County growth plan remains divisive topic

Quiring proposes delay, won't support update as written

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The Clark County Planning Commission's debate Thursday over the county's 20-year growth plan hinted at continued division over how best to provide for the area's population growth in the coming decades.

Thursday's meeting was the last step before the Clark County council is slated to approve the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update at its June 21 meeting, bringing a three-year process marred by controversy to a close. That means the county will seek its final draft through to the state Commerce Department just nine days shy of its June 30 deadline.

Planning Commissioner Eileen Quiring, who is also running as a Republican for the Clark County council seat currently held by retiring Republican Tom Mielke, set the tone for Thursday's debate early in the meeting.

Quiring, citing some community opposition to chapters of the plan, said she would not be supporting the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update as written.

"I think we should actually go back and start again even though it would make this plan late," she said. "I understand that I'm not going to be very popular with my commission members here with this stance."

In particular, Quiring questioned why chapters addressing home design, environmental issues and healthy living belong in the Comprehensive Plan at all, echoing recent complaints by Republican Councilor Tom Mielke about the amount of material in the plan.

"I've said this before. This is all part of the actual plan that I disagree with wholeheartedly," Quiring said during a discussion of housing policies. "I don't think it belongs in our comprehensive plan."

Quiring's idea to delay the plan, however, got little steam from her fellow commission members. John Blom, who is running as a Republican against Republican Councilor David Madore, said he feared Clark County may be faced with "potentially trying to rewrite one plan while..."

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