purpose, such as the first meeting for an overview, the second meeting to review the survey, the third meeting to discuss goals, etc.

Bill Skains: Suggests keeping objectives simple and straightforward.

Cris Bohinc: Wants to make sure that documents can be protected from future staff/government changes, and the plan "needs a life of its own".

Ruth Denham: Thanks to the Planning Department and staff, she wants the committee to know that they are serious about making "differences that will count".

## 3. EXAMINE COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Mark transitioned to SMCOG staff to provide a presentation on the data collected on Branson's community characteristics.

Aishwarya: Discusses the planning process, community surveys, census data and making plan actionable.

Gary Groman: Wants to know the areas that they (the committee) will be aiding in.

Aishwarya: Explains that committee members will be helping by going through multiple meeting and coming up with development plans, they will help get community involvement and by urging community members to complete their surveys and give feedback or thoughts regarding the plans.

Mark: Confirms that the committee is to be the bridge between staff and the community.

Cherry Webster: Brings up that plenty of subdivisions have their own boards and we should include them and speak with them as well, she states "that's where the people are at... in the communities they live in".

Aishwarya: Discusses population trends, population projections, income, community needs, median age changes and forecasting future community needs based on median age changes.

Glenn Schulz: Worries about data due to the female numbers being so much higher in children than the previous census.



Bill Skains: Requests to see particular data regarding graduates of the area staying in the area to build businesses that will help with economic development.

Aishwarya: Presents more slides showing education completion levels are trending higher in younger age groups, housing structures and that most of Branson's housing is geared towards tourism.

Glenn Schulz: Wonders where data came from and if housing is "single" only or including apartments.

Aishwarya: Answers that the data is from the census. She states she will check the numbers. Housing unit types are discussed, the increase in the number of apartments in the area is much higher than that of single-family "unattached" homes.

Gary Groman: Wants to know if condos are in the same category as apartments.

Aishwarya: She will check to make sure. Discusses how median household income had decreased in 2020, but raised back up in 2023.

Alex: Asks if loss of housing units should be discussed.

Bill Skains: Wants to know if timeshares are included.

Cris Bohinc: Thinks it probably wouldn't make sense for timeshares to be included in these figures because the census wouldn't have been sent to tourists.

Aishwarya: Moves on to slide showing our area's different job types.

Glenn Schulz: Questions the accuracy of the numbers of government workers in the area.

Gary Groman: Requests that more of the information be printed off and be in front of them to look at because the slides are hard to see.

Billy Ong: Notes that Gary is correct and the slides are hard to see

Mark: Makes sure that everyone knows he will be emailing the entire slide presentation out to all the committee members.

Glenn Schulz: Would like tax revenues to be included in the numbers given in the presentation.

Matthew Kendrick: Wants to know if the vacancy/availability numbers can be split to show condos and VRBO types versus primary residences.

Mark: Reminds committee members that the data is to help them to decide on some goals and to guide the discussion, that to keep this meeting time manageable, the numbers and data are minimal until they start to dive deeper down the road.

Mark introduces Curtis Copeland and asks him to speak regarding the maps that are located around the room. Curtis discusses the geographical information and data that each map shows. He assures them that he is ready to supply all GIS information that is needed to help the committee make informed decisions and be aware of restrictions that exist in our community due to its geographical uniqueness.

#### 4. INTRODUCE DRAFT COMMUNITY SURVEY

Mark discusses the need for upcoming surveys and passes out sample surveys for the members to go through and give feedback on. The committee took a few moments to look at the survey and were given

an opportunity to provide some initial feedback:

Glenn Schulz: Requests that there be electronic surveys

Gary Groman: Agrees with Glenn and wonders when the feedback is due.

Mark: Suggests 2 weeks for follow-up information to be returned to him. He also suggests setting the next meeting time quickly and asks that all members please send him the schedules of other major meetings to avoid when rescheduling this committee's next meeting.

Glenn Schulz: Asks who the surveys are going to be sent to.

Mark: Explains that the surveys will be sent to all PO Boxes and that residences and businesses all would be receiving.

Glenn Schulz: Wonders if it is possible to survey certain types of people only... like builders, business owners, just business owners on 76, etc.

Mark: Answers that, yes, it is called micro-surveying and we will also be doing that in time. We will be trying to normalize the data to make data obtainable.

Bill Skains: States that quality of life questions will be important to determine what is needed in the city.

Billy Ong: Questions if he is supposed to send the surveys to friends.

Alex: Answers that "no" they should not be sending out the surveys out just yet, that these are just for them to edit questions only.

Lisa Marshall: Points out that there are grammatical/spelling errors in the survey.

Mark: He is aware of errors, and these surveys are for editing purposes and not the final copy. Asks everyone to please remember to do the "homework" and edit it and send in meeting availability times.

## 5. SET DATE FOR SURVEY & NEXT MEETING

After Mark suggested trying to find a common time and date of the week and month to meet, a discussion ensued regarding the selection of the next meeting date and time:

Billy Ong: States that he thinks they can decide on availability right now.

Kirk Elmquist: Agrees with Billy and suggests the 26th or 27th at 5:00 p.m.

Mark: Asks if committee members agree that the 26th or 27th is a good night for them.

Billy Ong: Suggests 27th to avoid a church night, all members agree. The next CPC meeting will be Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.

Mark: Discussed that the meeting will probably be held at the Convention Center again for the next meeting, if available. Details would be sent out to the committee afterward.

## REPORTS

Due to the time, no reports were given at the meeting.

## ADJOURN

Mark closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their time. The Meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.



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Mark Colussy  
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator