

# Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

## Work Session Summary Minutes

June 7, 2021

Virtual Meeting

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### Attendance

**Commissioners Present:** Sam Spencer (Chairperson), Keba Samuel (Vice Chairperson), John Fryday, John Ham, Phillip Gussman, Douglas Welton, Cozzie Watkins, Victoria Nwasike, Erin Barbee, Peter Kelly, Andrew Blumenthal, Astrid Chirinos, and Courtney Rhodes

**Planning Staff Present:** Taiwo Jaiyeoba (*Planning Director*), Alyson Craig (*Deputy Planning Director*), Candice Rorie, Shavon Davis, Alysia Osborne, Kathy Cornett, and Laura Harmon

### Call to Order & Introductions

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm, welcomed those present and went over the protocols of the virtual meeting.

### Minutes and Reports

#### **Approval May 3 Work Session Minutes**

*A motion was made by Commissioner Barbee and seconded by Commissioner Blumenthal to approve the May 3, 2021 minutes. The vote was unanimous to approve the minutes.*

### New Business

#### **FY2022 Planning Commission Leadership Vote**

Chairperson Spencer thanked the commission and said that it has been an honor serving as chairperson over the past 2 years and opened the floor for any other nominations for Chairperson.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Gussman and seconded by Commissioner Barbee to close the nominations for chairperson. The vote was unanimous to close the nominations for chairperson.*

*A motion was made by Commissioner Gussman and seconded by Commissioner Chirinos to nominate Keba Samuel for Chairperson of the Planning Commission. The vote was unanimous to elect Keba Samuel as Chairperson of the Planning Commission. \*Due to audio issues, Commissioner Watkins vote was received via text.*

Chairperson-elect Samuel expressed her gratitude and looks forward to serving as Chairperson for the Commission.

Chairperson Spencer opened the floor for any other nominations for Vice Chairperson.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Ham and seconded by Commissioner Welton to close the nominations for vice chairperson. The vote was unanimous to close the nominations for vice chairperson.*

*A motion was made by Chairperson-elect Samuel and seconded by Commissioner Barbee to nominate Phillip Gussman for Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission. The vote was unanimous to elect Phillip Gussman as Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission. \*Due to audio issues, Commissioner Watkins vote was received via text.*

Vice Chairperson-elect Gussman expressed his gratitude and looks forward to continuing to serve in leadership position for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Chairperson Spencer advised that he will work with staff and incoming leadership to create the new committee lists for the next fiscal year and in addition to this, each committee will elect their Vice Chairs in July so if anyone is interested in running for those positions, please let the Commission know. He went on to say there is additional time commitment for that position; you are expected to be at every meeting, you are expected to run meetings, and you are expected to attend Executive Committee meetings which adds another hour of meetings and a couple more hours of work every month.

### **Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update and Comment Review**

Ms. Alysia Osborne shared a presentation on the process, where they are today, and the path moving forward with the plan. At the end of the presentation, she shared the comments received from the Commissioners and allowed them to explain the intent of their comment. Ms. Osborne offered explanation and feedback during this comment review period.

Commissioner Kelly's question was in relation to 1.3 Equitable Growth Framework and asked Ms. Osborne what was the basis for not accepting this recommendation from the Commission. Ms. Osborne replied they did change the language that was originally provided by the Planning Commission, as seen on page 19. Chairperson Spencer commented that he would have no objections of seeing this within the pages of section 1.3 as opposed to the first page.

Under the section of Complete Communities, Commissioner Fryday pointed out the statement which read "Not all neighborhoods have the same outcome goals" and asked is this in the plan now because he thinks it is an awfully good statement. Ms. Osborne replied that the place type mapping will provide that contextual application of the policy and it does talk about the guidance of what that place type mapping will do. She went on to say if the Commission feels that this language around some neighborhoods are more suburban than others, then that's some language that they will consider as a revision to the document for the Commission to vote on at the meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Chirinos asked, to the point of Commissioners Kelly and Fryday's comments, should it be said that this is all going to be specified on the UDO so people don't feel that there's a gap there and question why it is not stated or articulated in the plan. Ms. Osborne replied that discussion is within the plan; it just doesn't use those words, but it does talk about what complete communities are and provides that definition. She went on to explain how these are addressed through the equitable growth framework and place type mapping which applies the policies to actual land which happens prior to the UDO.

Commissioner Rhodes commented on page 33 under the appendix which talks about investments, it was a little unclear as to whether this included new increase investments. Ms. Osborne replied they are starting to measure some of their investments and being more intentional about creating those metrics and measures. She advised that they could refine the language to reach the suggested intent.

Chairperson-elect Samuel questioned how would we know if the intent of the plan matches the impact and Ms. Osborne explained that the metrics and measures for the plan are organized by each goal and there's a metric assigned to each objective. She advised that some of those metrics, they will be establishing for the first time and those will be tracked and monitored over time and reported out on to help them understand whether they are achieving the objective or goal that has been adopted within the plan.

There was a discussion concerning objective 3.C. Chairperson-elect Samuel feels the current language seems limiting. Ms. Osborne explained the collaboration with Housing and Neighborhood services and said as an objective or goal within the plan, they were advised to do the 80% AMI or less and provide flexibility in the types of partnerships in developments that they would need to provide affordable housing. Chairperson-elect Samuel replied that she understands there has been collaboration with Housing and Neighborhood Services and other pros and experts, but added that this is something that she will push to the limit and plans to attend the Planning Committee meeting and continue to support the change. Several Commissioners verbally extended their support.

### **Strategic Energy Action Plan**

Ms. Katie Riddle shared a slide presentation and gave a brief overview of the Strategic Energy Action Plan. She talked about the goals of their action plan and advised she is open to discuss ways their goals, strategies, and language could be incorporated into the Planning Commission's Environmental Statement.

Chairperson Spencer revealed one of the last things that he would like to do as chair of the Commission is to task Commissioner Blumenthal, who has graciously volunteered, to lead their policy statement to the commission and to TAP. This includes taking what they have talked about in their Environmental Statement last year and producing a policy statement for staff, Zoning Committee, and the City Council to use when considering rezonings. He said this would give them an opportunity to have a more coherent policy when it comes to considering the environment, whether that be the goals of the SEAP or the goals that they've stated on the Planning Commission as they've considered rezonings because right now, they do not have a coherent framework for doing that.

Commissioner Blumenthal addressed the Commission stating when he and Commissioner Watkins originally drafted the statement there was a general recognition that it was very aspirational but toothless, so he thinks this is a step in the right direction to create a framework by which they can actually start to build some metrics and some force-ability around the environmental statement and really make it into something that they are able to use. Lastly, he extended the offer for other Commissioners who wants to participate in this to join him.

Vice Chairperson-elect Gussman asked Ms. Riddle are they working to interact with private entities and some of our business leaders to help coordinate some of this. Ms. Riddle responded absolutely; in terms of community engagement on the SEAP, they have a SEAP External Content Group which is made up of individuals from Duke Energy, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, as well as the Environmental Stakeholders such as Sustain Charlotte and Clean Air Carolina. This group has been

meeting since 2019 and they come together to share best practices, help connect with what everyone in the community is doing, and share in how they can support one another.

Commissioner Chirinos asked Ms. Riddle if she could share the Statement of Sustainability that they will be supporting as a Commission. Chairperson Spencer clarified that they're initial statement was agreed to by the Planning Commission before she rotated on, so that was a part of the FY2020 Work Plan. He added as, Commissioner Blumenthal kicks off that work, they can send that Environmental Statement to the whole Commission. Commissioner Blumenthal explained that he will build out a framework for the next steps which includes taking that statement and using it as a basis for the framework going forward.

Chairperson Spencer commented one of the things that he hopes will continue going forward is the Planning Commission working closer with the Office of Sustainability because it's so important to the work that they do and the land use decisions that the city makes, especially here in Charlotte where we are powered by nuclear energy and not other forms of energy. He went on to say how we determine land use and how long our car trips are contributes to our carbon impact, so what they do here as a Commission directly touches sustainability every time they make a zoning decision. He thanked Ms. Riddle for taking the time out to speak with the Planning Commission as they work together for a more sustainable Charlotte.

### **Other Business**

Chairperson Spencer presented a virtual certificate of appreciation to out-going Commissioners John Fryday and Cozzie Watkins and thanked them for their years of service to the Planning Commission. Many of the Commissioners expressed gratitude for their devotion to this body and helping them transition to the Commission.

Director Jaiyeoba personally thanked Commissioner Fryday and Commissioner Watkins for their leadership, proactiveness, and sound guidance to the Planning Commission.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:53 pm.