



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Information: 360-753-8447

Friday, July 12, 2013

3:00 PM

Room 112

Ad Hoc Community Renewal Area Committee

1. ROLL CALL

Mayor Stephen H. Buxbaum
Mayor Pro Tem Nathaniel Jones
City Manager Steve Hall
Community Planning and Development Director Keith Stahley
Associate Planner Amy Buckler

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2.A 13-0563 Oral Report - Discussion of Next Steps in Working with the Citizens Advisory Committee

The Mayor reviewed the various plans and regulations that are currently or will be in process including the Community Renewal Area Plan, Comprehensive Plan update, Shoreline Master Program, Sub-area Planning, Downtown Master Plan, development regulations, and design review regulations. It will be necessary that these regulations are coordinated.

The Mayor turned to potential next steps for the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). He felt that there was still work to do around helping the CAC to fully understand the potential applications of the CRA and to clarify the reasons for the CRA. They need to be able to provide input on questions about the CRA boundary and options for governance. How can the consultant team help us accomplish that.

The Mayor suggested that rather than holding additional meetings of the entire CAC, he meet with smaller groups - by interest group - using the brown bag Lunch approach.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones agreed that there was additional work to do with the CAC. He felt that the CAC needed help to get beyond the term "blight." Issues relating to blight such as its effect on access to credit and the relationship with the master plan need to be dealt with directly. He supported continuing with the brown bag luncheons in the smaller groups as suggested by the Mayor.

The Mayor asked that the consultant team help to sharpen the boundary and governance discussion. The Mayor recognized that the inclusion of condemnation as a CRA power would be controversial; however, it could be determined at a later date.

The Mayor noted that additional information about the presence of and impacts on downtown for sea level rise, liquefaction, and soil contamination may be helpful in defining an appropriate CRA boundary. We must think of the CRA as a tool and not a plan.

The Committee discussed how best to use July 23rd and asked if we are ready for recommendations. The Mayor suggested that the best approach may be to have the CAC hear the recommendations first and then come forward to the full Council. He hoped to continue to build the capacity with the CAC and have them ready to answer questions and support the process. The Committee agreed to ask ECONorthwest to come early on the 23rd to begin small group discussions with CAC members. He also suggested that it may be beneficial to have the law firm of Foster & Pepper at the next CAC meeting.

Steve Hall said he felt that the CAC and the consultant team got too far into the weeds on Monday July 8. He recommended trying to keep the CAC at a higher level.

The Mayor then turned the Committee's attention to the upcoming discussion with the Planning Commission leadership Team. He suggested that this meeting focus on the relationship between the CRA and OPC planning efforts. He noted that the City is pursuing a Comprehensive Plan update and a Shoreline Master Program update and these efforts must be understood in relationship to the CRA and the Downtown Master Plan. He said that he hoped to convey a basic understanding of the CRA and the objectives of that process.

Amy Buckler spoke about scoping of the Downtown Master Plan. She also said that it was important to get clarity around what the relationship between the Planning Commission's March 18 recommended Comprehensive Plan and the addendum for the Comprehensive Plan approved on May 6.

The discussion was completed.

2.B 13-0564 Oral Report - Meeting with the Olympia Planning Commission Leadership Team Regarding Connections and Sequencing of a Potential Downtown Master Plan and the Community Renewal Area Work

The Joint Ad Hoc CRA Committee/ Planning Commission Leadership Team Meeting commenced at 4:00 PM.

Councilmember Langer arrived as well as Planning Commissioners Judy Barden, Jerry Parker, Carol Richmond, Roger Horn. Planning Services Manager Todd Stamm also joined the meeting.

Mayor Buxbaum set the agenda:

1. Work of CRA and Planning Commission
2. Scoping of work for the Downtown Master Plan
3. Urban Neighborhood Proposal
4. SMP - Commissioner Horn's thoughts

The Mayor provided an overview of the relationship between the CRA and the Planning Commission's work. He thanked the Planning Commission members for their attendance at CAC meetings and brown bag luncheons.

Commissioner Parker thanked Mayor Buxbaum for his overview and said that his understanding was much clearer. He summarized saying that the work of CRA is describing what is not what will be.

Commissioner Barden noted that the organization for the Downtown plan is not in place. She questioned what the outcomes, boundary, and blight are in relationship to the CRA.

Mayor Buxbaum noted that the CRA is a tool for the elimination of blight. It allows the City to carry out development projects to eliminate blight. If you want to purchase property, you must be specific and have a plan for redevelopment. The plan must also specify the activities and uses to be undertaken through the CRA.

Commissioner Barden asked what if the CRA said park and the plan said housing? How would you rectify that inconsistency? The Mayor responded that the CRA does not establish land use and must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Carol Richmond asked why we haven't begun to talk about the Downtown Master Plan. Why not the CRA and the Master Plan at the same time? Director Stahley noted that the timeline for the CRA consultant has them finishing their work by January 2014 and the Downtown Master Plan will likely take much longer.

Commissioner Parker noted that Mr. Drebeck had commented that development by the mall is far more likely and supportive of the City's revenue. He wondered if the CRA had broader applications.

Mayor Buxbaum responded that where to best use CRA as a tool was part of the consulting team's work. While they are focused on Downtown, it is possible to do more than one CRA.

Commissioner Parker recommended that we need to add a summary of the relationship of liquefaction, contamination, and sea level rise to the web page.

Commissioner Horn said that the table included in the consultant's report is helpful in explaining the powers of the CRA and the benefits to the City.

Commissioner Richmond added that the public is going to pay attention to the master plan and will want to be more engaged in that process.

Scoping the Downtown Master Plan

Mayor Buxbaum noted that there is a lot of work to do and that it is wise to start to scope the Downtown Master Plan and to develop a charter for that process.

Amy Buckler added that staff had met yesterday with representatives of the Coalition of

Neighborhood Associations (CNA) to discuss this process. A recommendation emerged from those discussions to form a task force to work with staff to develop the scope of the Master Plan. The task force should consist of a small group from representative interest groups including the CNA, Downtown Neighborhood Association, Olympia Downtown Association, Parking and Business Improvement Area Committee, the Land Use and Environment Committee, the Planning Commission, Oly 2020, and the Economic Development Council. The group agreed that this approach had merit and deserved further discussion at the upcoming Land Use and Environment Committee meeting.

Commissioner Richmond said the Downtown Plan should focus on redevelopment, identify targets for growth, consider how we accommodate it, and what kinds of projects should be developed.

Urban Neighborhoods

Amy Buckler asked how the May 6 proposal should be addressed? Will Council consider it in their deliberations? She recommended that the May 6 draft was more than a refinement to the March plan and that it needed further work by both staff and the Planning Commission before it would be ready for City Council consideration. She said that the effects of the May 6 plan need to be fully understood and the implications more fully explored.

Commissioner Horn agreed saying that the Planning Commission needs to spend more time on the proposal.

Commissioner Parker added that we need to work out the language and details. Consistency between nodes and the Thurston Regional Planning Council High Density Corridor proposal.

Mayor Buxbaum said there is still some refinement that needs to take place and it should probably be a 2014 work plan item.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones agreed and said he was interested in the Planning Commission's continuing to work on it and recognizes that it will not likely be ready for inclusion in the 2013 update.

Shoreline Master Program

Commissioner Horn questioned how the SMP would be harmonized with the Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Stamm responded that it may be better to address that issue after we receive comments from the Department of Ecology (DOE) on the proposed SMP.

Mayor Buxbaum added that we anticipate an iterative process to adjust and reflect DOE's recommendations and changes and input from the Planning Commission to achieve conformance between the SMP and the Comprehensive Plan will be necessary at that time.

The discussion was completed.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.