



ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL

Madore points fingers over Comp Plan

Posted on February 12, 2016

by Kaitlin Gillespie



The Clark County council's Wednesday board time featured a heated discussion of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update and Councilor David Madore's accusations that staff is attempting to hide information about that plan from the councilors.

The way Madore tells it, he found out in a work session about a month ago that county staff is working on policy statements for the comp plan update. When he requested copies of those policies, Acting County Manager Mark McCauley denied that request, because those sections of the growth plan are still drafts. They aren't "ready for primetime," McCauley said.

That wasn't enough for Madore, who compared county staff to the crew of a ship intentionally hiding the destination from its captain, essentially accusing staff of mutiny. Read more about how that conversation went in my story from earlier this week.

But what's even more interesting, in some ways, is what led up to this discussion.

Wednesday morning, Madore emailed McCauley asking for these policy statements.

"I did not realize that staff has been working on a new policy to be incorporated in to the Comp Plan that we are working on," Madore wrote. "Please email a copy of that draft policy that Oliver and Jeff Swanson said they provided to you. Are there any other policy changes that staff is working on that we don't know about?"

McCauley told Madore the documents aren't ready yet and therefore not ready to be released, but Madore wasn't taking no for an answer.

"I am puzzled by the executive branch creating policy and then keeping that proposed policy from the legislative branch who, as I understand, is the branch solely responsible and authorized to create policy," Madore said. "It is your duty, sir to disclose that draft policy to this policy member. I would consider it insubordination for you to refuse I have made my request clear. Your timely compliance it [sic] expected. Further, as a member of this council. I would consider it illegal for my colleagues to even attempt to withhold proposed policies from a council member."

Yikes. You can read that entire email exchange here.

First of all, there's nothing unusual about county staff putting together documents for the Clark County Planning Commission and council to review, edit and eventually approve. In general, that's how county government works.

These policy statement chapters should be non-controversial and even boring, covering subjects like land use, transportation, economic development and housing. Think of these as vision statements. Community Planning Director Oliver Orjiako confirmed that these chapters are standards parts of the growth plan, covering topics required by state statute. In many cases, these updates to existing policies in the current growth plan

Furthermore, some general information about what exactly these policy statements are, along with changes the Planning Commission proposed, is already available on the county website and has been for nearly two years.

So why is planning staff only now finishing the work on these chapters?

"We stopped working on the comp plan text when Alternative 4 was introduced and revised," Orjiako said "We have not been back to the Planning Commission yet on the comp plan text We are working on it now with the understanding that further revision will be necessary as the preferred alternative plan unfolds."

Oh.

The Clark County council at 10 a.m Tuesday will review its Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update preferred alternative. For more information, visit Community Planning's website.



Kaitlin Gillespie

I'm the Clark County government reporter at The Columbian. Get in touch at kaitlin.gillespie@columbian.com or 360-735-4517.

Comments

7 Comments

Sort by **Newest**



Add a comment. .



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

I strongly encourage people to watch the video. Then vote.

Reply 2 Feb 15, 2016 6 49pm



Robert Ives · Vancouver, Washington

I seem to remember Mr. Madore springing Alt. 4 on the council without much prior release of policy statements or the text until he was good and ready. The planning staff was also kept in the dark on the "details" and Mr. Madore's "source" for his population projections. The pot is calling the kettle black.

Reply 5 Feb 13, 2016 3 52pm



Nancy Jeffrey · Portland State University

Thanks Katie, for the emails between Madore and McCauley. Watching how Madore speaks to and about staff, live on tv and in his written communications illustrates his great contempt for those he feels are beneath him. Keep up the great work Mr. McCauley, Jennifer Clark and the rest of our valuable county "crew". You are appreciated!

Reply 6 Feb 12, 2016 10 33pm



John Laird · Works at Retired Journalist

As usual, on this issue Jack Burkman provides the insight of an experienced and insightful communitarian. Meanwhile, the slow but entertaining meltdown of radical right-wing Pastor/CEO David Madore continues for the amusement of many Clark County residents. Congratulations and gratitude to the highly professional county staff leaders who provide their measured, dignified input. Carry on, county workers.

Reply 8 Feb 12, 2016 8 24pm



Bridget McLeman

It would be more logical for staff to be outraged that, while they are toiling away at drafting language to actually make sure the document is ready by the deadline, a Councilor is again making plans for last minute changes. But I guess the Councilor's outrage is understandable IF you don't trust staff, can't quite believe that GMA regulations really are rules, and you are sure that your version of reality is philosophically and legally perfect. And if you are secretly working in your office for "weeks and months" on new ideas then it must, indeed, come as a shock that others (staff) are following established process by continuing to do the work that we are paying them to do - getting the GMA plan in on time.

Reply 9 Feb 12, 2016 5 07pm




Jack Burkman · Council Member at Vancouver, Washington City Government

I saw Council Chair Boldt ask Councilor Madore if he wanted a work session on this, but that was not acceptable.

Overall, this sounds like a normal process to me. Staff has to have the flexibility to create the implementation of the policy direction they have been given, get feedback from the Planning Commission that was appointed by the County Councilors to perform that review, and then have the Council review, modify if needed, and adopt. If they didn't do this, there could easily be five

the Councils acting as additional staff members drafting the documents. If that happened, the Councils would not be acting in the legislative role the Charter now requires.

I'm quite familiar with this because the City of Vancouver has a Charter that is very similar to the new County Charter.

Reply  11 Feb 12, 2016 4:59pm



A.G. Flynn

For a pedant there is nothing boring about land use and the writings that guide it - really
In any case staff is allowed to make draft after draft before presenting the dogs and ponies to the ringmaster under the big top - simple stuff -

alternative 4 clark county clark county council comp plan

comprehensive growth management plan update David Madore oliver orjako