

DRAFT
MINUTES OF THE JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
FOR THE CITY OF HAYDEN, KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO

Monday, March 18, 2024

Special Meeting: 5:30 PM

Hayden City Hall Council Chambers, 8930 N. Government Way, Hayden, ID 83835

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present: Ed DePriest, Matthew Roetter, Tom Shafer, **Absent:** Sandra White.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Present: Shawn Taylor, Mary Howard, David Erickson, Ben Prickett, Brandon Beamis, Joel Johnson, and Keith Gibson

1. WORKSHOP

A. Proposed Updates to Adopted Comprehensive Plan Discussion - Stakeholder Meeting 1

Mayor Davis began the workshop with a presentation emphasizing the need for a collaborative approach between the City Council, planning and zoning commission members, and developers to shape the future of Hayden. He urged a shift from an "us versus them" mentality to a unified community vision. The presentation outlined the diverse housing needs in Hayden, ranging from affordable options to single-family homes on larger lots. Mayor Davis highlighted the importance of building trust and partnerships with the development community. The meeting format was described as akin to speed dating, with four rounds of discussions planned to facilitate open dialogue. The presentation also touched on draft goals and policy updates to the Comprehensive Plan related to parks, connectivity, environmental protection, and housing diversity. Mayor Davis encouraged feedback and engagement from the community to inform future decisions.

Mayor Davis, along with Emily Bradley from the North Idaho Building Contractors Association and Joel Johnson from the Planning and Zoning Citizen Commission, discussed the need for more affordable housing options in Hayden. Mayor Davis expressed concerns about housing becoming a business rather than a utility, and emphasized the importance of creativity and community input in development projects. Joel raised concerns about infrastructure capacity and the need for affordable housing to be aesthetically pleasing and diverse. They discussed the challenges of defining affordable housing and the importance of partnerships to address housing needs. Emily expressed gratitude for being included in the conversation and committed to discussing the issues with builders and developers to find solutions.

Council Member Tom Shafer, Commission Members Brandon Bemis and Ben Prickett, and Steve Syrcle owner of Tri-State Engineering engaged in a discussion about various issues related to development and the environment in Hayden. Steve, a private land use development engineer, highlighted the importance of managed growth and balancing development with environmental preservation. He also expressed concerns about housing affordability, particularly for young homebuyers. Tom Shafer, a City Council Member shared that he and Steve had previously met over an issue that motivated Tom to run for council. Tom expressed concerns about environmental

regulations being burdensome for small and medium-sized developers in an area where he previously resided. However, Tom noted deficiencies in Hayden's city codes, particularly regarding environmental protection, which he felt were optional and not enforced consistently. He emphasized the importance of standard principles for environmental protection and suggested that Hayden should adopt practices similar to the county's more reasonable regulations as it grows to preserve the natural environment for future generations. Ben, a member of the Planning and Zoning commission, shared his perspective on the environment, emphasizing the need to protect natural resources and avoid overdevelopment. Brandon, also on the Planning and Zoning commission, discussed deficiencies in the city code related to environmental protection and suggested aligning with county regulations. The group also touched on the impact of housing prices on working people, traffic congestion, and the preservation of the aquifer. Overall, there was a consensus on the importance of managing growth responsibly to preserve Hayden's natural environment and quality of life.

The discussion on sprawl and density in Hayden involved several key stakeholders expressing diverse perspectives and concerns. Jeramie Terzulli, representing the development community, highlighted the need to balance development with the preservation of open spaces. He also expressed personal concerns about housing affordability for future generations, particularly his children's ability to return home after college.

Mary Howard, a Planning and Zoning Commission member, underscored the community's inability to afford their homes today, calling for developers to think innovatively about creating attainable housing options. She criticized the construction of townhomes in single-family neighborhoods and emphasized the importance of considering overall neighborhood density rather than just the number of residences in a development.

Mr. Terzulli advocated for preserving open spaces through community initiatives, questioning the lack of collaboration between the County and local municipalities in this regard. Council Member Ed DePriest emphasized the responsibility of elected officials to the citizens and the need to consider all viewpoints. While Keith Gibson, a Planning and Zoning Commission member cautioned against unrealistic expectations regarding housing affordability and the unintended consequences of overregulation.

The results from the recent citizen survey were referenced. Noting that the citizens indicated a preference for single-family dwellings but also recognized the necessity of diverse housing types. Concerns were raised about traffic impacts, with a preference for higher density developments along major transportation corridors rather than in existing residential areas. Overall, there was a call for finding mechanisms to create attainable housing, adhering to community goals for greenbelts and pathways, and fostering collaboration between developers and municipalities.

Gordon Root, a real estate developer, emphasized the importance of attainability, balance, and choice in housing development. He highlighted the need for a balanced housing market that responds to different needs and life cycles. Mr. Root discussed the significance of master-planned communities in providing the volume, balance, and choice needed for a community. He also stressed the importance of preserving open spaces and integrating different housing types, such as townhomes and duplexes, to meet market demands. He advocated for infrastructure development, particularly focusing on traffic management, citing the Huetter Road bypass as a necessary project to alleviate traffic congestion. He also mentioned the role of public-private partnerships in infrastructure development and the importance of developers meeting city regulations and standards.

Eric Olson, a land development engineer, expressed frustration with the challenges faced in land development projects. He noted a lack of public infrastructure projects in Hayden and criticized the perceived authority and standards of those reviewing plans, which often led to re-designs and increased costs. Olson also mentioned feeling in an adversarial position with regulatory bodies,

impacting the enjoyment of his work. He felt constrained by these challenges and emphasized the need for more efficient processes to reduce costs and improve project timelines.

David Erickson, a member of the Planning and Zoning commission, emphasized the importance of learning from the past and using history as a guide. He shared his experience of moving to Hayden in 2020 from a small town with a similar feel, highlighting the desire to maintain that small-town atmosphere. Erickson disagreed with the goal of creating or keeping Hayden as a place where our children can afford to live, suggesting that government involvement in such matters can lead to problems. He also mentioned the importance of infrastructure planning, citing his hometown's traffic issues due to a lack of foresight. Erickson agreed with the need for projects like the Huetter bypass, noting that failure to address infrastructure needs could lead to future problems as Hayden grows. Despite his age, he expressed a belief in learning from other places' mistakes and applying those lessons to tackle current problems effectively.

Shawn Taylor, a resident of Hayden since 1994, shared his experience with infrastructure development and growth. He mentioned the Sandpoint bypass project and its positive impact on relieving traffic in downtown Sandpoint, emphasizing the importance of the Huetter bypass for Hayden. Taylor also discussed the challenges of infrastructure development on the east side of Highway 95, noting the lack of sidewalks and swales due to limited city funding. He acknowledged the need for growth to pay for infrastructure but cautioned against restricting growth too much. Taylor highlighted the cyclical nature of growth debates in Hayden and stressed the importance of planning infrastructure to meet future needs.

Gordon Root and Eric Olson echoed the importance of infrastructure planning and the potential consequences of restricting infrastructure development. Root mentioned the anti-growth contingent's strategy of choking off infrastructure development to thwart future growth. Olson discussed the need for realistic infrastructure designs, mentioning the need to scale back designs to what is realistically attainable. They both emphasized the importance of planning for future needs and having a long-term view when it comes to infrastructure development.

Matt Roetter, City Council President, discussed various issues related to Hayden, including affordable housing, infrastructure, and citizen input. He shared personal experiences and highlighted the need for affordable housing, mentioning a conversation with Maggie Lyon from the Panhandle Housing Alliance about impact fees and affordable housing. Ray Kimball, a civil engineer, emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships for infrastructure projects, citing an example from Post Falls. Other topics included sewer treatment capacity, the citizen survey, and the role of citizens in driving the city's future.

Matt Roetter highlighted the significance of discussing roads and growth, suggesting that developers should review the results of the Citizen Survey. He raised a question about whether the City of Hayden is collecting excessively high fees for development. Jeramie Terzulli agreed that the fees were too high, but he also emphasized that needed infrastructure upgrades are inevitable with growth, stating that blaming recent development for infrastructure issues is misguided. Mr. Terzulli argued that incremental growth had already been leading to the need for infrastructure upgrades and attributed the City's lack of funding on the City's low property tax rate.

Mr. Terzulli pointed out that if the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) stopped allowing discharge into the Spokane River, the cost of land application would fall on all residents, not just those from recent years. Matt Roetter further discussed the challenges of keeping up with current issues due to the low levy rate. Mr. Terzulli suggested the need for education for the population on these matters. He emphasized the need to find a balance between charging developers enough to cover infrastructure costs while ensuring fairness.

Matt Roetter asked about the suggestion of needing to increase taxes. Ed DePriest emphasized the conflict between listening to the people's desire to avoid tax increases and providing developers with incentives to ensure profitability for everyone involved. He pointed out that the low levy rate has been contributing to the City's financial challenges. Ray Kimball suggested that Hayden citizens had been receiving a discount on property taxes for a long time and that it might be time to consider paying more. He also highlighted the developers' desire for fair treatment, wanting everyone to pay the same fees for permits and impact fees. Kimball stressed that the city's traffic infrastructure would fail if development ceased, indicating a need for ongoing development to support infrastructure.

Mayor Davis acknowledged the valuable contributions from attendees and invited them to continue sharing ideas for improving the city. He expressed confidence in the collective ability of the group to address challenges, citing the need to work together to achieve progress. Mayor Davis also highlighted the potential for innovative approaches, such as expediting projects like Hayden Avenue and finding better methods for infrastructure development. He closed by thanking everyone for their participation and encouraged ongoing feedback over the next 60-90 days.

2. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Abbi Sanchez, City Clerk

Alan Davis, Mayor