



City of Prescott

General Plan Review Committee

July 31, 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 2:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Terry Sapio, Chair
Don Michelman, Vice-Chair
Andre Carman - Excused
Thomas Davis
Mary Frederickson
J.D. Greenberg
Ralph Hess
Jim Huffman
James McCarver - Arrived 2:07 p.m.
Rod Moyer - Excused
Tom Reilly

3. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- A. Presentation, Discussion, Review & Possible Action Regarding Proposed Language From the Martin Luther King Committee Regarding Proposed Anti-Discrimination Language in the Introduction of the Charter.

Jim Helbling and Robert Shegog, members of the Martin Luther King Committee presented and spoke on the topic. They provided a presentation on updated wording to be used in the General Plan that they discussed with the Martin Luther King Committee, Member Carman and Member Hess.

Member Frederickson commented that she feels the words of "gender expression or identity" should be removed, she feels it can cause more problems and does not do anything positive.

Mr. Shegog responded that the words should be included since they are hot button issues, they should not be ignored and it shows it is being embraced.

Mr. Helbling commented that the General Plan contains goals for the city, if the list contains something that a person can identify with then they will feel included

and welcome and that the city does not condone discrimination.

Chair Sapio asked if the research results and surveys showed that youth that have gender reassignment surgeries have high suicide rates.

Mr. Helbling responded that those youth probably, unfortunately did not or do not have a good support system or people in their corner.

Chair Sapio asked how it would be possible to make everyone feel comfortable in the City of Prescott, don't want to move backwards when trying to make improvements for everyone.

Mr. Shegog commented that he has experienced discrimination in the City of Prescott and is aware of others who have said they have, too. Adding the updated language would help those who feel discriminated against, he would like an anti-discrimination ordinance but knows that can be an uphill battle.

Mr. Helbling stated that this should be put out there for the people to decide for themselves what they would like to include.

Member Reilly asked what is it about the statement that is not positive. All words can be hollow, different people can take the words as different meanings, it is difficult to make sure all citizens are happy, but stated that it is not the job of this Committee to decide what is and is not discrimination, they need to decide the language to be used in the General Plan.

Councilman Gambogi compared the current situation to the creation of the Declaration of Independence and emphasized the importance of rational debate and civil discussion. He urged everyone to avoid emotional arguments and focus on preserving the neighborly and friendly spirit of Prescott, known as "Everybody's Hometown" and encouraged everyone work together to reach a resolution and to collectively accept the outcome once the debate is over.

Vice-Chair Michelman commented that he is in support of the statement, highlighting two key points: the city's commitment to valuing quality of life and its stance against condoning discrimination. He emphasized that the statement is a general expression of values which aligns with the purpose of a General Plan.

Member McCarver added that words are emotionally charged and mean different things to different people.

Member Hess commented that the plan is not a legal document, it is what the city values.

Mr. Worley added that the public has the 60 day comment period to let Committee know if they agree or disagree with the language.

Member of the public Leslie Grady commented that she serves on the steering committee for the Prescott Peacebuilders and shared their goal statement, and added need to make Prescott a visible example on how a community should

openly respect and support all people living and visiting our city.

MOTION BY MEMBER REILLY TO APPROVE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LANGUAGE OPTION 3; SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR MICHELMAN: PASSED (6 - 2). MEMBERS FREDERICKSON AND MCCARVER DISSENTING, MEMBER DAVIS ABSTAINING.

- B. Presentation, Discussion & Review of the Draft 2025 Prescott General Plan.

Due to timing, Ms. DeWitt requested the Committee Members provide her their comments and edits and this topic will be further discussed at a future meeting.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

- C. Presentation, Discussion, Review & Possible Action Regarding Language for Major Plan Amendments.

Item C was discussed before Item B.

Planner Tammy DeWitt introduced the updated version of major plan amendments.

Member Hess commented that he wants to look at the options available and the effects they may have.

Member McCarver commented he believes the major plan amendment has never been triggered since there may be few, if any, parcels in the city that would meet the acreage criteria. He understands changing the criteria may bring additional work but it can also allow managed growth.

Chair Sapio commented that the Committee changed the threshold for triggering a major plan amendment from a quarter-mile to a half-mile radius to avoid making every rezoning request a major amendment. He emphasized that requiring a supermajority vote for minor rezonings could give undue power to a few council members, potentially disenfranchising voters, he believes all council members should have an equal vote on rezoning decisions.

Member Hess commented since the major plan amendment has not been triggered that it can benefit developers. He wants the public to see different options.

Mr. Worley added that the current wording and triggers were established by a prior Committee.

Member Greenburg asked for examples where a change would have been helpful and made a difference in the outcome.

Member Hess responded that his understanding is that the public is displeased with the current wording.

Member Reilly commented that he sees unintended consequences possible with

the proposed changes.

Member Greenburg asked if something can be incorporated for the welfare of the community.

Member Reilly commented that the land use guide is what the Planning & Zoning Commission uses to review zoning changes. City Council can then look at all aspects of the proposed change to make their decision.

Mr. Worley commented that the Committee is deciding today on a possible alternative for the public to consider.

Chair Sapio stated that a proposal which lacks size criteria for projects would require even small projects to go through a major plan amendment. He supports the existing half-mile radius criteria and suggested sticking with it unless adjustments are needed. He added that 40 acres seems to be an appropriate threshold for requiring a major plan amendment and questioned if anything smaller should qualify.

Member McCarver added that he sees the restrictions as a plus to manage growth and have another set of eyes to review the proposals.

Mr. Worley explained that both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council review land use and zoning changes, with the City Council making the final decision. The key difference in proposals is the time and voting requirements of a major amendment, including a 60-day review period and a supermajority vote. Large developers can afford to wait, but small infill developers often can't, due to financing constraints. An acreage limit, whether 10 or 40 acres, could offer flexibility, allowing smaller developers to avoid the prolonged process and the need for a supermajority vote.

Member Hess proposed that both options for the major plan amendment criteria—his suggestion and the existing option modified to increase the radius from a quarter mile to a half mile—be presented for public comment. He emphasized that since the committee's consensus was close (6 to 4), both alternatives should be shared with the public to gather feedback. He stressed the importance of public input and indicated that the final decision would ultimately be made by the City Council after reviewing public comments and suggestions.

Ms. DeWitt clarified that if a project is under the five-acre limit but doesn't comply with the land use map, it still requires a minor plan amendment, which goes through a public hearing process similar to a major amendment. The major amendment adds a 60-day comment period and requires a supermajority vote. Previously, major amendments were only heard once a year, but now the process is less restrictive. She suggested setting an acreage threshold, like five or ten acres, for triggering major amendments to avoid delaying small, beneficial infill projects, as smaller rezonings are more common in the city.

Chair Sapio and Member Reilly commented that the proposed change would kill close to 90 percent of infill.

The Committee Members discussed and debated if an alternative is needed and what the effects would be if a change was implemented.

Member of the public Deborah Thalasis commented that after two years, the group still lacked key data and examples from other communities to make informed decisions. She supports Member Hess's suggestion to delay final decisions until more information was gathered.

Member Reilly asked what the data is that Ms. Thalasis is referring to, what would be an example.

Ms. Thalasis responded that one set of data would be looking at all parcels 40 acres or larger that can be found through the GIS database.

Mr. Worley said it is not a problem to get the data and map.

Member of the public Truly Bracken commented that she agrees more data is needed and alternatives need to be considered.

Committee Members each commented on their thoughts of what acreage number is appropriate, responses ranged from 10 - 40 acres, a response that a number is arbitrary without more data, and that the density designation also has high impact.

Member Reilly commented that he would like to see the data before a motion is voted on.

MOTION BY CHAIR SAPIO TO APPROVE MAJOR PLAN AMENDMENT LANGUAGE SUGGESTED BY RALPH HESS AND A 20 ACRE SIZE; MOTION DIED DUE TO LACK OF SECOND

The Committee decided to defer a decision to a future meeting after additional data is reviewed.

D. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Input for the 60-Day Public Comment Period.

Ms. DeWitt let the Committee Members know how the public comments will appear for the public to see. All comments received prior to the 60 day comment period will be available to view via a PDF document. Department heads will also be commenting when the draft is shared with them. Comments from the public will be reviewed with the Committee Members.

Member Hess suggested that the public commenters have an option to be able to identify themselves if they are part of a group and are providing comments from their area of expertise.

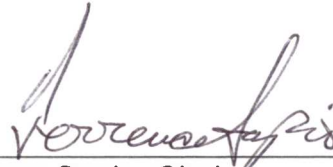
This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

5. UPDATES

Ms. DeWitt requested the Committee Members provide her their comments and edits. The final draft should be back to the members in time for them to review for the August 28th meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sapio adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m.



Terry Sapio, Chair

ATTEST:



Board Secretary