



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Amy Buckler
360.570.5847

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, October 7, 2013

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 8 - Chair Jerome Parker, Vice Chair Judy Bardin, Commissioner Kim Andresen, Commissioner Jessica Bateman, Commissioner Darrell Hoppe, Commissioner Roger Horn, Commissioner Carole Richmond, and Commissioner Missy Watts

Excused: 1 - Commissioner Max Brown

1. OTHERS PRESENT

Staff Present:

Community Planning and Development Deputy Director Leonard Bauer, Associate Planner Amy Buckler, Building Official Tom Hill, Public Works Senior Planner Sophie Stimson

Guests Present:

Joseph Becker with Ion EcoBuilding, Doug White with Brand X Design & Construction, Jim Greene with Greene Realty Group, Thurston Regional Planning Council Senior Planners Thera Black and Veena Tabbutt

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris van Daalen with the Northwest EcoBuilding Guild announced the "Vision To Action Series" and two upcoming events; the Sustainability Symposium at South Puget Sound Community College on Saturday, October 26 and; a sub area planning symposium at City Hall on December 6.

Bob Jacobs asked about where, and why, the density numbers are used, and if they are appropriate for Olympia. Chair Parker explained there will be many opportunities for the public to give the Commission input regarding this subject.

Jeffrey Jaksich gave an example of an infill community in Seattle that was poorly done and has caused many unforeseen problems. He stressed that Olympia is a unique place and solutions that work best for this area need to be put forward by thinking creatively, involving the public, and then translating that into action. He believes this is the best form of planning.

Vice Chair Bardin remarked that density numbers need to be more explicit and the Commission is working on developing clearer language. Ms. Buckler told the Commission there were new handouts in the packets they received for tonight's meeting that redefined and clarified the language regarding density.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The public was invited to contact City Hall and speak with the planner on site with any questions regarding tonight's presentation and discussion.

5. INFORMATION REQUESTS

Vice Chair Bardin asked for new information regarding projections about population and density by districts.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

[13-0803](#) Special Presentation: Small Infill Housing

Ms. Buckler gave a presentation about duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADU), and townhouses entitled "Small Infill Housing". The square footage and details specific to each housing type were described. Building heights, setbacks, parking, garage standards, and building and site design were outlined. The attachments provided to the Commission accompanying this presentation can be viewed by the public on the City's website on the calendar tab.

Ms. Buckler introduced the panel members: Mr. Hill; Mr. Becker; Mr. White; and Mr. Greene.

Panel Discussion:

- Description of how impact fees and general utility charges are differentiated .
- The challenges faced by builders and reasons they don't purchase infill lots.
- Why smaller builders are sometimes more likely to buy and build in town.
- Past and current land values and their effect on building .
- Initiatives to help owner builders do green building.
- Innovative building projects that are happening locally, regionally and nationally.
- ADUs as responsible, thoughtful solutions to keeping neighborhoods intact.
- Examples that demonstrate good design and neighborhood compatibility.
- Backyard programs in Seattle and Toronto.
- The current constraints in building ADUs and the need to be more flexible regarding uses.
- Using the existing sewer, water, etc., infrastructure.

- Additional general facility fees for use.
- Impact fee increases.
- How the current fee schedule does not adequately cover additional usage.
- Wastewater and consideration of new volume-based fees.
- Land value recovery in a depressed economy.
- The increasing demand for multiple dwellings.
- What happens when properties change hands.
- Enforcement is problematic.
- Impact fees for ADUs.
- Problems with current setbacks.
- City website online brochure outlining flexibility on setbacks.
- How Vancouver's civic renewal lab, a project-based public participation model, could be duplicated.
- The percentages of new homes without buildings versus additions to existing homes.
- Contacting panel members with questions via email.
- This is an ongoing conversation and will continue to be studied by the Commission.

The report was received.

[13-0804](#)

Briefing: Regional and Local Transportation Plans & Strategies Related to the Urban Corridors (Cont. review of the 'Urban Neighborhoods' proposals)

Thurston Regional Planning Council Senior Planner Thera Black presented "Urban Corridors" which described transportation strategies and the urban corridor. She began by reading a priority goal of the Sustainable Thurston Vision: "to create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth" which means that density and corridors need to be in alignment with the way we grow our communities. Options available to Thurston County and their relevancy were described and plans since the enactment of the Washington State Growth Act in 1993 were outlined. Copies of the report were distributed.

Public Works Senior Planner Sophie Stimson presented the Transportation Mobility Strategy. Redevelopment efforts, financing options, and the smart corridors project were covered. She and Thurston Regional Planning Senior Planner Veena Tabbutt answered questions.

Commission Discussion and Answers:

- The 5 lane limit will not preclude the development of light rail or bus express. In many other cities this occurs on the urban corridors. For the Thurston region Intercity Transit is the sole transit authority with connections to other transit authorities.
- The quarter mile designation along the corridors indicates the distance length people are willing to walk to shopping. The vision for greater density along the corridors, meaning less sprawl, will only happen if funding is made available to implement this vision.
- Research about people who live near highly traveled roadways establishes that health risks, especially respiratory, and other problems, are greater. These health risks are associated with very large numbers of vehicles and the area being discussed

encompasses only about one tenth of that. Statistics from other areas are very different depending on how metropolitan, etc. the areas are, and cannot be compared with an area this size. This has been discussed in the Tumwater region with retail on the corridor and residential set back in a buffered zone. Vice Chair Bardin emphasized that research done on lower volume roadways demonstrate a dose response relationship between environmental exposures and disease.

-On 2nd Avenue in Seattle there are very few commercial enterprises along the bus route and this seems problematic.

-A node is a district or place, a walkable area along the corridor which can be small or large. Residents need to be able to get from node to node relatively quickly using alternative transportation in order to reduce the use of cars.

-A corridor district is another way of describing an area of urban activity that identifies a unique area on the corridor.

-The current speed limit is 25 to 35 mph, but generally the desire is for slower traffic. Because streets must be designed to create this, simply changing the posted limit does not work. This presents a new challenge for designers, especially on arterial roadways.

Mr. Bauer expressed his appreciation for the presentations. They are very helpful to the Commission in reviewing the May addendum and the urban neighborhood proposals in the addendum. Questions for the Commission to consider for deliberation were presented.

The report was received.

[13-0805](#) PUBLIC HEARING & Deliberation: OPC Recommendation on the Draft 2014-2019 Capital Facilities Plan

The Public Hearing was opened. Chair Parker asked for comments three times and closed the hearing when no one came forward to comment.

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Vice Chair Bardin, to accept Commissioner Horn's draft of the letter to Council as the base document for submission at the October 8th council meeting.

Chair Parker moved and Vice Chair Bardin seconded to add Commissioner Richmond's recommendations regarding neighborhood park acquisition on page 3, as an amendment to the letter.

Commissioner Andresen questioned why, after so much review, additional language was being added. Commissioner Richmond explained it was in response to Chair Parker's questions during review which was new material and not included in their packets before tonight. Commissioner Andresen expressed concern that they did not have sufficient time to reevaluate the new material. The new material is more of a refinement than a substantial change. Commissioner Hoppe asked for more clarification on the maintenance part of the new material.

Vote to amend the draft letter by adding the paragraphs 1 and 3 in Commissioner

Richmond's revision was taken. Chair Parker, Commissioner Watts and Andresen voted Nay and the vote failed.

Commissioner Bateman reported the Parks Committee (PC) had met and agreed with all the recommendations by the Commission on the Capital Facilities Plan. There were three areas the Committee wanted emphasis on; maintenance of existing park buildings and systems has the highest priority; new bonds should support the purchase of new parks; the need to develop a comprehensive funding plan for development and maintenance of new parks and funding for the maintenance of existing parks has to be instituted. Where that funding will come from needs to be determined. Commissioner Andresen asked about the current funding coverage and discussion followed. Because the new Parks Plan has to be updated every 6 years current funding covers through 2016. There was conferment of Committee to support the Planning Commission recommendation for Council to develop new sources of funding.

Staff explained the Isthmus Acquisition/Building Demolition item had been added to the Council's list and was not something the Commission had reviewed. Because the Commission had not had time to study or review this item, the Commission cannot make a recommendation tomorrow because of the short notice. Discussion followed and it was decided the Commission will make a verbal "no comment" if asked about this by the Council.

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Horn, to approve the base draft letter as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 - Chair Parker, Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioner Andresen, Commissioner Bateman, Commissioner Hoppe, Commissioner Horn, Commissioner Richmond and Commissioner Watts

Excused: 1 - Commissioner Brown

[13-0799](#) Deliberation: Code Amendment to Change Rezone Hearing Body

The deliberation for the code amendment to change rezone hearing body was postponed and the discussion on regional and local transportation was continued in that time allotment.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[13-0553](#) Approval of July 15, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as amended.

[13-0759](#) Approval of August 19, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved as amended.

[13-0734](#) Approval of September 9, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting

Minutes

The minutes were approved as amended.

8. REPORTS

Vice Chair Bardin spoke about the email she received from a member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Commissioner Bateman outlined the advisory committee's agenda for their next meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.