

Cheney Planning Commission begins hearing comments about comp plan

By DAVID TELLER

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As part of the comprehensive plan rewrite, Cheney planning commissioners Don Nichols and Jason Alvarez began presenting their findings on the current plan and posted question and observations about the contents of their assigned chapters at the commission's April 13 meeting.

In the plan, Chapter Seven outlines land use goals, how to use the land and how to grow the city as dictated by the Growth Management Act. Alvarez described the chapter as well defined. He made the observation that there is not enough information about locating two different land uses adjacent to each other. He also said the capacity for public comment is lacking.

Nichols said environmentally sensitive lands (Chapter Six) was pretty straightforward but added it was a little broad reaching, saying the comp plan included too many outlying areas, like Fish Lake. He said he understands mentioning areas outside the Urban Growth Area, but in the comp plan it seems excessive.

Nichols also criticized the use of jargon. He said the comp plan could describe reference points better, but currently uses "township" and "range." He suggested a list of definitions to explain in plain talk what terms are used to describe wetlands. Another example is "influence area." "I don't know what that means," Nichols said.

The only action item of the night was a follow up on a previous meeting. The commission held a public hearing in December of 2007 regarding a proposed comprehensive plan amendment and zone change on 14 acres of property owned by developer Steve Emtman that is near the Cheney wastewater treatment plant on Anderson Road. If approved, the rezone would change the property that is currently zoned semi-rural residential to light industrial.

During that meeting the commission voted to approve the request pending receipt of a detailed site plan and a legal description of the area to be rezoned, which was provided by Emtman.

City planner Elisa Rodriguez said the original request needed more information.

"The city did not have an exact area for this," she said of the previous submission.

The submission the commission reviewed at the April 13 meeting contained a site plan, staff report location map and determination of non-significance.

Commission president Mike Rossey said the request should be approved "in good faith" that Emtman provided the information that the Planning Commission requested.

In an information item, community development director Brian Jennings told the commission that the city is close to deciding on a consultant to help with the comprehensive plan rewrite. During the City Council meeting on April 14, the council approved hiring Spokane's Studio Cascade.

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