



SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES TOWN COUNCIL

Thursday, March 27, 2025 – Council Chambers – Special Meeting Study Session

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jackson called the Town Council Retreat/Study Session to order at 9:05 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers: Steve Hushebeck (Position No. 1), Richard Geffen (Position No. 2), Anna Maria de Freitas (Position No. 3) remote, Mason Turnage (Position No. 4), and Barbara Starr (Position No. 5).

Mayor Raymont Jackson, Town Administrator Denice Kulseth, Finance Director Bethany Berry, and Town Clerk Jennifer Krembs.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Jackson conducted the flag salute.

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Comprehensive Plan

At 9:06 a.m., Mayor Jackson invited Community Development Director Ryan Ericson to present on the Comprehensive Plan consultant and staff recommendations. Ericson stated the Town will be ready to adopt the Comprehensive Plan by end of year 2025, and he requested Council advisement on Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) to meet State allocations.

Housing Element

At 9:09 a.m., Ericson explained how census data, population projections, growth rate, and Office of Financial Management (OFM) provides data to help align housing projections and needs. Using the Housing Needs Assessment data, the 2045 population projection is calculated to grow by 1.68% totaling approximately 3,963 residents. Ericson provided background on how housing allocations are assigned at the County level, with typically 50% being allocated to the Urban Growth Area (UGA); the Town gets to comment on the County's assigned allocation. Last year, Town staff presented to the Council a recommendation to accept a 60% of the population allocation. The Town and San Juan County (SJC) agreed to accept the OFM medium population projection number with the County adopting the medium range with Resolution No. 34-2023. Ericson explained the growth rate numbers and allocations within the UGA and once the population forecasts are established, the Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates planning for new housing units by income bands. The County's LCA projects new housing unit numbers by each Island's UGA and non-UGA reflecting extremely low, very low-, low-, moderate-, and high-income bands. The County and the Town are planning for lower incomes band housing units by combining 0-80% area mean income (AMI) into a single housing band, this aligns with the capacity of the County's three Home Trusts which are the sole providers of lower income housing units. Allocation is being recommended which then projects the need of 916 new housing types across the income bands to be added into the UGA with additional 10 STEP housing units. Council inquired about examples of transitional housing and the impact of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Ericson explained the State only allows ADUs to be part of 10% of the property factor; ADUs receive a 33% decrease on utility hookup fees. Ericson explained using the State's Housing Actional Planning Tool (HAPT), Version No. 1 - Housing Needs Assessment, determined the Town will need approximately 700 new units over the next 20 years, plus an additional 12% to account for second homes; this presents a significant difference which is explained by the assumptions of Version No. 2 of the State's HAPT. Ericson explained the methodology of Version No. 2 of the HAPT that the County's consultant used to project new housing needs by income level, and how vacancy rates impact the cost burden of housing. The method applied accounts for housing to eliminate baseline renter

cost-burden, housing for homeless population, and additional housing to accommodate population growth with the goal of projecting new units needed by income level; the prediction is this method will saturate the market bringing down the cost of living. Councilmember de Freitas inquired if support agencies have been involved with planning for the low-income population to increase, such as the Food Bank and the Family Resource Center (FRC); Ericson explained the FRC is part of the stakeholder group and support agencies will be included in the Comprehensive Plan. The Town is required to remove regulatory barriers for development while planning for all income levels to decrease the housing deficit. Allocations need to have high enough density so development can be built to reduce cost burdened houses to be within the UGAs. Ericson presented a graph to show SJC's existing and target housing targets by income band for the years 2020-2045 along with a graph to show the cost burden analysis by income ranges for owners and renters. The current housing unit capacity for each zone was shared; to maintain the current Town size, the needed density per acre will not be feasible; this makes the need for expanding the UGA necessary.

Ericson shared the proposed recommended areas for UGA expansion to include mapped areas No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 and No. 6 (areas explained below). The process of incorporating these areas requires the Town to present the request to SJC Council. Recommendations include the reduction of lot size to double density in single family household zones from 9000 square feet to 4,500 square feet. To obtain the bonus density, the recommendation would be to move residential zoning from R14 to the minimum of R20, meaning a maximum of 20 dwelling units per gross acre. Projected data for R-14, R-20, R-24, R-26, and R-30 residential were overviewed.

Moved by Councilmember Geffen, seconded by Councilmember Starr, to extend the time for the Housing Element by 30 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Future land use maps of Friday Harbor with proposed UGA expansions were shared in more detail: UGA Expansion No. 1 Port of Friday Harbor off Turn Point Road, No. 2 West side of Town between San Juan Valley Road and Lampard Road, No. 3 East of Mullis adjacent to the airport to include SJC Fire District No. 3, No. 4 West and southern section of Friday Harbor Airport runway, No. 5 properties West of Town and South of Beaverton Valley Road, and No. 6 North of Dougherty Lane and Bald Hill Road to include SJC Fairgrounds. Annexations must be next to the existing Town boundaries, and property owners must pass by majority vote to be included within Town boundaries.

RECESS

At 10:37 p.m., Mayor Jackson called for a recess. At 10:50 a.m., Mayor Jackson reconvened the special meeting.

Ericson reviewed BERK Consultants' recommendations and shared visual models of R-20 density. Ericson asked for Council approval to move forward with R-20 to increase density; The Council concurred.

Development Design Standards

At 10:52 p.m., Ericson presented Council with the Development Design Standards for buildings and streetscapes with the lens of doubling density within 20 years. Ericson invited the Council to think of standards street-by-street to maintain the ambient feel of Friday Harbor; he recommended the creation of a development design standard checklist which would support the Community Development Department with implementation. Cohesive visual examples of rowed homes, set-backs, plazas, awnings, three story modulated buildings, sidewalks, pedestrian scale projecting signs, landscaping, planters, stoops, full-screen parking, parallel parking, and lighting were presented. Building materials, landscaping/vegetation, and historic recessed windows were discussed as potential requirements. Councilmember Turnage commented on the nice aesthetic of real wood. Councilmember de Freitas commented on the importance of using fire-resistant materials. A potential option of a parking garage to provide more town parking with an elevated park on top of the structure was proposed. Councilmember Turnage inquired if Sunken Park could be a potential property; Ericson stated three stories would be possible in that location. Councilmember de Freitas mentioned the Port of Friday Harbor parking lot as another potential location. Kulseth shared a resource from the Strong Towns organization where Stanwood, WA was featured; Stanwood is an example of implementing Development Design Standards to positively impact economic growth and promote pedestrian

safety. Ericson will propose Development Design Standards to Council; Council can mandate development design requirements.

Signage

At 11:16 a.m., Ericson reviewed Friday Harbor Municipal Code Title 14 with proposed definition revisions and prohibitions to include limited use for banners, prohibiting after hour illuminated signs, prohibiting external neon signs, and the regulation of wattage for LED signs. Existing code was written before LED lights; code revision would regulate the use of subdued warm lighting. Ericson shared a visual scale of lighting; Councilmember Turnage was in favor of 3000K. Councilmember Geffen inquired if the Town could regulate on rated lumens; Ericson said regulating on rated lumens would be a good idea. Ericson shared measurement calculations for determining sign size with the recommendation of allowing only two signs considering primary and secondary frontage depending on conditions. Sign size based on sign type to include projecting, hanging, pole, marquee, window, door, freestanding signs were presented. Councilmember Turnage inquired about paper advertisements in windows. Ericson said paper displays are not regulated, but they could be included. Councilmember Hushebeck suggested a percentage of windows not to be covered. Councilmember de Freitas suggested other options for businesses to display advertisements. Councilmember Turnage inquired about color, font, and material of sign requirements; Ericson suggested those elements would be included. The Council appreciated the sign information and agreed grandfathering of signs should not be allowed, but allowing a reasonable timeframe to allow businesses to comply is advisable. Ericson requested to make the sign code clearer, and he will bring sign revisions back to the Council in the Fall.

Capital Road Improvement Projects

At 11:41 a.m., Mayor Jackson welcomed Public Works Director Jesse Douglas-Seitz to present briefly on capital road improvement projects. Douglas-Seitz provided background on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for years 2025-2030 passed through Council with Resolution No. 2857 on June 6, 2024. The TIP provided several areas for transportation improvement projects. Douglas-Seitz reviewed two potential street projects, Nichols Street and Grover Street, with an outline and visual map of opportunities and challenges for both locations. Nichols Street, Argyle Street to C Street, would be a good candidate for Transportation Improvement Board funding. Grover Street, Argyle to Hunt Street, would not be fully eligible for funding. The Council requested to continue the retreat/study session on May 8, 2025, to continue the capital road improvement projects.

ADJOURNMENT – Hearing no further business and no objection, Mayor Jackson adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.

* * * * *

These minutes were approved by motion of the Town Council . The original document is retained by the Clerk in the Town Council’s permanent records. Attest: Jennifer Krembs, Town of Friday Harbor Clerk