



# City of Olympia

City Hall  
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## Meeting Minutes Land Use & Environment Committee

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**Thursday, April 17, 2014**

**5:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Langer called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 3 - Chair Steve Langer, Committee Member Jeannine Roe and  
Committee Member Julie Hankins

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Planning Commissioners Judy Bardin and Roger Horn  
Deputy Director Leonard Bauer  
Assistant City Manager Jay Burney  
Project Engineers Eric Christensen and David Smith  
Utilities Advisory Committee Chair Thad Curtz  
City Manager Steve Hall  
Public Works Director Rich Hoey  
Engineering Plans Examiner Alan Murley  
Associate Planner Stacey Ray  
Transportation Director Mark Russell  
Community Planning and Development Director (CP&D) Keith Stahley  
Senior Planner Todd Stamm  
Senior Planner Sophie Stimson

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 3.A** [14-0377](#) Approval of March 27, 2014 Land Use and Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

**The minutes were approved.**

**4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

- 4.A** [14-0363](#) Comprehensive Plan Policies Regarding Scenic Views

Mr. Stamm gave a presentation on scenic view policies. He outlined the differences between the Planning Commission (PC) and City Manager recommendations, and discussed the current scenic view regulations. He described elements of view

evaluation.

Discussion:

- Frustration with not having used visualization tools in the past.
- Challenges of adequate training for use of Community Planning and Development (CP&D) in-house technology.
- Capability of the One Solution software.
- Importance of having visual images to the decision making process.
- Static and dynamic scenic views.

Commissioner Bardin explained the reasons for the PC's recommendation.

Public Comment:

Mr. Curtz shared his experience while walking and bussing through the City.

Stuart Drebeck of Olympia Master Builders expressed concern about the public process in determining view protection.

Mr. Bauer explained how codes would be impacted only if changes are adopted. He voiced concern about the purchase of software without adequate funds for training.

Mr. Walt Jorgensen spoke in favor of using visualization software.

Ms. Mary Wilkinson recommended revising the language of PL 8.1 to: Through a public process using appropriate methods, for example visual simulations, identify important landmark views and observation points, and find appropriate means of preserving and enhancing valued aspects of these public views.

Chair Langer addressed the importance of protecting views and their value as public assets. He supports changes only after a public process and supports using visualization tools. He would like to see a library of images created for the City.

Councilmember Roe said she supports visualization as a way of creating a common understanding to make, or not make, changes.

Mr. Stahley explained the gains from Mithun, the company hired in 2013 to analyze view protections scenarios in and around downtown.

Consensus to adopt this language for the draft:

PL8.1 Implement public processes, including the use of digital simulation software, to identify important landmark views and observation points.

PL8.2 Use visualization tools to identify view planes and sightline heights between the landmark view and observation point.

**The Committee recommended the changes for approval and referred them to the City Council.**

**4.B**     [14-0278](#)     Require Alleys for All New Development and Other Considerations

Ms. Stimson gave an overview of the language on alleys for the Public Hearing draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update. She showed images of several alleys in Olympia and described their functions.

Discussion:

- Consideration of uses and purposes of alleys.
- Determination of the size of collector streets.
- Frequency of the creation of alleys if required for development.
- Residential building challenges of including alleys.

Commissioner Horn addressed the advantages of residential alleys.

Discussion:

- Percentage of maintenance requests for residential and downtown alleys.
- Lack of grass center in the middle of alleys at Woodbury Crossing.
- Need for creating more impervious surfaces.
- Design standards for implementation of alley requirement.
- Request for specific examples of successful implementation.
- Consider Northwest Landing, a 3,000 acre (1,215 ha) community in DuPont, as an example for sound planning to integrate diverse land uses into a cohesive pedestrian environment.
- Alley appropriateness depending on location, geography, and logistics.
- Market response to consumer desire for alleys.

Consensus on changing the language to "require alleys where feasible and/or practical."

**The Committee recommended the change for approval and referred it to the City Council.**

**4.C**     [14-0362](#)     Draft Comprehensive Plan Update Regarding Urban Green Space and Tree Canopy

Ms. Ray discussed urban green space and tree canopy. She distributed an Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas map.

Commissioner Bardin discussed the perspective of the Planning Commission, presented examples of urban green space, and emphasized the importance of ensuring a livable urban environment.

Mr. Curtz, Tree Committee Chair, spoke about the need for planting replacement trees in older neighborhoods where trees will disappear. He suggested more green walls downtown and stressed the priority of reaching the goal of reducing parking lots.

Discussion:

- Requirement of tree retention for large developments.
- Current code language of "tree units" does not differentiate between the different diameters of trees.
- Challenges of designing a policy for implementation of "increasing green space."
- Getting the urban forestry program "back on its feet."

Consensus on new language:

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

No change to PN3.2:

**The Committee recommended the change for approval and referred it to the City Council.**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.