

## **Summary of Minutes Record Regarding View Protection Goals and Policies (PL8.1 & 8.2)**

### **Council Direction from February 25, 2014:**

Referred to Land Use and Environment Committee

### **OPC Lead for 2014:**

To be determined.

### **Background:**

The Commission passed this recommendation on March 4, 2013.

The OPC sponsor was Commissioner Bardin.

From the written sponsor proposal:

“OPC Sponsor: Commissioner Bardin

1. Describe the scope of the topic. (Don't just state, “housing.” What are the goal or policy issue(s) regarding housing to be discussed?)

In reviewing public comments on views and heights, I came across an email from Jeffrey Jaksich that very effectively addresses the scope of this topic. I have included a number of excerpts from his email, not his entire email.

“Scenic views were always an intrinsic part of this area, the quality of life, how locals live and enjoy the Olympia area, especially the views up Puget Sound to and from Olympia to the Black Hills from east to west, from west to east to Mt. Rainier, from Olympia, especially from the State Capital Campus up Puget Sound to the Olympic Mountains. The tree-lined hill tops and ridges planned by generations of Olympia Planning Commissions and elected officials surrounds south Budd Inlet with fabulous panoramic views. These views and view sheds have become part of Olympia and South Sound formalized in values, vision, goals, and supporting policies. These are largely reflected in numerous Olympia Comp Plans going back from many decades. A good example of these values and vision are reflected Wilder and White graphic visions and conceptual designs. The strategic vision in Wilder and White Washington State Capital Campus of 1911 Capital Campus design reflects a long held value to not only appreciate the local beauty, but to protect and preserve such views such as Olympia Capital Dome Sight Plain in Olympia Zoning Ordinances, etc.”

“The point is to recognize the importance of views to Olympia and the residents of this area of Olympia for hundreds of years and far into our future. We recently recognized in the Olympia Planning Commission in the 1980s and 1990s that views and panoramic views were important to our local Olympia quality of life. We wanted and still want a walkable community with beautiful views that can be enjoyed around the City. This is especially true along the saltwater and other shorelines. This value was formalized in the Wilder and Whites vision and designs in 1911 for the Capital Campus. Olympia was and still is a special place in the mind of most current residents largely because of it special views, like those over the Isthmus”.

“People” ” have often remarked and continue to make the point about the special view of coming into Olympia from the waters of Puget Sound. This is especially true looking up to the Capital Dome as you come into Olympia by boat from the water.”

2. Why does this issue demand attention? (i.e., why the treatment in the July draft is, to the sponsor, inadequate.)

The language in the Plan is not specific enough to protect scenic views/vistas/view sheds.

A high profile public process needs to be set-up to make sure all important views are identified and maintained.

3. Is this topic addressed in the July Draft? If so, where? (staff can help)

Substantive Change Policies:

PL6.9: Preserve and enhance water vistas by retaining public rights-of-way that abut or are within one block of water bodies and by not siting public buildings within associated view corridors.

PU6.10: Identify and designate significant public- viewpoints and – with consideration of trees and other enhancing landscaping—protect, preserve and enhance particular views of the Capitol Campus, Budd Inlet, Downtown skyline, Mount Rainier, the Black Hills, Capitol Lake and surrounding treed slopes, and the Olympic Mountains, such as:

- Capitol Group views of the Olympic Mountains
- West Bay Park views of Capitol Group
- Existing West Bay Park views of Olympic Mountains
- Olympic Way sidewalk and Fourth Avenue bridge viewpoint views of the Capitol Group
- Existing Fourth Avenue bridge views of the Olympic Mountains
- Upper Sunrise Park views of Mount Rainier
- Pacific Avenue sidewalk views of Mount Rainier from Boulevard Road to Steele Street
- Priest Point Park views of Capitol Group and Olympic Mountains
- East Bay Waterfront Park views of Olympic Mountains
- Existing Brawne and Foote intersection view of Budd Inlet
- Upper Madison Scenic Park views of Capitol Campus and downtown
- Capitol Boulevard west sidewalk views of Capitol Lake
- Percival Landing views of Capitol Group and Olympic Mountains

[Other] policy language in the July Draft:

PR3.3: Preserve and enhance scenic views and significant historic sites within Olympia’s park system.

PU 3.3: Protect historic vistas from the Capitol Campus to Budd Inlet and the Olympic Mountains and from Budd Inlet to the Capitol Group.

PU 10.2: Establish maximum building heights that are proportional to streets, retain scenic views and are compatible with adjoining development.

PU 12.5: In the West Bay Drive area provide for a mix of recreation and urban uses that enhance wildlife habitat and cultural resources; limit industrial uses to existing sites; minimize blockage of upland views of Budd Inlet; and connect the area to the south with an urban trail.

PU 14.1: Adopt a Downtown Master Plan addressing – at minimum – housing, public spaces, parking management, rehabilitation and redevelopment, architecture and cultural resources, building skyline and views, and relationships to the Port peninsula and Capitol Campus.

PU 15.5: Designate ‘pedestrian streets’ where most of the frontage will have ‘people-oriented’ activities and street-level buildings will have a high proportion of glass. Prohibit parking lots along these streets, except when preserving scenic views and instead provide for surface parking along other streets.

PU 15.8: Limit building heights to accentuate, and retain selected public views of the Capitol dome.

4. Provide the specific goal or policy language that you propose (or a motion if goal/policy language is not applicable.)

#### Heights and View Protection:

Goal 7: Establish building height limits to protect, preserve, and enhance treasured public and private views in the capital city of Washington state.

#### Policies:

PL7.1: Implement public processes to identify important landmark views and observation points. Involve 2013 digital simulation software to verify protection of landmark views.

PL7.2: Utilizes 2013 digital simulation software to identify and maximize view planes and sightline heights which provide the maximum development capacity for downtown between the landmark view and observation point.

PL7.3: Establish the maximum height for state office buildings north of the Legislative Buildings which are below the base of the World War I Memorial.

PL7.4: Provide public landmark views from all west Capitol Campus’s War and Law Enforcement Memorials to Puget Sound and Olympic Mountains.

PL7.5: Prevent buildings or structures 35 feet or more in height above the average grade level above the west and east Olympia valley ridge lines in all directions distracting attention from landmark views.

PL7.6: Delete all height bonuses and incentives in state capital city policies, and all development codes, and require that “height means height”. Delete maximum allowable heights from discretion of City staff or private individuals.

P L7.7: Delete “Visual Impact Assessment” analysis and requirements from all development permits.

PL7.8: Prevent interference from night light sources, utility poles, and light standards, radio communication towers, and street signage (public and private) that obstruct or distraction from landmark views.

PL7.9: Develop matrix between scenic Landmark Views and Observation Points.

Landmark Views: (Landmark views involve state Capitol Campus, mountains, waterways, and hills.)

- Olympic Mountains
- Puget Sound
- Mt. Rainier
- State Capitol Campus Promontory
- Olympia Valley's Treed Hill Slopes
- Capitol Lake Estuary
- Black Hills
- Observation Points: (Observations points are either static or dynamic from: Puget Sound, state Capitol Campus, public parks, public right of ways, "W", downtown Olympia, and the surrounding community.)
- Puget Sound's Navigational Channel
- Parks: West Bay Park, Priest Point Park, North Point, Sunrise Park, and Madison Scenic Park, and Percival Landing.
- Streets: State, 4th Avenue, Harrison, Deschutes, West Bay, East Bay Drive, 4th Avenue Bridge, Olympic Avenue, Boulevard Road, Pacific Avenue, Martin Ave, Brawne, Foote, Capitol Way, (portions)
- Washington "W" walkway and bikeway system (portions)
- Downtown: Hands-on Museum, and old/new City Hall

Height and view protection shall provide greater opportunities for the general public to enjoy the scenic qualities of the capital city of Washington state. Protection and enhancement of public and private views of Olympia are important objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

**From the OPC March 4, 2013 Minutes:**

"Vice Chair Bardin discussed her suggested changes to goals and policies related to heights and views contained within proposed Land Use Goal 7 and proposed Policies 7.1 -PL7.8. There was discussion about creating a matrix to reflect important heights and views and having a public process to determine the protected views. Commissioners decided to vote on the proposals by consensus unless a vote was requested.

There was discussion about whether the City can and should protect private property views, as Vice Chair Bardin and Commissioner Ingman are recommending. It was noted the Shoreline Management Act already requires protection of residential shoreline views. It was clarified that the proposal is for goals and policies related to heights and views to remain in the July draft, and the proposed policies are intended to be in addition to the existing goals and policies, with these exceptions: 1) The new PL7.8 would replace the existing PL6.10, and 2) move PL3.3 to be a new policy PL7.3.

1. Discussion of Goal 7 (see page 6). Commissioners discussed the goal and chose to rephrase it as: "Community views are protected, preserved and enhanced."
2. Discussion of PL7.1 (see page 6). Commissioners discussed the policy and chose to make the following changes: change "2013" to "Olympia's." "After processes," add "including the use of Olympia's digital simulation software."
3. Discussion of PL7.2 (see page 6). Commissioners discussed the policy and chose to make the following changes: Change "2013" to "Olympia's." Remove "maximize" and "which provide the maximum development capacity for downtown."

There was discussion of the possible need to define terms such as "sight line heights" and "view planes." Commissioners didn't feel this was necessary.

4. Discussion of proposed policy PL7.3, regarding establishing the maximum height for State office buildings north of the Legislative Buildings which are below the base of the World War I Memorial. Commissioners discussed the policy and chose to make the following changes: Change "Capital" to "Capitol." There was a lengthy discussion about what views are currently visible from which memorials and how the policy would affect future building on State property. During the discussion of the proposed language Commissioner Tousley registered a "no" vote. Commissioner Ingman moved to adopt "Establish the maximum height for new State office buildings to provide public panoramic landmark views to Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains from all west Capitol Campus War and Law Enforcement Memorials." Vice Chair Bardin seconded it. No discussion was held. Vice Chair Bardin and Commissioner Ingman voted in favor, Commissioners Kizza and Reddick abstained, Commissioner Leveen, Chair Parker, Commissioners Richards and Tousley voted no and the motion failed.
5. Discussion of PL7.4 (see page 6). There was a lengthy discussion about which views and viewpoints were included. Commissioner Tousley registered a "no" vote on this proposal. Commissioner Kizza moved to adopt, "Prevent blockage of landmark views by limiting the heights of buildings and structures on the west and east Olympia ridge lines." Vice Chair Bardin seconded it, and there was discussion of the motion. Commissioner Richards, Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioners Horn, Reddick, Ingman and Kizza voted in support, Commissioners Leveen and Tousley voted no. The motion carried.
6. Discussion of PL7.5 (see page 6). Commissioners discussed the policy and possible changes to the wording. The final version is: "Height bonuses and incentives shall not interfere with landmark views." The language was approved by consensus.
7. Discussion of PL7.6: Commissioners discussed proposed policy PL7.6, regarding deleting all height bonus and incentives in state capital City policies, and all development codes, and requiring that "height means height." The proposal would also delete maximum allowable heights from discretion of City staff or private individuals. Chair Parker made a motion that the proposed PL 7.6 be rejected, Commissioner Horn seconded it and there was a discussion of the proper procedure for making the motion. It was decided that the motion should be in the affirmative so Chair Parker moved that the Commission adopt PL7.6; Commissioner Ingman seconded it; there was another discussion about the procedure of making the motion and whether the policy is too proscriptive. Commissioner Ingman, Vice Chair Bardin and

Commissioner Kiswa voted in favor, and Commissioner Leveen, Chair Parker, Commissioners Horn, Reddick and Tousley voted no. The motion failed and PL7.6 will not be included.

As 9:30 p.m. approached, Commissioners decided to extend the meeting in order to finish items on the agenda.

8. Discussion of proposed policy PL7.7 regarding deleting "Visual Impact Assessment" analysis and requirements from all development permits. Commissioners discussed how this policy relates to utilities and dark skies language, as well as how the policy may be re-worded. Commissioner Horn moved to eliminate PL7.7 and Commissioner Leveen seconded it; there was no discussion. Commissioners Leveen, Richards, Chair Parker, Commissioners Tousley, Horn and Reddick voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.
9. Discussion of PL7.8 (see page 6). Commissioners discussed the policy and chose to make the following changes to the "matrix": "Capital" needs to be changed to "Capitol;" a colon is needed after "observation points;" there should be an apostrophe in "Valley's;" and "valley" shouldn't be capitalized; "Capital Lake" should be changed to "Capitol Lake/Estuary;" add (portions) to the end "streets" and "W" should be changed to "the Olympia Waterfront Route 22 Map in the Parks Plan." The final proposed policy language is: "Set absolute maximum building heights to preserve views of landmarks from observation points such as those identified in the following matrix, as determined through public process." Commissioners agreed to the language on consensus.

The following is the language that is being recommended:

Goal 7:

Community views are protected, preserved and enhanced.

**Policies:**

PL7.1: Implement public processes, including the use of Olympia's digital simulation software, to identify important landmark views and observation points.

PL7.2: Utilize Olympia's digital simulation software to identify view planes\* and sightline heights\* between the landmark view and observation point. [\*find a way to define words early on so public can understand.]

PL7.4: Prevent blockage of landmark views by limiting the heights of buildings or structures on the west and east Olympia ridge lines.

PL7.5: Height bonuses and incentives shall not interfere with landmark views.

PL7.8: Set absolute maximum building heights to preserve views of landmarks from observation points, such as those identified in the following matrix, as determined through public process:

Landmark Views: (Landmark views involve State Capitol Campus, mountains, waterways, and hills.)

- Olympic Mountains
- Puget Sound
- Mt. Rainier
- State Capitol Campus Promontory
- Olympia valleys' treed hill slopes
- Capitol Lake/ Estuary
- Black Hills

Observation Points: (Observations points are either static or dynamic from: Puget Sound, State Capitol Campus, public parks, public rights-of-way, the Olympia Waterfront Route, Map 2.2 in Parks Plan, downtown Olympia, and the surrounding community.)

- Puget Sound's Navigational Channel
- State Capitol Campus Promontory
- Parks: West Bay Park, Priest Point Park, North Point, Sunrise Park, Madison Scenic Park, and Percival Landing
- Streets: State, 4th Avenue, Harrison, Deschutes, West Bay, East Bay Drive, 4th Avenue Bridge, Boulevard Road, Pacific Avenue, Martin Way, Brawne, Foote, Capitol Way (portions)
- Washington "W" walkway and bikeway system (portions)
- Downtown: Hands On Children's Museum and old/new City Hall

The Commission voted not to include policies proposed in the packet: PL7.3, PL7.6 and PL7.7