



City of Prescott

General Plan Review Committee

August 21, 2024 | 2:00 PM
201 N. Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sapio called the meeting to order at 02:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Terry Sapio, Chair
Don Michelman, Vice-Chair
Andre Carman Member
Thomas Davis, Member
Mary Frederickson, Member
J.D. Greenberg, Member
Ralph Hess, Member
Jim Huffman, Member
James McCarver, Member (Arrived 2:10 p.m.)
Rod Moyer, Member (Excused)
Tom Reilly, Member

3. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- A. Presentation, Discussion, Review and Approval Regarding Language for Major Plan Amendments.

George Worley, Planning Manager, introduced the topic for discussion. Examples from other municipalities, definitions, and maps were displayed for review and discussion. Background was provided on major plan amendments and the criteria associated with them. Three options were presented: one generated by staff after reviewing example plans, another recommended by Committee Member Ralph Hess, and a third open for discussion and potential hybridization by the Committee. The Committee had previously discussed what triggers a major plan amendment, focusing on an acreage trigger. Staff expressed concern that focusing solely on acreage might overlook community impacts. They suggested considering variable acreages depending on the type of change, as different jurisdictions use different criteria. Mr. Worley covered the distinction between land use and zoning, and the types of amendments that can occur in the General Plan: text amendments and map amendments. He emphasized that only these two types can be amended. The discussion also highlighted the importance of having criteria to determine what triggers a major amendment, ensuring that map designations in the General Plan are not confused with zoning.

Tammy DeWitt, Community Planner, continued the presentation and explained which zoning districts align with each land use designation, emphasizing that the

general plan uses land use designations, not zoning. For example, recreational and open space designations align with natural and recreational zoning districts. Mixed-use designations include light commercial and various residential categories. Commercial designations allow residential uses without requiring rezoning, though rezoning to higher density could trigger a change. They reviewed various residential densities and noted that land use maps use designations, not zoning, to reflect current and planned uses.

Mr. Worley continued that land use and zoning designations don't perfectly align and discussed the need to update the criteria for triggering major amendments, as they were created for different circumstances over a decade ago. The process used to be more complex, but recent changes have diluted its impact. Additionally, Committee Member Ralph Hess proposed revisions to better align with the staff's recommendation format, which was discussed in the last meeting.

Member Hess added that the goal was to make the information more readable and accessible to both the public and the Committee. He also modified the original proposal, adding a note about changes in the land use map from residential to other designations, except for open space or recreation space, which had not been included in the earlier text.

Mr. Worley stated that the staff alternative for major amendments was more complex, as it considered the impacts of changes between land use categories more thoroughly than previous methods. Major amendments required additional scrutiny and a city council review. The difference between requiring a majority versus a super majority vote was significant, as a super majority required more support but could be easily vetoed. The staff believed that not all amendments should need a super majority and that factors like parcel size and impact should be considered. They raised concerns about Ralph's broader proposal, which didn't account for density increases within residential uses. The staff's matrix aimed to address these issues with detailed criteria for different land use categories.

The Committee reviewed the pros and cons of the options available.

Member of the public Mike Fann expressed concern that Prescott is becoming an elitist community, losing families and its workforce. He urged the committee to consider the long-term vision for Prescott, emphasizing the need to support families and workforce housing. He cautioned against adding more hurdles that could hinder affordable housing development and warned that if developers face too many obstacles, they might choose to build outside of Prescott, leading to increased traffic and crime without the benefits of local economic growth.

Ms. DeWitt added that there are multiple hurdles developers face when seeking approval for projects in Prescott, particularly for multifamily housing. After receiving zoning approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission, developers must also obtain a water allocation recommendation before the City Council can give final approval. Financing for multifamily projects is currently difficult, causing delays and potential loss of water allocations, which are only valid for one year. She also emphasized the need to avoid additional obstacles that could hinder essential infill projects aimed at making Prescott a more family-friendly

community.

Member of the public Deb Thalasis addressed the frequent use of "affordable housing" as a buzzword, reflecting on her experience in cities with housing authorities and affordable housing programs. She questioned why, despite 21 years since the 40-acre regulation was implemented, Prescott still struggled with affordable housing and argued that the issue isn't due to restrictive regulations but the lack of financial investment and subsidies. Ms. Thalasis emphasized that focusing solely on regulations and lowering impact fees hasn't yielded the desired results. She also suggested a need for an "Institutional use" category in Prescott's zoning, particularly for areas like the airport, which are currently designated as open space but aren't used for recreational purposes.

Member Reilly commented on the need to protect neighborhood quality rather than just focusing on parcel size. He critiqued Member Hess's proposal for allowing high-density residential changes without major plan amendments, which could harm neighborhoods. He supported the staff's alternative for its more nuanced approach and thorough scrutiny, cautioning against an elitist attitude that resists change. He argued that the staff's proposal is crucial for making balanced decisions and ensuring the plan's effectiveness.

Member Hess stated he is willing to amend his proposal to align with staff's recommendations on upzoning in residential areas, requiring major plan amendments for density increases. He emphasized that quality projects would likely gain the necessary approval and highlighted the importance of the 60-day public comment period for community input. He believes his amended proposal best reflects the committee's consensus.

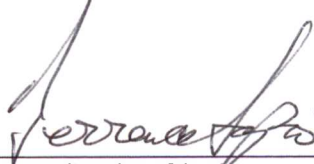
MOTION BY MEMBER REILLY TO APPROVE THE MAJOR PLAN AMENDMENT LANGUAGE AS: STAFF'S ALTERNATIVE; SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR MICHELMAN: APPROVED (7 - 0 - 3) MEMBERS HESS, GREENBERG AND HUFFMAN DISSENTING.

4. UPDATES

Ms. DeWitt stated the Committee will receive a copy of the current draft to review and will vote on it at the next meeting.

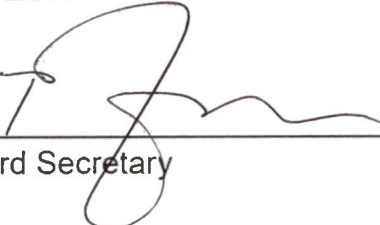
5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sapio adjourned the meeting at 03:37 PM.



Terry Sapio, Chair

ATTEST:



Board Secretary