



MEETING MINUTES

LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 20th, 2024

7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle City Council Chambers

Members Present: George Halik,, Kiril Mirintchev, Chair Matt Rodgers, Myrna Arevalo, Jeanne Lindwall, Brian Johnson, Max Puchtel

Members Absent: Jameika Mangum, Darush Mabadi

Staff Present: Neighborhood Land Use Planner Meagan Jones, Zoning Administrator Melissa Klotz, Senior Planner Sam Hubbard, Planning Manager Elizabeth Williams, Community Development Director Sarah Flax

Presiding Member: Matt Rodgers

I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing | Comprehensive Plan - Envision Evanston 2045

The City of Evanston is proposing a new Comprehensive General Plan to guide development for the next 20 years. The draft plan includes a vision statement, goals, policies and actions related to the environment; land use; transportation; housing; economic development; placemaking, arts and culture; parks and open space; and preservation.

Chair Rodgers introduced Mayor Daniel Biss who thanked the Land Use Commission for their dedication, acknowledging the challenging complexity and importance of their work. He highlighted the transformational potential of the commission's decisions, emphasizing how they align with community priorities. The mayor recognized this process as an extraordinary opportunity to guide the city's long-term trajectory and expressed hope that the commission takes pride in their role in shaping a meaningful future for Evanston.

Planning Manager Elizabeth Williams presented a presentation in regards to Envision Evanston 2025 that discussed the planning process, emphasizing the importance of community engagement in shaping the comprehensive plan. It also outlined the phases of the plan's development, from gathering public input to refining policies in collaboration with city departments as well as key goals. The process remains open to feedback, and

various engagement opportunities are available to gather more input before the plan moves forward.

Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Manager Alison Leipsiger and Neighborhood and Land Use Planner Meagan Jones continued with the presentation, providing additional information on community engagement, outlining the chapters and mentioning next steps in the process including gathering additional community input through town halls and zoning meetings, with a final draft planned for review in early 2025.

Deputy City Manager Steve Ruger thanked the attendees for their participation and emphasized the importance of aligning the community's goals with the draft plan. He highlighted the comprehensive, 20-year scope of the plan, noting that the city is working on a long-term vision, unlike cities with shorter planning cycles. He then praised the staff for their dedication, mentioned the transparency efforts with the updated land use code, and encouraged public feedback to ensure the plan reflects the community's needs. He expressed excitement for continued collaboration moving forward.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Lindwall asked for confirmation that the draft was a draft and that there will be an approval draft that would be put together before it went to city council. Elizabeth Williams confirmed.

Commissioner Halik expressed concern that the community outreach, while impressive, still only represents a small percentage of Evanston's population. He suggested the need for more ways to engage a broader audience, beyond just relying on the website and individuals volunteering their opinions. Halik compared this to voter turnout, noting that even though not everyone votes, there should be more effort to involve more residents in the planning process.

Elizabeth Williams acknowledged the concern about community participation and encouraged suggestions for improving engagement. She highlighted that the city's efforts have already surpassed the national average for public participation in comprehensive planning, which typically ranges from 1-2%. In Evanston's case, participation has exceeded expectations, reflecting the community's engagement with local planning efforts.

Commissioner Johnson inquired about the decision to conduct the comprehensive plan and zoning process concurrently. Elizabeth Williams explained that the decision to conduct the comprehensive plan and zoning process concurrently was outlined from the start in the request for proposals (RFP). Both documents are closely intertwined and were last evaluated decades ago. This approach ensures that the plan reflects current trends and community values, while also addressing the importance of aligning planning with regulations. When planning and regulations are done separately, it can result in the plan's lack of practical implementation, which is why this integrated approach was chosen.

Commissioner Halik mentioned the importance of taxes and fiscal responsibility and how that fits in with the plan. Fiscal responsibility is something that needs to be considered, one of the themes relates to the cost of housing and taxes are inherently part of that cost and is something that community members did bring up during community engagement. One of the ways to address this is expanding the tax base, finding ways to enable more businesses to locate in Evanston. This could also apply to housing choice in Evanston.

Chair Rodgers explained that there are no set standards of approval for Comprehensive Plans and provided the definition of Comprehensive General Plan in section 2.7.3 - Definitions of the City Code for reference.

Public Testimony

Chair Rodgers opened public comment.

Christine Lofquist, a Sixth Ward resident for 22 years, expressed support for the proposed zoning code changes and the comprehensive plan. She shared her experience as a single mother who could not afford a townhome in the Sixth Ward, emphasizing the need for more diverse housing options such as duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to provide opportunities for others like her. Christine advocated for inclusivity and adaptability in Evanston's planning, highlighting the importance of accommodating different family structures and demographics in the community.

Sergio De los Reyes, a resident of Evanston since 1980, Sergio expressed support for the goals of the comprehensive plan, emphasizing increased density, more housing choices, and a transparent zoning process.

Peter Kelly, representing a three-generation Evanston family, encouraged the commission to focus on expanding housing options for various life stages, from starter homes for young families to downsizing needs of empty nesters. He suggested gathering insights from realtors and organizations like Connections for the Homeless to understand housing demand better. He also emphasized that downtown Evanston should be recognized as a distinct neighborhood in the plan.

David Graver expressed strong support for the upzoning process and the comprehensive plan. He shared a personal story about his family's multi-generational ties to Evanston, highlighting the challenges of affording housing for younger generations. He emphasized the importance of considering the needs of busy, younger residents with families, who often cannot participate in public meetings but are directly impacted by housing policies.

David Cherry critiqued the idea of reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements in Evanston's comprehensive plan, citing data on transit ridership. He highlighted that the construction of multi-unit buildings like Amlie and The Main had no significant positive impact on CTA Main Street station ridership. He expressed skepticism about projections of population growth and increased transit use, suggesting potential risks of overbuilding housing with inadequate parking. He also noted a historical decline in CTA ridership, reflecting broader trends in transit use.

Matt Cotter, a resident of Evanston's Second Ward and co-chair of the Evanston Environment Board, expressed support for the comprehensive plan's strong focus on environmental sustainability and resilience. He highlighted the Board's memo with specific recommendations, including enhancing language on natural resource growth, providing historical context on environmental injustices, and promoting a circular economy. Speaking personally, he likened the plan to planting seeds, emphasizing gradual progress toward a more sustainable, inclusive, and vibrant future for Evanston. He encouraged bold action to bring this vision to life.

Owen Wilson Thomas critiqued the comprehensive plan's representation of bike infrastructure, emphasizing that painted bike lanes should not be categorized as protected lanes and pointing out misleading labeling on the map. He supported increasing housing supply and appreciated the plan's prioritization of housing availability over property values and its focus on eliminating parking minimums. He also praised the transportation section for its acknowledgment of the negative impacts of car infrastructure. Thomas urged the city to implement the document's recommendations, emphasizing the need to "walk the talk."

Naqiy McMullen, a resident of Evanston's Eighth Ward, broadly supported the goals of the Envision 2045 plan, emphasizing its focus on addressing climate change and housing affordability. She critiqued the limited application of mixed-use zoning and advocated for expanding neighborhood-scale retail to encourage walking and reduce car dependency. McMullen also highlighted the need for better transit options, like extended bus service on Ridge Avenue and a new Yellow Line infill station in South Evanston, to enhance transportation accessibility and support diverse, low-income populations. She encouraged moving the plan forward.

Eric Paset, a Fourth Ward resident and property manager, expressed concerns about Evanston's property taxes, particularly their high burden on apartment buildings compared to single-family homes. He supports development but emphasized the importance of providing adequate parking, especially in areas like downtown and Main Street. He noted that while parking demand varies by location, a lack of sufficient parking for new developments could strain existing resources and deter visitors due to high parking costs. He urged thoughtful integration of parking into future development plans.

Jonathan Seldin, a resident of the Third Ward, expressed strong support for the Envision 2045 plan, particularly the removal of parking minimums, stating that if parking is not provided, people will not bring cars. He emphasized the need for diverse housing options, critiquing the preservation of large mansions in favor of townhomes and multifamily units. He also advocated for improved transit, including east-west bus routes and protected bike lanes. Additionally, Mr. Seldin suggested expanding affordable housing through vouchers rather than inclusionary housing ordinances and endorsed policies that focus on reducing rents in older housing stock.

Jeff Smith expressed concerns about the draft comprehensive plan, particularly regarding the emphasis on density, growth, and the removal of parking requirements. He questioned the assumption that growth is inevitable and argued that Evanston is already a densely populated and diverse community. Mr. Smith also criticized the lack of focus on housing for seniors and fixed-income residents, suggesting the plan favors new development at the expense of long-term residents. He advocated for more community-driven planning and a better understanding of the potential impact on affordability and sustainability.

Sue Loellbach, with Connections for the Homeless, expressed support for the zoning changes, which she believes will create more housing options and affordability in Evanston. She

acknowledged that the new zoning code offers greater flexibility while maintaining a cohesive community appearance. She emphasized that the zoning changes will not immediately create affordable housing but will provide opportunities for it. Ms. Loellbach also highlighted the importance of housing as a foundational element for equity, noting that the high cost of housing exacerbates poverty and other social issues. She urged the commission to prioritize the well-being of residents across all income levels.

Ann Trumpeter, a resident of Evanston for over 20 years, expressed strong opposition to eliminating the R1 zoning district. She values the beauty, safety, and sense of community that the current neighborhoods provide. Ms. Trumpeter argued that eliminating R1 would encourage large-scale developments that could harm the character and property values of the area. She believes that this change would negatively impact the quality of life in Evanston and does not address housing inequity effectively. She urged the commission not to pursue this aspect of the comprehensive plan.

Paul Janicki, an architect in Evanston, voiced concern over the elimination of the R1 zoning district. He warned that it could lead to the demolition of historic homes and significant loss of mature trees and open space. Mr. Janicki emphasized the importance of preserving the architectural beauty and character of the city, arguing that the pace of these changes is too fast. While he supports density in housing, he believes the removal of R1 zoning is misguided and could negatively impact the city's environment and heritage.

Nicole Haidu, a real estate professional, expressed support for the proposed zoning plan. She believes the changes will be beneficial for those in her industry by helping them understand new zoning rules and enabling them to communicate more effectively with clients. She emphasized that these adjustments would help expedite the process.

Drina Nikola, a resident of Evanston and a member of the Age Friendly Evanston Task Force, expressed concerns about the senior population in the city. She highlighted a significant decrease in the percentage of seniors from 18.3% to 15.6% between 2018 and 2023. Ms. Nikola emphasized the need for senior housing and pointed out that many seniors moving into the city are from outside Evanston. She also advocated for supportive housing and clustered housing options for seniors, particularly in walkable neighborhoods near the Levy Center and James Park.

Paul Lehner, a resident of downtown Evanston, expressed concerns about the plan's suggestion to allow many tall buildings in the area. He urged the commission to carefully consider whether a downtown dominated by high-rise buildings aligns with what residents want or what would be accessible and welcoming. He indicated that he would share more specific comments at a later meeting or in writing.

Carl Bova, a long-time resident of Evanston, voiced concerns about the R1 zoning issue, agreeing with earlier comments that preserving current structures is important rather than allowing dense developments. He also mentioned the significant increase in his property taxes, from \$11,200 to nearly \$20,000 annually. Carl criticized the city's proposed spending on various projects, such as enhancing the Foster School, and raised concerns about increasing density in narrow streets, which could affect parking and quality of life. He plans to review the comprehensive plan further before making additional comments.

John Foley briefly discussed concerns about high property taxes in Evanston, which he believes are a major factor driving out the middle class and contributing to affordability issues. He agreed

with Jeff Smith's comments about avoiding high-density development like Chicago's, which he feels would exacerbate traffic congestion and reduce quality of life. John expressed skepticism about whether such changes would benefit Evanston residents.

Mary Rosinski expressed concerns about the rushed nature of the comprehensive plan process, suggesting more time for public engagement and reflection. She emphasized the importance of balancing vision and functionality in urban planning, with a need for gradual increases in density rather than drastic changes. Rosinski called for clarity on zoning changes, particularly the impact of potential high-density buildings near smaller homes. She stressed the importance of a long-term commitment to affordable housing, warning that zoning changes alone would not address affordability without solid planning.

John Metzger expressed concerns about increasing density in his neighborhood, particularly with the potential opening up of R1 zoning to multifamily housing. He highlighted the challenges of small lots with limited parking, which already cause congestion when there are gatherings. Meter also noted the problematic intersection near his block, where a proposed development, such as converting Unity Church into multifamily housing, could worsen traffic and safety issues. He strongly believes that increasing density in this area would be a mistake.

Chris Oakley, a resident of Sixth Ward, commented that he did not see the elimination of R1 zoning in the proposed changes, but only a subtle increase in building lot coverage. He also emphasized the importance of involving other large taxing bodies, such as Districts 65 and 202, as well as institutions like Northwestern University and local hospitals, in the comprehensive planning process, since they play a significant role in the city's property tax structure.

Cecile McHugh expressed concern about allowing increased density by right, fearing it might lead to buildings being demolished solely for profit, which could harm the aesthetic and character of Evanston. He appreciated the city's historic and attractive architecture, stating that while increased density might be appropriate in certain areas needing improvement, it should not come at the cost of destroying well-preserved neighborhoods.

Commissioner Comments

Chair Rodgers emphasized the broad vision and policy focus of the Comprehensive General Plan, clarifying that it is a guiding document addressing objectives and policies rather than specific site plans or individual property details. They referred to Evanston's city code to define the purpose of the plan, highlighting its role in outlining community goals for land use, transportation, and public facilities. Chair Rodgers also noted that detailed land-use specifics will be addressed later during the zoning ordinance phase.

Commissioner Lindwall provided extensive feedback, and emphasized creating a well-rounded, comprehensive plan that respects Evanston's history while addressing modern needs. She also noted the following key points:

- **Missing Components:** She noted the absence of sections on local institutions, public buildings, and schools in the comprehensive plan, suggesting their inclusion. These were addressed in previous plans (1974, 1986, 2000) and remain relevant today.
- **Community Facilities:** She recommended creating a dedicated chapter on public infrastructure, institutions, and schools to address operational needs and align

with community goals.

- Community Wellness: She proposed a chapter focusing on environmental justice, brownfields, and sustainability issues, incorporating elements like tree canopies and life expectancy concerns.
- Preserving Built Environment: Lindwall highlighted Evanston's commitment to preserving its architectural heritage and sustainability, stressing the importance of valuing and reusing existing structures.

Commissioner Halik expressed concern about the tight schedule for finalizing the comprehensive plan, emphasizing the need to incorporate critical feedback from discussions, such as points raised by Commissioner Lindwall. He criticized the idea of rushing to finalize the plan and making adjustments later, arguing that such an approach is not logical or practical. Halik stressed the importance of addressing essential issues upfront to ensure a thorough and complete plan.

Commissioner Puchtel made three main comments:

- He questioned the need to address broadband access goals in the plan, noting that 95.2% of families reportedly have broadband access. He suggested confirming whether access is a real issue before including it.
- General concern about the proposed zoning map, questioning the distinction between low-impact residential and moderate-sized residential areas, and why specific areas are classified as such.
- He asked about the process for drafting and evaluating amendments to the plan, expressing interest in understanding how community or Commissioner proposals would be formally incorporated.

Elizabeth Williams explained that staff is preparing a summary matrix of all comments made by Commissioners during deliberations. This matrix will help Commissioners review feedback, propose amendments, and make motions or recommendations as part of the package sent to the City Council. This process aims to provide clarity and structure for evaluating and finalizing changes to the comprehensive plan.

Elizabeth Williams addressed a follow-up question about edits to the comprehensive plan, outlining three main categories: typographical corrections, clarifications on statements, workforce demographics and school enrollment trends, and policy changes requiring votes. She emphasized staff's commitment to integrating feedback from Commissioners and community members. Staff welcomes input via emails or comments and has enlisted volunteers to assist with refinements. Additionally, the suggestion for more comparative visuals and explanations of changes to zoning and policies is being considered to improve clarity and accessibility of the plan.

Chair Rodgers emphasized the need for coordination with external entities like the RTA, CTA, Metra, schools, and park districts to align Evanston's 20-year plan with their long-term goals and resources.

Elizabeth Williams explained that staff has ongoing discussions with various community partners impacting the built environment and noted that consultants had conducted one-on-one conversations with organizations. Additionally, she expressed openness to continuing these discussions, especially in light of Commissioner Lindwall's suggestion to add a chapter addressing community facilities and institutions.

Chair Rodgers suggested that for clarity, the document should include sources for overarching statements. He proposed that staff indicate whether the data comes from community input, CMAP, HUD statistics, or other sources, making it clearer where the information is derived from.

Commissioner Halik raised concerns about the carbon-neutral development goals, particularly the potential impact on housing affordability. He suggested that while sustainability is important, requiring such measures could make housing more expensive and may drive developers away. He recommended promoting these goals without making them mandatory. Elizabeth Williams asked if he had a suggested alternative, noting that these goals were part of the city's climate action plan.

Commissioner Lindwall proposed moving the future land use map to the land use chapter for clarity and raised a question about the mixed-use category regarding past industrial uses not being relevant. Elizabeth Williams explained that the city is updating its industrial land base, acknowledging that many areas designated as industrial no longer serve traditional industrial purposes.

Commissioner Lindwall suggested including other local park districts like Lighthouse and Ridgeville, along with Canal Shores, in the open space section.

Commissioner Puchtel asked for clarification on the definitions of "low impact residential" and "moderate size residential," and Chair Rodgers expressed concerns about specific density goals in the comprehensive plan and wanted clearer distinctions between the residential categories.

Elizabeth Williams clarified that residential categories are divided into low impact residential (R1/R2), moderate-sized residential (R3), and urban living (R4), with varying development potential. She also discussed the mixed-use categories, such as neighborhood pocket (M1), business districts (M2), and urban mixed use (M3).

Commissioner Mirintchev suggested including specific density data and parameters in the comprehensive plan for better tracking and comparison with other cities, which could help evaluate density and zoning effectiveness over time.

Chair Rodgers raised concerns about displacement during redevelopment, particularly in a built environment, and the challenges of innovating in underused industrial spaces. Elizabeth Williams explained that innovation zones were born from community visioning sessions, focusing on sustainability and local economic resilience. She also mentioned the potential for reusing obsolete industrial buildings for purposes like housing or commercial spaces.

Commissioner Lindwall and Chair Rodgers suggested broadening these innovation zones to incorporate mixed-use developments, especially if housing is included, addressing contaminated land concerns for potential redevelopment areas like near Target.

Chair Rodgers raised concerns about displacement and the limited availability of land for new development. Questioned the placement of Innovation and Creation Zones and their connectivity to other areas. Suggested revising the category to include mixed-use areas with housing.

Elizabeth Williams provided clarification on residential zoning categories and how they reflect varying development potentials. She then discussed the vision behind the Innovation and Creation Zones, including sustainability and local resource production.

Commissioner Lindwall emphasized the need for clearer categories in transportation, especially regarding limited transit hours. Suggested revising truck routes and including active transportation modes, like e-scooters, in planning documents.

Commissioner Halik expressed concerns about eliminating parking requirements, questioned the inclusion of self-driving cars, and disagreed with a one-sided view on parking fees. He also raised concerns about parking and delivery zones.

Commissioner Rodgers discussed flexible parking spaces and questioned the exclusion of Howard and Main Streets from infrastructure planning. Suggested more focus on truck routes and improving alley loading zones. Raised the need for ADA-compliant, walkable sidewalks in business areas.

Commissioner Halik suggested that park density should be analyzed by specific areas within Evanston rather than considering the city as a whole. He emphasized that some areas are well-served by parks, while others are lacking, and these disparities need to be addressed separately for accurate planning.

Commissioner Lindwall requested clarification regarding the land served by the Skokie Park District, as mentioned in the existing conditions section of the document. She referred to a paragraph that discusses three independent park districts (Ridgeville, Lighthouse, and Skokie) managing parkland in Evanston and expressed confusion about what she was missing, indicating she had not previously heard about this.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Callahan explained that Pooch Park, located on the west side of Evanston off Main Street, is owned by the Skokie Park District. Evanston has a reciprocal agreement with Skokie, where Evanston funds some improvements at the park, and Evanston residents can use the park at a specific rate.

Commissioner Lindwall raised concerns about preserving habitats for native flora and fauna, particularly regarding the use of herbicides and pesticides in parks. He expressed concern over their potential impact on pollinators and predators, like owls, hawks, and foxes, which could be affected by poison used for pest control, such as anticoagulants. Lindwall suggested that a policy might be necessary to ensure that

these ecological risks are considered in park management.

Michael Callahan explained that the city has a resolution limiting pesticide use on public property, including herbicides, though rodenticides are exempted due to public health concerns. He emphasized that very few pesticides are used on public property, but acknowledged the importance of managing ecological risks associated with pest control.

Chair Rodgers praised the section, noting its helpful content. He suggested adding a paragraph about the city's commitment to protecting threatened species, such as through the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, and caring for resources like Elm trees, the lakefront, and beaches. Emphasized the ongoing work of replacing beach sand and the importance of making environmental care part of city policy. Also mentioned having additional observations but was unsure if they were in the correct section.

Chair Rodgers raised a point about underutilized parks, particularly tot lots, and suggested repurposing them to contribute to economic development. Recommended using these spaces for events like music performances, food truck festivals, or other activities that would draw people and encourage spending in nearby business districts. Highlighted James Park as an example of a large space with sections that are not being fully utilized. Suggested integrating underused parks into the overall economic development strategy.

Commissioner Lindwall emphasized the need to address displacement in the plan, especially in lower-value neighborhoods, and suggested consulting with Councilmember Burns' informal working group on the topic. Discussed the potential for repurposing obsolete commercial properties for housing, including townhouses and infill housing. Highlighted the flexibility of current zoning, such as ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), and suggested considering the full range of housing types in Evanston, including multifamily, co-ops, and senior housing. Raised the question of what types of housing might be missing or needed in the city.

Commissioner Halik noted that a significant portion of Evanston's housing (68%) is already multifamily. Expressed concern that opening up R1 zoning citywide might alter Evanston's identity as the "City of Homes." Emphasized support for denser housing only in appropriate areas, like arterial streets (e.g., Emerson). He raised questions about the impact of zoning changes on historic districts, particularly regarding the construction of multifamily units near single-family homes, which could affect the character of areas like Ridge Historic District.

Elizabeth Williams clarified that under the current code, two-unit developments are the only ones allowed in historic districts. She confirmed that no changes to the preservation ordinance are being proposed. Historic district properties would still need to go through the Preservation Commission process if they wish to demolish a property or make significant changes.

Commissioner Lindwall noted that in historic districts like the Lakeshore and Northeast Evanston, there are several older two-flats, double houses, and small apartment

buildings. These structures mostly predate the 1921 zoning ordinance. She expressed that while these buildings are legacy structures, they may not necessarily align with current zoning requirements, and further clarification is needed on how zoning applies to these areas.

Commissioner Lindwall emphasized the importance of maintaining Evanston's housing stock to ensure it is free from environmental hazards such as lead paint and asbestos. She also raised concerns about protecting vulnerable households from displacement, especially in areas like West Evanston where developers may target properties first. Additionally, she noted the need for consistency in housing data, specifically distinguishing between single-family detached and attached homes, and pointed out that opportunities to build new single-family homes in the city are limited.

Commissioner Johnson expressed opposition to the proposal of eliminating R1 zoning or allowing more than two units in R1 areas. He believes this could incentivize the demolition of lower-cost single-family homes, which would conflict with sustainability goals, as the most sustainable housing is existing housing. He also highlighted that Evanston already has a diverse range of housing types, and expanding density in single-family areas could undermine the historic "City of Homes" character, particularly in recognized historic districts. He suggested creating a category to preserve single-family housing in certain areas.

Commissioner Lindwall suggested comparing Evanston's housing cost burden to neighboring communities like Skokie, Chicago, and Cook County. She raised concerns about the statement in the plan claiming that "compact well-connected neighborhoods tend to be less affordable," questioning whether it's true and whether it should be included. She also pointed out issues with a map on page 87 showing high cost burden in a quadrant, suggesting it may need to be revised, particularly around the area near Presbyterian Home.

Chair Rodgers brought up "beating a dead horse" and expressed concerns about balancing affordability with sustainability goals and the impact on homeowners, particularly "mom and pop" landlords. He emphasized the need for collaboration and partnerships to reduce burdens on these groups. He also requested more detailed data on housing insecurity, particularly in Evanston, including the impact of zoning changes on displacement. He asked for comparisons of supply and demand with neighboring municipalities and suggested further data on how proposed changes might affect housing and affordability in Evanston. Additionally, he stressed the importance of collaborating with neighboring communities.

Commissioner Halik shared insights from experience in Chicago's Fourth Ward, where low-rise mixed-income housing was prioritized. He noted that building two- and three-unit buildings, such as two-flats, is often economically unfeasible due to high construction costs. Based on his experience and research, he argued that such buildings are unlikely to be affordable, and that larger buildings like six-unit structures are more viable financially. He expressed concern that the push for smaller units may not be the right direction for affordable housing.

Commissioner Lindwall pointed out a correction needed concerning the first preservation ordinance which was adopted in 1975.

Chair Rodgers expressed support for adaptive reuse of buildings, noting its environmental benefits by avoiding demolition and hazardous materials. Also raised a question about the "Suburban Apartment Buildings" category on page 110 of the plan, which mentions 48 buildings from 1890 to the 1920s that exemplify a particular style of suburban apartments in Evanston. He asked for further clarification about this category and its significance to the city's historical housing development.

Commissioner Lindwall explained that the "Suburban Apartment Buildings" referenced are primarily courtyard buildings, with some dating back to the 1920s. About 40 years ago, a city manager supported the development of such a district to make them eligible for federal tax credits for rehabilitation. She also suggested that the locations of these buildings might benefit from being marked with "dots" on maps.

Commissioners then made additional comments about the photographs and maps used in the Envision Evanston plans.

Commissioner Lindwall made a motion to continue the public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan to the January 8, 2025 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Puchtel. Motion passed 7-0.

Ayes: Halik, Mirintchev, Puchtel, Rodgers, Arevalo, Lindwall, Johnson

Nays:

Abstain:

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Elizabeth Williams announced that the current Zoning Administrator, Melissa Klotz, had submitted her resignation effective December 3rd. This would be her last meeting with the City of Evanston. She took the opportunity to express gratitude for Melissa's many years of service and her significant contributions to Evanston. She also highlighted Melissa's impressive ability to recall the existing zoning code and acknowledged her expertise, which would be greatly missed. Commissioners were invited to express their thanks and appreciation for Melissa's work.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Lindwall made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Johnson Seconded.

Adjourned at 10:06 PM

The next Evanston Land Use Commission meeting will be held **on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 6:00 pm**, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Bock, Administrative lead

Reviewed by
Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner