



MEETING MINUTES

LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 21st, 2025

6:00 PM

James C. Lytle City Council Chamber, Second Floor
Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, 909 Davis Street

Members Present: Loren Berlin, Darush Mabadi, Jameika Mangum, Max Puchtel, Luke Harris-Ferree, Myrna Arevalo, Brian Johnson, Chair Jeanne Lindwall

Members Absent: Kiril Mirintchev

Staff Present: Neighborhood Land Use Planner Meagan Jones, Planning Manager Elizabeth Willias, Planning and policy Supervisor Erin Baynes, Community Development Director Sarah Flax

Presiding Member: Chair Jeanne Lindwall

I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

II. OLD 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.

The Commission discussed and clarified the order in which they would review the documents including the revised draft plan and [recommended language provided by Chair Lindwall](#). Chair Lindwall provided some general recommended edits to the draft, then the Commission reviewed chapter by chapter.

Chapter 1

Commissioner Johnson motioned revising the sentence on page 1:

"This draft seeks to reflect..." — and recommended updating the list that follows to align with the chapter structure in the plan.

The motion did not receive a second, so it did not proceed.

Chapter 2

Chair Lindwall mentioned that “EC2C” should be spelled out in full: *Evanston Cradle to Career*.

Commissioner Johnson suggested revising the sentence: “*White respondents less positive about neighborhood integration and design*” to better clarify the intent in the statement and summarize the feedback more clearly

Motion to change language to “white respondents less positive about integration of new developments into neighborhoods”

Motion: Berlin
Second: Harris-Ferree
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall inquired about the focus groups listed and Ms. Jones clarified that the focus group for the Black Community came about from residents approaching the consultant to have a focus group that spoke to their concerns.

Chair Lindwall proposed several edits and clarifications including: On page 9 under the Land Use section, she recommended adding a bullet point to recognize the contribution of Evanston’s single-family neighborhoods. In the Parks and Recreation section, she suggested including a statement to “embrace the lakefront,”

In the Arts and Culture section, Commissioner Berlin noted the language should say "support" instead of "support and grow" Evanston's museum community so as to not over commit since we don't know what the community will look like in the future. Chair Lindwall noted the need for consistent formatting throughout the document.

A separate motion was made to revise the education section to read: “Prioritize student needs: Employ student-centered decision-making across District 65 and District 202,” but the motion was later withdrawn after Ms. Williams clarified that this section is within the What We Heard Chapter.

Chair Lindwall made a motion to make the following edits:

- Under Neighborhoods and Places, in the last bullet add “Guide change:...”
- Under the Getting Around section, add “Coordinate with Transit providers:...”
- Under the Environment section add “Embrace the lakefront:...”
- Under the Arts & Culture section add “Recognize cultural amenities: support Evanston’s museum community.”

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:

Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 3

Commissioner Johnson proposed deleting the section describing populations that were difficult to obtain information on, suggesting it be reframed as a footnote instead. He recommended shifting the focus to explain where the data was obtained and referencing the best available sources, with a note that those interested in overcount or undercount issues could consult the U.S. Census website. Commissioners Mangum and Mabadi expressed disagreement, stating the proposed language should be added and that the existing section should remain and be rewritten to improve its tone and clarity.

Following this, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to add a paragraph he drafted, which stated: “This section draws from reliable sources such as the United States Census. Here, data on Evanston demographics is presented alongside that of Cook County as well as neighboring municipalities of Wilmette, Chicago, Lincolnwood, and Skokie. Additionally, data from specific Chicago ZIP codes that border Evanston—60626 and 60645—are included. These ZIP codes are roughly coterminous with the Chicago community areas of Rogers Park and West Ridge. Finally, Oak Park is also included because it is similar to Evanston in terms of current built environment and historical development.”

(Commissioner Arevalo arrived during this discussion).

Motion: Johnson
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Commissioner Berlin asked for clarification on the inclusion of the suggestion on adding a stop to the CTA Yellow Line in Evanston. Chair Lindwall confirmed that discussion occurred at a previous meeting.

Chair Lindwall motioned to add language regarding reason for small households under the Households section (page 19), to reference seniors being drawn to the community for its amenities.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Johnson
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Commissioner Johnson emphasized the need to provide context for the demographic data points in Chapter 3. He suggested the draft include comparisons, such as “Evanston has this number, which is higher than...” to help readers interpret the information meaningfully. Commissioner Lindwall recommended incorporating tables and charts that had been prepared for past Commission meetings into the current draft to enhance clarity and visual representation.

Commissioner Mabadi added a suggestion to end the chapter with a note that Evanston’s eastern border is a body of water, Lake Michigan, which is not traversable and therefore limits certain types of regional connectivity.

Chair Lindwall pointed to the key metrics on page 23, suggesting that population density should be expressed using the number of housing units per square mile, rather than population per square mile, to better reflect built form.

Chair Lindwall motioned to add number of housing units as a metric

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Johnson
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to update Household income language on page 20 to “the city has a relatively higher income population in comparison to Chicago and Cook county and is more economically diverse than suburbs like Wilmette.”

Motion: Lindwall
Second:Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 4

Commissioner Johnson pointed out a typo that should be made from “lines” to “lanes”

Chapter 5

Chair Lindwall proposed to add language after the 4th paragraph of the introduction as referenced in her recommendation document.

Motion: Lindwall
Second:Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall motioned to include the 2nd paragraph in her recommended language to close that introduction section.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Berlin
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall noted that within the 6th and 7th Ward descriptions the Central Street business district is split, with a portion at Central St and Green Bay Rd.

She motioned to change the language to be in line with the recommendation in her document- 6th ward: "The Sixth ward includes much of the Central Street Business District." and in the 2nd sentence of 7th Ward description: "it offers a dynamic mix of dining and shopping experiences in the Central Street & Green Bay business area and a variety of housing options..."

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Johnson
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall then noted that the "Evaluating Zoning Proposals.." section should be moved to the end. It was noted that this section in the designed draft is actually a separated box and not part of the regular text between the other sections.

Chair Lindwall motioned to make an edit within the Campus community section - Add "while recognizing the potential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods."

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

In the Open Space section, Chair Lindwall suggested adding context to why Calvary Cemetery is considered Open Space.

She motioned to add language that says "Calvary Cemetery is included in Open Space category because it provides semi-public green space that is unlikely to be redeveloped for other uses and provides habitat for birds and fauna."

Motion: Lindwall
Second:Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Commissioner Berlin proposed a minor grammar edit.

The Commission then discussed industrial uses and how to recognize those existing areas. Commissioner Mabadi motioned to change the “Creation and Innovation” header to “Creation, Innovation, and Enterprise”.

Motion: Mabadi
Second:Lindwall
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 6

On page 42, after the 1st paragraph in the introduction, Chair Lindwall proposed additional language from her document related to infrastructure and existing services and City buildings.

Motion: Lindwall
Second:Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

On page 44, Chair Lindwall proposed language regarding the replacement of lead service lines.

Motion: Lindwall
Second:Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 7

On page 50, Chair Lindwall proposed additional language regarding regional transit providers and its current and potential issues and referenced the document she had previously shared with the Commission. However, Commissioner Mangum expressed that she felt the added

language should be left out. No motion was made, and the group moved on without formal action.

On page 52 under the parking section in 2nd paragraph, Chair Lindwall proposed to replace the last sentence with proposed language discussing on-street and off-street parking in neighborhoods. Seconded by Commissioner Puchtel. Commissioner Mabadi notes that it conflicts with language about transit adjacent development, Commissioner Puchtel disagrees. discussion follows.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

On page 55 under Parking, Chair Lindwall proposed additional language regarding right-sizing off-street parking.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Kiril Mirintchev

Also on page 55, Chair Lindwall proposed additional replacement text for the section on minimum parking requirements. Commissioner Mangum expressed support for keeping the original language, and Commissioner Mabadi agreed. The proposed change was ultimately withdrawn.

Chapters 8

No changes proposed.

Chapter 9

No changes proposed.

Chapter 10,

Lindwall proposed revised opening language and referenced her document; the motion was seconded by Mabadi. Commissioner Harris-Ferree suggested removing the portion stating that “not everyone will be able to live in Evanston,” saying it was important to explore the concept without stating it so directly. Chair Lindwall revised her suggestion, removing that phrasing. Commissioner Berlin seconded. Commissioner Johnson proposed deleting that specific phrasing but keeping the underlying idea with a softer statement like “however, housing supply

is not likely to catch up with housing demand.” Mabadi emphasized that the city should be striving to meet housing demand, and Puchtel agreed, noting that the plan is aspirational.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Berlin
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

On page 77, Commissioner Mabadi suggested adding language about implementing a comprehensive housing strategy, including support for live-work arrangements and adaptive reuse. Commissioner Johnson reminded the group that the Land Use Commission had previously voted to revise Policy 10.1 to read “Preserve and increase Evanston’s diverse housing choices.” He proposed reintroducing this phrasing at multiple points throughout the document. Commissioner Harris-Ferree questioned the fit of the phrase in certain contexts, while Commissioner Berlin confirmed that the vote had occurred and supported using the language consistently where appropriate. Additional discussion followed.

Commissioner Johnson proposed revised language for the first sentence on page 77 to read: “This chapter outlines a framework for preserving and increasing Evanston’s diverse housing choices, maintaining...” This revision was supported. However, similar language proposed for later in the chapter—specifically a sentence on page 77 about little vacant land, a section on page 80 referencing underinvestment and housing supply, and a phrase on page 82—was discussed but ultimately not included.

Johnson then revised his motion to update the chapter’s opening sentence to: “This chapter outlines the framework for preserving and increasing housing choice and supply, maintaining...”

Motion: Johnson
Second: Lindwall
Motion Failed

Ayes: Mabadi, Arevalo, Johnson,
Nayes: Mangum, Puchtel, Berlin, Chair Lindwall, Harris-Ferree,
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall suggested adding a chart using ACS data on housing information- cost burden (overall, owners and renters), home price appreciation and rent growths over time added by Berlin (as an appendix item). Discussion followed on using this as info from a point of time that can be used at a later date to see how we are doing.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Harris-Ferree
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:

Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 11

Lindwall suggested a section be inserted after the Climate section on page 87- “Industrial Legacy” using the language she provided in her comment document related to old industrial sites, contaminated sites, and the waste transfer station.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 12

Commissioner Lindwall raised comments and questions regarding the discussion on page 92 related to Evanston’s aging population. She noted concern about the framing of the issue—specifically the suggestion that an older population may result in a lack of workers to support Evanston’s economy. A broader discussion followed. Chair Lindwall ultimately recommended deleting the final two sentences of the paragraph, expressing discomfort with the conclusions being drawn.

Commission Puchtel motioned to keep factual info and striking the speculative items.

Motion: Puchtel
Second: Lindwall
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chapter 13

No changes proposed.

Chapter 14

No proposed changes. Discussion followed on eligible properties for landmark designation.

Chapter 15

No proposed changes.

Glossary of terms

Chair Lindwall questioned including “conditional use” in the glossary. She then motioned to remove it.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Mabadi
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall motioned to change “Planning Commission” to “Land Use Commission”.

Motion: Lindwall
Second: Puchtel
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Johnson, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Chair Lindwall mentioned action NP 9.5 on page 41, within the Neighborhood and Places Chapter, related to adding retail uses to all neighborhoods, which was an Environment Board recommendation. A brief discussion followed on whether or not to include this as an action that would lead to updates to the zoning code

Puchtel motioned to Strike NP 9.5. Seconded by Chair Lindwall.

Motion: Puchtel
Second: Lindwall
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Johnson, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Chair Lindwall
Nayes:
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Commissioner Puchtel motioned to recommend approval of the revised comp plan as shown in the revised packet as is, inclusive of text changes discussed and approved this evening. 2nd by Berlin

Motion: Puchtel
Second: Berlin
Motion Passed

Ayes: Berlin, Mabadi, Mangum, Puchtel, Harris-Ferree, Arevalo, Chair Lindwall
Nayes: Johnson
Abstain:
Absent: Mirintchev

Following discussion of various map updates, the Commission expressed interest in adding a parks map and updating the preservation map. Chair Lindwall also suggested that the Land Use Commission provide a formal recommendation to the City Council on which areas of the plan

warrant further Council focus—such as the Community Systems chapter, which had been requested and developed by the Commission.

Chair Lindwall closed the public hearing.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Jones stated that the trainers from last week's Commissioner training summarized the feedback received and that summary will be provided to Commissioners.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carlis Sutton voiced strong opposition to forwarding the plan to City Council, stating that it is offensive to marginalized communities. He noted the omission of land trusts and elderly housing, said the plan favors developers, and criticized the location of the waste transfer station. He also felt public participation was inadequate.

John Storey Williams warned of political interference in the process, especially regarding sweeping zoning reforms. He expressed concern about the influence of Connections for the Homeless and the marginalization of long-time residents.

Liz Bryant, representing the League of Women Voters, thanked the Commission for their work and dedication.

Paul Breslin reflected on the broader planning process, expressing skepticism of the ZoneCo zoning analysis and disapproval of the Mayor's characterization of the debate in moral terms. He discussed concerns about rushed changes, neighborhood conflict, and the impact of upzoning on Black communities, referencing Alf McConnell's comments about gentrification and displacement.

Priscilla Giles emphasized the continued need for low-income housing and cited local properties like Jackson-Emerson and Wesley Avenue. She stated many Black residents have been forced out, and those who have "helped" have often enabled this displacement.

Sue Loellbach thanked the Commission, acknowledging the difficult task before them and expressing admiration that the Commission was able to reach agreement despite polarization. She found the plan's policies to be solid overall.

Scott Roberts thanked the Commission and referenced recent Evanston Now articles on duplexes. He urged commissioners to keep such coverage in mind as the discussion shifts to zoning.

Michelle Chlebek thanked staff for their work and emphasized the importance of finalizing the plan. She highlighted the inconsistency in language around "preserve and increase housing," noting two versions were circulating, suggesting the plan was not yet ready to advance.

Brian Hansen (6th Ward) thanked the Commission and acknowledged the challenges and frustrations involved. He appreciated the commission's good faith effort and also recognized staff for their responsiveness and professionalism, even with complications from the consultant.

Kiera Kelly reinforced Michelle Chlebek’s concerns about the “preserve and increase” language. She said reversing it felt like a power move and that public engagement remained insufficient. She questioned the integrity of the process.

Linda Damashek criticized the rushed nature of the LUC’s process for a 20-year plan. She lamented the lack of chapter-by-chapter deliberation and called a sentence about meeting attendees providing “a range of opinions” overly simplistic and derogatory.

Sue Gregor (2nd Ward) said the plan may sound good on paper but is unrealistic in practice. She doubted developers would build truly affordable housing and expressed fears about gentrification and displacement. She urged caution and strong protections for existing residents.

Mary Rosinski thanked the Commission but critiqued the lack of community dialogue compared to past efforts like the Central Street Plan. She said the plan is incomplete and called for a 60–90 day Council review period. She noted inconsistencies in the housing language and urged inclusion of chapters on adaptive reuse, income data, and skepticism of “trickle-down” affordable housing.

Jeff Boarini echoed Rosinski’s concerns. He noted that while the plan assesses housing types, it fails to address needed quantity and does not fully justify the need for more housing. He called for a more localized analysis and expressed gratitude for the Commission’s time and diligence.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:07PM

The next Evanston Land Use Commission meeting is scheduled to be held **on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 7:00 pm**, in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Bock, Administrative Lead

Reviewed by
Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner