



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Meeting Minutes City Council

Information: 360.753.8447

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

Special Study Session

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Stephen H. Buxbaum, Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones, Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Julie Hankins, Councilmember Jeannine Roe and Councilmember Cheryl Selby

Excused: 1 - Councilmember Steve Langer

OTHERS PRESENT

Community Planning and Development Deputy Director Leonard Bauer
Associate Planner Amy Buckler
Public Works Transportation Senior Planner Sophie Stimson
Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) Senior Planner Thera Black
Intercity Transit (IT) Planning Manager Dennis Bloom
Olympia Planning Commissioners Jerome Parker, Roger Horn, Judy Bardin, and Carole Richmond

2. SPECIAL STUDY SESSION TOPICS

- 2.A [14-0308](#) Discussion and Potential Guidance on the Comprehensive Plan Update including Background Information, Process and Next Steps Regarding Olympia's Urban Corridors

Mr. Bauer provided an overview of the history of the Comprehensive Plan (CP) Urban Corridors (UC), a concept which integrates transportation and land use, initially designated in 1994. He outlined the relationship between housing, transportation, and transit, defined existing corridor width, and explained rationale for staff's recommendation for narrower corridors.

Ms. Black gave a regional perspective overview. She explained how regional corridors are designated, what the objectives are, and the relationship between transportation and land use. She discussed traffic congestion, public desire for more travel mode choices, the creation of urban lifestyle opportunities which support walking, and how to lower infrastructure and environmental impact costs. She outlined the objectives of the Urban Corridors Task Force to understand background conditions along the

region's key urban corridors, identify and understand barriers to achieving adopted land use visions, and identify potential opportunities for addressing those barriers.

Mr. Bloom provided an overview of the IT system relative to Olympia and the urban corridors. He outlined service levels and discussed the need to build density to support high frequency transit service. He discussed the Smart Corridor project which allows buses an extended time to pass through intersections and the need for a mix of housing services and jobs to support successful community transit service.

Mr. Bauer discussed the changing perspective of neighborhood character over time and how wider corridors enable a better mix of services.

Commissioner Parker discussed how the UC designation applies to certain areas in the vicinity of major arterial streets with the intent to intensify commercial uses for larger structures near the street edge, with less intensive uses and smaller structures farther from the street to transition to adjacent properties. An emphasis on creating opportunities to live, work, shop, and recreate will be located within walking distance of nodes, or intersections that are more intensely developed. He explained the reasons for the nodal approach and the removal of the Capitol Way corridor due to public comments from an adjoining neighborhood.

Commissioner Horn discussed the changing future land use map and neighborhood center approach to development.

Discussion included the following:

- TRPC population projections of where future development will occur.
- Easton's 2009 report.
- Clarify language regarding widening, density, and mobility.
- Actual physical widening is not contemplated or likely, and traffic may decrease due to proximity of goods and services.
- The relationship between amenities and mobility.
- Municipalities of Burlington, Vermont, and Greenville, North Carolina, have reduced traffic carrying capacity in through streets, creating positive impacts on economic activity .
- Question of adequate space to accommodate anticipated growth.
- Existing work done regarding population projections.
- The need for a 25% market factor and near-term market for dense housing in the Capital Mall area.
- Inability to perform in the past and the need for one good project, perhaps Columbia Heights, establishing a precedent.
- Targeting 25 units per acre.

- The impact of ADUs and infill on density.
- Quarter mile is on the transportation map in the draft plan, not on the land use map.
- Concern about corridors with hills and impact for pedestrian access.
- Public investment for wider sidewalks, creation of pedestrian scale, and nudging for State, Fourth, Martin/Boulevard, and Harrison and Division nodes.
- Focus on downtown as essential to City growth and encourage people to move downtown.
- General consensus for support of Planning Commission proposal.
- Decreasing the size of potential high density commercial areas.
- Use of incentives and opportunity sites.
- Linking to the Economic Chapter and land use component.
- Development and deployment of a fully connected transportation system that makes the most of multi-modal, transformational applications.

The discussion was completed.

2.B [14-0329](#) Discussion and Potential Guidance on the Comprehensive Plan Update including Background Information, Process and Next Steps Regarding Urban Agriculture

Ms. Buckler gave an overview of urban agriculture as addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. She explained why staff supports the revisions to the plan proposed by the Planning Commission encouraging active partnership in the food network and public input on policies to the implementation plan.

Commissioner Richmond discussed how climate change may impact food security/insecurity and described ways to reduce the amount of miles our food travels, how to encourage smaller scale farming, how to maintain food affordability, and how to use urban areas in yards and community gardens. She distributed an article from the United Nations on small scale urban farming.

Discussion included the following:

- Implementation issues.
- Urban versus rural agriculture and the role of the City.
- The three day food supply scenario.
- Possible conflicts where different uses meet.
- Backyard chickens.
- Investment in more community gardens?
- Working with Thurston Food System Council to foster collaboration and active engagement in the local food system.
- Puget Sound Regional Council for guidance with developing integrated and sustainable policy and action recommendations to strengthen local and regional food systems.

The discussion was completed.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.