

County Council pushes back Comp Plan vote

JC Cortez staff reporter | Posted: Wednesday, October 28, 2015 9:00 am

The Board of Clark County Councilors pushed off a vote last week to select a preferred alternative to the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, which is the next step in the process of choosing a final update to the plan.

Councilors met last Tuesday to consider a recommended preferred alternative drafted by the Clark County Planning Commission in September, and to choose a preferred alternative which would then be studied in a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

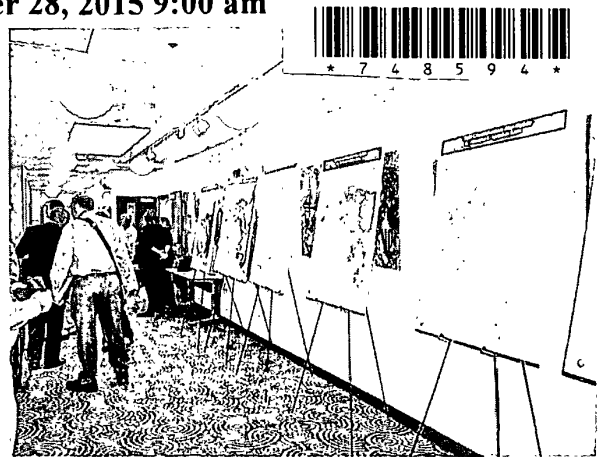
To form the recommendation, the Planning Commission reviewed the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), which examined the four proposed alternatives, and then voted on individual provisions of each alternative separately. The provisions they approved were added to the recommended preferred alternative, but no provision from the controversial Alternative 4 survived the Commission's voting process. As a result, Alternative 4 was left out of the recommendation entirely.

Early in the discussion, Councilor David Madore introduced a pair of documents he authored in response to criticism Alternative 4 received. In the documents, Madore questioned data and projections in the DSEIS, saying it used "unrealistic" assumptions about the county's growth. He declared Alternative 4 had been updated as a result using "more realistic" assumptions.

"The concerns and recommendations expressed by the DSEIS, citizen testimony and city representatives have provided me with valuable feedback to make Alternative 4 better," Madore said. "As a result, Alternative 4 has been updated to lessen impacts and mitigate concerns."

Some officials worried that modifying the growth projections would require adding more work and wait into the already tight update schedule which requires the county's plans be finalized by June 30, 2016. Councilor Jeanne Stewart suggested the changes may require rebooting the entire process, which she said would be "a monumental task."

"The assumptions are the starting point," Stewart said. "If we are on the wrong path we need to



County Comp. Plan Update

A ROW OF COMPLICATED maps detail the four proposed alternatives to the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan outside the Board hearing room of the Public Service Center during an open comment session earlier this year.

recognize that and change course.”

The issues Madore raised went unresolved Tuesday; county legal staff intervened to warn the council that, since the items were not included on the meeting agenda, it would technically have been illegal for the council to discuss or act upon them.

Near the close of the meeting, councilors began to squabble over how to continue the process. More than four hours into the meeting, which included a presentation on the Planning Commission’s recommendation and hours of comment from Clark County residents, Councilor Tom Mielke moved to reconvene the meeting Nov. 24 for further discussion. Stewart originally seconded the motion to reconvene, but withdrew her support after Councilor Madore proposed an amendment to the motion that would ensure his new materials could be discussed at the next meeting.

“The restriction we have in this meeting, not even being able to discuss the information that was introduced, is a handicap,” he said. “The November 24 meeting needs to include the flexibility for us to cover these topics. You name it, if it has to do with the comprehensive plan update, I want it on the table.”

After Stewart withdrew her support, Madore seconded Mielke’s motion himself, prompting a sharp outburst from Stewart.

“It is absolutely shameful, the way that you have hijacked this process to get people to comply with your ... will,” she said. “This is not good government. It’s shocking and I’m ashamed of it.”

“We represent the people, the citizens of Clark County,” he replied. “My role is to advocate for their interests. That’s where my allegiance lies.”

The council will take the issue up again during its Tue., Nov. 24 hearing with discussion over Madore’s new materials.