



# City of Olympia

City Hall  
601 4th Avenue E  
Olympia, WA 98501

## Meeting Minutes City Council

Information: 360-753-8447

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**Tuesday, June 11, 2013**

**7:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### Special Study Session

#### 1. ROLL CALL

**Present:** 7 - Mayor Stephen H. Buxbaum, Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones, Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Julie Hankins, Councilmember Steve Langer, Councilmember Jeannine Roe and Councilmember Karen Rogers

#### 2. BUSINESS ITEM

##### 2.A [13-0464](#) Joint Study Session with the Olympia Planning Commission - Handoff of Comprehensive Plan

Associate Planner Amy Buckler distributed a corrected letter from Planning Commissioner Roger Horn. The packet was missing page 3 of his letter. She reviewed the background of the Comprehensive Plan and comments made by individuals. She noted one comment she heard many times was that they like the small town feel and hope to keep it. She reviewed population trends, housing needs, and recent community discussions about creating a bold, transformational vision for the Sustainable Thurston project. She also noted various aspects of the Comprehensive Plan the Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) reviewed over the past two years. She pointed out the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) is not included in the draft of the Comprehensive Plan, but the Planning Commission will review the CFP and bring it to Council in the future.

OPC Chair Jerry Parker noted the public will have an opportunity to comment on this again. He said the OPC will continue to work on details in the municipal code and development regulations. He then reviewed recommendations made and challenges identified by the OPC.

Vice Chair Judy Bardin noted most of the policy recommendations were passed by a super majority.

Commissioners reviewed aspects in the draft plan and shared individual recommendations and reasoning behind them.

##### Items Brought up by Commissioners:

- Keep moving forward on the Downtown Master Plan and integrate it into the Comprehensive Plan.

- OPC should be able to hear zone changes and code amendments.
- Need more for bicyclists.
- Downtown planning should be done sooner rather than later.
- Contract with an urban design firm to provide leadership.
- Do not put the Downtown Plan in the Comprehensive Plan, but the Comprehensive Plan should provide guidance to the Downtown Plan.
- Look at urban growth boundaries.
- Pedestrian safety.
- Reduce speed limits on local access streets from 25 to 20.
- Become a compact and walkable city.
- Be pro-active in development.

Mayor Buxbaum recognized the newly appointed Planning Commission members.

Mayor Buxbaum noted Ms. Kendra Dahlen of FLT Consulting, will act as facilitator for the discussion with Councilmembers and current OPC members on the sub-area plan and the action plan.

**Commission Comments:**

- A general consensus action plan would put downtown planning very high on the agenda.
- Urban design will provide solutions.
- Need predictability in the plan.
- The OPC should develop a process to developing these plans.
- Try innovative techniques in downtown and sub-areas.
- There needs to be a sense of unity within neighborhoods.
- Consider holding a charrette.
- Public participation should include neighborhood associations as well as others who visit the downtown.

**Council Comments:**

- The downtown sub-area is different and should eventually be put in the Comprehensive Plan.
- The plan needs to be forward-looking.
- The Council needs clarity on guidelines or vision for the Downtown Master Plan.
- This is a major piece of what we're trying to accomplish and we should encourage neighbors to get involved.
- The OPC should develop a process for a sub-area and then bring it to Council.
- Develop a template so neighborhoods can follow it.
- Should the Downtown Master Plan be in the Comprehensive Plan?
- The OPC should also have a role in the Community Renewal Area in downtown.
- We need to provide incentives to bring people into discussions.
- We need a consultant to help us.
- Bring the public into discussions when we can be receptive to their input.

**Action Plan Discussion Points:**

- This should include the Downtown Plan plus other development nodes and urban design.
- The sub-area plans should include development of regulations to preserve character.

- Consider using form-based codes.
- Form-based codes should be in place before requesting neighbors' input.
- Need vision before doing renovations to remove blight.
- The Community Renewal Area needs to have blight defined.
- A Community Renewal Area requires a Downtown Master Plan.
- Reach out to advisory boards.
- Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Clark County have done a good job implementing action plans.

City Manager Steve Hall noted he worked on the 1994 Comprehensive Plan and said he has seen 20 years of progress.

Mayor Buxbaum said this is just a first conversation and the next meeting could include discussion on structure, purpose, and results.

**The work session was discussed and closed.**

**2.B**     [13-0460](#)             Artesian Court Draft Concept Design and Interim Use Plan

**Because of the lengthy discussion on the Comprehensive Plan and the late hour, the Council agreed to postpone this item to the June 18, 2013 City Council meeting.**

**3.         ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.