

## MINUTES OF MEETING

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, July 23, 2012**  
**Olympia City Hall, Council Chambers**  
**601 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue East**  
**Olympia, WA**

### Call to Order

Chair Tousley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### Attendance

Members Present: Judy Bardin, Roger Horn, Paul Ingman, Agnieszka Kiswa, Jerome Parker, Larry Leveen, James Reddick, Rob Richards, and Amy Tousley

City of Olympia Staff: Associate Planners Amy Buckler, Jennifer Kenny, and Stacey Ray, and Planning Manager Todd Stamm

Others: Consultant Kendra Dahlen, FLT Consulting, and Tom Gow, Recording Secretary, Puget Sound Meeting Services

<b>SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:</b>	
<b>Acceptance of Agenda:</b>	Approved as published.

### Acceptance of Agenda

Chair Tousley reviewed the agenda.

**Commissioner Reddick moved, seconded by Commissioner Richards, to approve the agenda as published. Motion carried.**

### Announcements

Commissioner Leveen reported the Olympia Safe Street Campaign received a grant through Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) to update and reprint the Washington State Bicycle Commute Guide. The guide is a free community resource. The City of Olympia partnered in the production of the guide. The guide is available at the City, at local bike shops, and at libraries, as well as online.

The Squaxin Island Indian Tribe is hosting the 2012 Canoe Journey at the Port peninsula on July 29. The landing and celebration is a community-wide experience and everyone is encouraged to attend.

### Public Communication

There were no public comments.

### Public Hearing on 'July Draft' of Comprehensive Plan Update

Chair Tousley reviewed the public hearing process for receiving public testimony on the comprehensive plan. The public hearing marks the beginning of the Commission's review and deliberation process culminating 3-1/2 years of public process and comment on the update to the comprehensive plan. That process began in November 2009 with a kick-off meeting on the *Imagine Olympia* process involving a series of focus and community meetings and open houses. Although the public hearing is the beginning of the Commission's formal process, it is not the end of the process. The public hearing begins the first series of public hearings. The Commission's last public hearing is scheduled in October with final deliberations on the comprehensive plan and recommendations delivered to the City Council in November.

Minutes of the meeting will be available in the next several weeks. The City has transitioned to a new minutes process utilizing the program, *Legistar*, which provides a recording and summary minutes of meetings on the City's website.

Public submittal of all materials to the Commission will become part of the official record with all Commissioners receiving copies of the materials.

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 2 of 16**

Chair Tousley reported the community received a flyer announcing the public hearing as a hearing on the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The Commission recently completed its deliberation and recommendations on the Shoreline Master Program. This public hearing is on the update of the comprehensive plan and not the SMP. The Council is pursuing its public process on the SMP beginning on Saturday, July 28, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Olympia Community Center. The flyer was not sent by the City and references an address of one of the City's parking lots. The flyer is not an official publication or part of the official notice released by the City.

Throughout the *Imagine Olympia* process, the City accumulated much information from the community. That process led to the completion of the April draft of the comprehensive plan known as the 'Staff Draft'. A 60-day comment period followed on the April draft resulting in the production of the 'July Draft'. The July Draft is the public hearing draft and is staff's proposed draft comprehensive plan. It is not the proposal by the Commission. It is staff's draft from input received from the community and through the *Imagine Olympia* process.

The Commission's process is being test-driven for the City in terms of how the Commission will continue to receive input throughout the process at each meeting as well as the topics to discuss. The Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU) Subcommittee of the Commission and the full Commission will consider the testimony and those issues of relevance to determine how the Commission addresses issues over the course of the update. The update timeline is aggressive for producing a document by the end of the year.

Chair Tousley reported the Commission adopted several options for receiving testimony. One option is receiving testimony individually or from one or two citizens with a 10 minute time limit, to include Q&A with the Commission. Another option includes a panel of 3-4 citizens with a 15 minute time limit. Both options include time for the Commission to ask clarifying questions of citizens providing testimony. The public hearing is scheduled for two hours and could continue to Wednesday, July 25, and potentially, Thursday, July 26, if necessary.

Chair Tousley opened the public hearing at 6:41 p.m.

**Susan Ahlschwede, 3726 Wesley Loop**, said that while reviewing the Land Use and Urban Design chapters of the draft comprehensive plan, she was pleased to find many concepts she champions. Some include recognition of the importance of land near the water, protecting valued views and features of the community's landscapes, the importance of trees in many landscapes, and seeking opportunities to create or enhance town squares with buildings, parks, plazas, and other small spaces downtown. She suggested that to pull all the ideas together, the City needs to hire a firm that will work with the community to develop an overarching plan for downtown. All of the plans for specific spaces or areas of downtown need to be a part of a larger plan. Once that has been accomplished, the community will know how all of the pieces of the puzzle will fit. A larger plan will save time and money in the long run, and make it easier to achieve everyone's goal of a downtown where people want to live, work, and play.

**Steve Hassett, 2932 Maringo Road SE**, thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak as well as to Planning Manager Todd Stamm for information he provided prior to the public hearing. Mr. Hassett said he lives in the Carlyon neighborhood located off Capitol near the Tumwater City limits. Recently, he became aware that the comprehensive plan designates his neighborhood as an urban corridor, which has raised many concerns within the neighborhood, which is a stable, single-family neighborhood. He understands the designation has been in place for some years although most of his neighbors recently became aware of it. He asked the Commission to consider changing the designation from urban corridor. The neighborhood is a very stable neighborhood and he understands that as an urban corridor, it creates the possibility of opening the neighborhood to development within a quarter mile of Capitol Way of multi-use buildings and commercial that would significantly change the character of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is not opposed to the urban corridor concept in appropriate areas. The poster in the lobby indicates that there are a number of urban corridors, such as State Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Martin Way, and Harrison on the west side. It doesn't mention his neighborhood on the poster and it appears that the neighborhood is an afterthought. The poster also indicates that part of the vision for an urban corridor is to change the area dominated by strip commercial and undeveloped land into a neighborhood where people can enjoy walking. Currently, the neighborhood doesn't fit that characteristic, as it's not a neighborhood dominated by strip commercial use or undeveloped land. It is

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 3 of 16**

essentially a built and stable residential neighborhood. For these reasons, the neighborhood is asking the Commission to take the step of changing the designation.

**Heather McPherson, 2930 Maringo Road SE**, thanked the Commission for allowing citizens to participate. She lives in the Governor Stevens neighborhood, which has been designated as an urban corridor. She has some real concerns, as it seems a little conflicting because the neighborhood has a healthy, functioning wetland within it containing Northwestern salamanders, long-term salamanders, wood ducks, and Kingfishers. It's part of some wetland stepping stones from Watershed Park to Capitol Lake. Recently, there was a fox running down the street and there are deer. There are no endangered species using the area, but it's an area that provides a linkage for wildlife within the City limits of Olympia including Western Tanagers every spring in the trees and within the wetland. It's an older neighborhood with different shaped lots. Her setback from the street is approximately 10 feet and she can view neighbors walking to Capitol Way to work or to take the bus. The neighborhood has older homes that have character and it doesn't fit the concept of an urban corridor. Because of the alignment of the streets, there is a real issue with emergency response vehicles. Her daughter has a seizure disorder and multiple times they could not find her house or the fire truck could not make the turn correctly onto her street to respond to the emergency. She has seen fire trucks stuck on the corner of Maringo and, in numerous instances, they couldn't make the corner. Having weirdly shaped streets and then adding higher density, which will require more emergency response vehicles seems like a real issue as well as parking, as there is no adequate parking. When she parks in her driveway with her Kia minivan, it overhangs onto the sidewalk. She actually can't even park in her driveway if she doesn't want to block the sidewalk because of the small setback. She has a concern that if the designation as an urban corridor is retained, the City will change the density designation for housing within the area. She asked the Commission to look deeper into the issue of her wonderful little walkable, friendly neighborhood/wildlife corridor.

Commissioner Horn asked about the neighborhood group that is proposing the change. Ms. McPherson said that at this point, it has been members of the neighborhood as the neighbors just recently learned about the designation. The neighborhood association notified residents of the designation. However, a larger coalition of the neighborhood hasn't been established. People who live in the neighborhood are very concerned. The president of the neighborhood association will also be speaking.

Commissioner Horn asked citizens wishing to testify to provide addresses to help Commissioners identify specific neighborhoods.

**Carl See, 3141 Hoadly Street SE, Ben Ruder, 703 Governor Stevens Avenue SE, and Erin Simmons, 3403 Pear Street SE.** Mr. See said he is President of the Carlyon Neighborhood Association and is testifying in conjunction with Ben Ritter, President of the Governor Stevens Neighborhood Association, and Erin Simmons, a resident of the Carlyon neighborhood. The group is speaking to the Commission about the urban corridor proposal and to address the section that speaks to increasing density of current zoning of 4-7 housing units per acre for a healthy historic residential neighborhood. He noted that a representative of the Wildwood Neighborhood Association had planned to attend but did submit a letter to the Commission. Mr. See provided the Commission with the copy of the letter. In the April draft, language in the land use section implied a proposed land use of 15 plus housing units per acre in the neighborhoods of southwest Olympia within a quarter mile of Capitol Boulevard. Thankfully, he received input from over 30 residents and City staff has clarified that it is at least 7 housing units per acre in accordance with existing urban corridor proposals by the City and at the regional level. City staff has indicated that making any changes would require the support of the Planning Commission, which is why the group is testifying. He asked the Commission to consider a proposal. He outlined several key points. First, the proposal is counter to City and state goals in preserving healthy, historic residential neighborhoods in Olympia. For example, the Growth Management Act's (GMA) housing goal states in part "...promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types and encourages preservation of existing housing stock." The historic preservation goal is to identify and encourage preservation of lands, sites, and structures that are historical or of archeological significance. As the Commission may know, Olympia has previously identified neighborhoods in southeast Olympia as one of five selected historic neighborhoods in the Historic Preservation Assessment and Action Plan. These proposals are also counter to similar provisions in the proposed comprehensive plan regarding the preservation of residential and historic homes. Second, Olympia designates these proposals to remain focused on areas currently zoned high density, such as

downtown, along the Harrison, 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Martin Way/Pacific corridor. Encouraging development in the his neighborhood will only decrease capacity of the City to direct development to where it is already considered more appropriate.. Additionally, City staff indicated that no firm definitions of densities are in place for the City of Olympia. For example, gross density versus net density for development of these final plans. The impact on neighborhoods is rather impossible to define. He questioned what it entails to increase density from 4-7 units per acre. The neighborhoods feel it would be irresponsible and nontransparent to move forward with a new density proposal without having at least a working definition of density in the comprehensive plan. Schools in the area are already nearing or exceeding capacity. Washington Middle School and Pioneer Elementary come to mind. Additional housing stock is likely to increase crowding in classes in neighborhood schools. Finally, to support density in this area, Olympia should work with Tumwater to develop more appropriate properties. For example, residents in the community have expressed support for increasing residential and commercial density at the Tumwater Safeway business center and at the brewery location.

**Ben Ruder, 703 Governor Stevens Avenue, SE**, said he is the President of the Governor Stevens Neighborhood Association, which is a wonderful family-friendly historic neighborhood association of 100 homes that borders the Carlyon North Neighborhood Association and the Wildwood Neighborhood Association. Many families seek out these neighborhoods because they are conveniently located, they have wonderful homes of historic character, and many of the schools and amenities that people like to have are within walking distance or driving distance from these neighborhoods. As many residents have already commented, the roads in the neighborhood are small being an historic neighborhood and it's difficult for emergency response vehicles to navigate the roads. There are already many high school students who try to speed through the neighborhood and try to avoid stoplights. At the point roads and infrastructure would have to be improved if this is considered an urban corridor, it would be very challenging and detrimental to the neighborhood. Furthermore, as far as the historic nature of the neighborhood, the neighborhood is one of the more historic neighborhoods in the City. The late Roger Easton was able to come and speak to the group several years ago and was very excited about the possibility of having four of the homes added to the historic register. It would be a shame to have a number of the homes changed or altered for the sake of increasing the number of people that live in a neighborhood. Many families have been moving into the neighborhood and many people have lived in the neighborhood for decades. Young families are moving in all of the time because they can walk to school and the grocery store. The neighborhood is very healthy and it would be a shame to alter the quality and character of the neighborhood just so that people can get on the bus and live more densely.

**Erin Simmons, 3402 Pear Street SE**, said she grew up in Lacey and graduated from Timberline High School and attended college and moved back to the area. She and her husband spent two years in Ballard and decided to move home and raise a family. They rented an apartment and bought their first home both in the Carlyon North area because they were so drawn to that neighborhood. She is concerned about the proposal to increase density in the neighborhood and the urban corridor designation. She experienced the same change when she lived in Ballard and saw historical homes bought and demolished and replaced with 4-plex townhomes. Those buildings came with tall fences and residents who were not engaged in the neighborhood. The change in density that the Commission is suggesting in her neighborhood could result in the same thing that she witnessed in Ballard. In time, it would irreparably change the character of her neighborhood to the point where it would no longer be a desirable place in which to live, at least for the people who live there now. While growing up in Lacey, she knew only one of her neighbors, and not very well. Her family had to drive in order to do anything and she knew that when she settled down she wanted to live in a healthy neighborhood, a close-knit community that provided her family with a different lifestyle than what she grew up with. The Carlyon North neighborhood was the perfect fit. While searching for a place to live and raise her family she had a few criteria. One included an historical area, as she has always loved older homes and the charm of historic architecture. Another was schools, as her family is very happy to live near Pioneer Elementary School and Olympia High School so that her children can walk. Safety – she and her husband researched the area of historic neighborhoods of Olympia and found the Carlyon North neighborhood had very low crime rates. Walkability - her family can walk recreationally within the neighborhood streets and enjoy the scenery of the neighborhood where people care for their environment. She and her family can walk to Tumwater Safeway and to schools and to Intercity Transit bus stops. While sitting at her dinner table, her family views a constant flow of traffic down Pear Street, so she knows they are surrounded by residents who value the same values as she and her family. Family-friendly - her family wanted to live in an area that was accessible to first-time homebuyers like herself

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 5 of 16**

and her husband, who would choose to stay and raise their families in the area. She wants her daughters to have friends down the street who they see in school every day and they want to be surrounded by residents who have been in the neighborhood since its inception as well as those who grew up and moved away and came back. Sense of community - her family joined the Carlyon North Neighborhood Association when she bought the home and they have attended numerous association meetings and received valuable information about the community. She and her family have met residents in her neighborhood and they are very close to neighbors surrounding her home as well as to others from several streets over. Her family was unable to attend the block party last year due to her daughter's birth, but they attended this year along with 50 other residents in the neighborhood. The Carlyon North neighborhood provides its residents with the benefits of an historical neighborhood that is safe, in a central location, is family-friendly, and most of all - fosters community. These are essentially the goals that are outlined in the comprehensive plan. Yet, she is worried that the plan for increasing density will not preserve the very things the City intends to promote with the proposed urban corridor through her neighborhood. She fears the change in density that is proposed will change the character of the Carlyon North neighborhood as such that it will no longer be a healthy neighborhood. She respectfully asked the Commission to maintain the density of the neighborhood at its status of 4 to 7 homes per acre as well as removing the neighborhood from being designated an urban corridor. She thanked the Commission for considering her testimony when they make the final recommendation to the Council.

Commissioner Horn asked staff to define the 'urban corridor' location to assist the Commission in understanding the area. Planning Manager Todd Stamm reported that 'Urban Corridors' were formerly called 'High Density Corridors.' They are a joint agreement from the regional transportation plan of the three cities and the county. The corridor of concern along Capitol Way terminates at Tumwater Boulevard where the new state office buildings are located. The corridor runs through downtown Olympia along Capitol Way. However, within Olympia's plan, the South Capitol Neighborhood between the campus and Interstate 5 is not included in the urban corridor. Some of the regional plans, however, do include that area.

Commissioner Horn commented that it's likely the speakers understand why the goal is to increase density. There likely are also different ways to increase density such as accessory dwelling units and duplexes that are not as severe as the urban corridor designation. He asked for the group's thoughts on how density could be achieved in different ways other than what is designated in the urban corridors description.

**Carl See** responded that the neighborhood understands there are many ways to build out increased density and the group is not necessarily saying they are against the strategy of urban corridors in the region. This is more about the appropriateness of the density that's proposed because of that designation in a neighborhood area. Currently, there are duplexes in the neighborhood and there are parking issues in the neighborhood. The goal is to consider less impactful options for the neighborhood.

**Ben Ruder** added that there are some accessory dwelling units already located within the neighborhood. The neighborhood is mainly concerned about the potential change in zoning that could come with a designation of urban corridor. The group was able to talk with staff to reduce density to 7 plus units per acre. However, the neighborhood is concerned with the plus element and what that might mean to some homes along Capitol Way or some streets in the neighborhood where a developer could buy several lots and develop something bigger. The neighborhood doesn't believe there would be any benefit to the neighborhood. From a zoning standpoint, the neighborhood hopes that can be avoided as well.

**Carl See** said there is the consideration that the Commission is looking at other parts of the City and that the concerns raised by the neighborhoods pertains to a question of policy and whether it's appropriate to expand the current zoning in an urban corridor and apply it to current zoning for certain areas. The neighborhood feels very strongly that the neighborhoods have unique historic and other values to preserve but without knowing everything about the neighborhood in the City, it does appear that the Commission and the City Council should consider whether it's appropriate to expand those urban high density areas to other parts of the City.

Commissioner Richards said there seems to be different information about the history of high density corridors in that particular area. He asked about the timing of when that area was first designated because the proposal is not new. Manager Stamm replied that he's unable to provide an exact date of the designation. The concept

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 6 of 16**

of the HDC is from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) from 1993 with some of the concepts incorporated into local comprehensive plans, including the City's plan in 1994. One issue that has been raised in general, particularly in this location, is the lack of efforts to implement that element of the plan.

Commissioner Bardin asked Mr. See to elaborate on his perception of how increased density would impact the neighborhood. Mr. See said that part of the issue is the uncertainty of what the current zoning of 1 to 7 units per acre actually entails. It depends on how density is being applied in the City and whether that includes streets, parks, and other areas within the definition of density or whether density only applies to housing stock. The issue is perception of two different types of densities and what the plan is proposing when zoning is 7+ units per acre, and whether that includes parks, community development areas, and streets, or is it just for housing. It's difficult to visualize what that density is without a clear definition by the City. It would be helpful for residents to have a working definition of density to understand the intent.

**Michael Doherty, 2933 Maringo Road SE**, said he has lived in the neighborhood since December 3, 1980, and is the second owner of a home built in 1939. The character of the neighborhood, type of architecture, and the history in that neighborhood is quite lengthy and goes all the way back to Hazard Stevens, who owned the neighborhood properties. The farmhouse on the corner of Carlyon was a Hazard Stevens house. It was a working dairy for many years and if a person dug deep enough in the yard they can sometimes find cow bones still lurking underneath the surface of the ground. Changing the density of the neighborhood would change its historic value in the way that it operates pretty dramatically. All of the points have already been covered about parking, emergency vehicles, and all of the things that increased density would impact. He would be very happy if several Commissioners would walk through the neighborhood on a Saturday afternoon at approximately 4 to 5 PM to see what it looks like when everyone is home and all the cars are parked to understand the difficulty of how fire trucks maneuver the street. He doesn't really have anything more to add than what has already been said, but that it needs to be said over and over. The neighborhood is an organized group and it will be heard. He expressed appreciation for the chance for the Commission to listen to the neighborhood and to hear each neighbor's opinion on the issue. It is wonderful that the City of Olympia is open to its citizens during this process.

Commissioner Horn commented that the South Capital Neighborhood is exempt from the designation of urban corridor. He asked Mr. Doherty how he would compare the historic nature of his neighborhood versus the South Capital Neighborhood. Mr. Doherty said it comes from different roots, but it has roots that run just as deep. He really doesn't understand why that section of the neighborhood is not being considered for increased density and his section of the neighborhood is. There is only four blocks and it's questionable as to how many more people could get on the bus anyway, but it would impact the neighborhood dramatically. There is only housing on one side of Capitol Way, as there is nowhere to build on the other side because of the river. As far as density is concerned, four blocks is not going to make that much difference in terms of who rides the bus. However, it will make a huge difference to his neighbors.

Commissioner Horn asked Mr. Doherty how many homes are designated historic within his neighborhood. Mr. Doherty said he cannot speak to that as many of the homes located within the vicinity of his home were built in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Many of them probably qualify for historic designation but have not applied for it. Mr. Doherty said he changed the façade on his house and the City asked him if he wanted to apply to the register. Many of the homes were owned by railroad employees and were all built around the same time. Most of the houses have the same rotten siding that will not hold paint. Many neighbors became acquainted with one another because of that reason. The neighborhood consists of older homes with channel Cedar siding that is smooth and 1-1/2" thick.

Commissioner Parker asked Manager Stamm asked about the difference in the designation for transportation corridors versus the designation for land use. Transportation corridors have a designation as urban and the land use designation does not speak to that. He asked staff to identify the operative proposal at this time. Manager Stamm replied that the land use map and the corridor map should match in that respect.

Chair Tousley asked staff a follow-up question on how many homes in the area are locally listed or on the register.

**Ryan Simmons, 3403 Pear St., SE**, expressed concerns about the proposed urban corridor south of Interstate 5 in the Carlyon North/Governor Stevens/Wildwood Neighborhoods. When he moved to Olympia, he and his wife gravitated to this area for very specific reasons. Those reasons were walkability as well as close proximity to where they worked and shopped. They were also interested in its historic value. The neighborhood is very diverse of both renters and homeowners that make up both young families as well as older residents whose children have moved away. This diversity is very unique and is what drew him and his wife to the area. Many people buy their first homes as stepping stones, but he did not and plans to live there for a very long time to raise a family, using the schools in the area, and probably retiring in the area. Few neighborhoods in the area have that type of quality. It's evident on the streets especially on the weekends. Many of his younger friends have chosen to live on the outskirts of the City in rural developments where services are further away and require more car transportation. He fears that the changes to his neighborhood would only perpetuate this type of exodus from the City's core areas to more outlying areas – something that is counter to the comprehensive plan. Having the pride of living in such a neighborhood, he and his wife have been considering inquiring about the City's voluntary historic register program. However, he is now questioning whether it's worth the time and investment in looking into whether this would be a possibility for his own house because he fears that the historic character of his surroundings will slowly fade as part of the neighborhood is changed to higher density. He believes that the plan in its current form would threaten the functionality and character of the neighborhood and lead to significant loss to the City's historic resources.

As currently defined in the comprehensive plan and as Mr. Hassett pointed out earlier, urban corridors will help to improve portions of major arterials streets that are lined with low density residential and office uses in typical strip commercial development. Mr. Hassett said that the current pattern of buildings promote disjointed signage, landscaping, and building designs that are often unattractive. As a result, these areas have limited appeal as places to live, work, and shop. He respectfully disagrees that the neighborhood fits this category and asserted that walking, shopping, working, and living are all currently very attainable in the immediate vicinity of where he lives. He recognizes the long-term goal of connecting the urban corridors of Olympia and Tumwater and recognizes that it is partly why the neighborhood falls within the designation of a proposed urban corridor. However, he believes that patches of historic and healthy residential areas like his neighborhood abutting areas where higher density is more appropriately planned can have large benefits. He encouraged the Planning Commission to work closely with the City of Tumwater as they develop its plan for the Tumwater Square area around Safeway where densification makes more sense. Many of his residents agree that densification is needed but in areas that also promote the qualities that the neighborhood has. He asked the Planning Commission to consider the merit of explicitly defining how density is measured within the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan in its current form does not define the very thing that intends to redefine and regulate proposed urban corridors and its density. The current vagueness of how density is defined makes him doubt that the City would adequately regulate how redevelopment would occur along the stretch of Capitol Boulevard. He is also somewhat skeptical that it would be done in a manner that it is respectful to the residents living there. For these reasons, Mr. Simmons respectfully asked the Commission to consider the merits of adding this area as an urban corridor.

**Mike McCormick, 2420 Columbia St. SW**, expressed appreciation for the opportunity the Commission has created for residents to speak. He is testifying for himself and Ms. Holly Gadbow as members of the South Capital Neighborhood. He has lived in the neighborhood for more than four decades and raised his family there. Like the gentleman before him, he has told his children he is leaving feet first. He and Ms. Gadbow are recognized by the American Institute of Certified Planners as professional planners and they are providing their expertise through comments to the Commission. Both he and Ms. Gadbow have spent a significant number of years working with growth management and he was involved in the initial creation of the Act and administered the state program for the first three years. For the last 19 years, he has been a professional planner working on those issues. Ms. Gadbow worked for him and continued to work for the state until the Act was implemented and then was appointed to the Hearings Board. Mr. McCormick said they are contributing their expertise to help the City and the Planning Commission with a very difficult task. They previously submitted letters on the previous draft and will submit a detailed comment letter by the deadline. He advised the Commission that although his comments may appear to be critical, the Commission should consider them as helpful comments.

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 8 of 16**

The GMA requires plans that can be implemented. Both he and Ms. Gadbow see significant insufficiencies in the plan. It is inadequate, it is incomplete, and it fails to meet the goals and requirements of the Act. Some examples include the capacity of the City to meet housing and population targets and the lack of a target number in the plan. In response to earlier comments that he or others may have made, there is a reference to the Buildable Lands Report and there is no analysis that supports that and there is significant changes being proposed in the densities for the City that are not incorporated within that analysis. In terms of the discussion from the previous panelists regarding density and the definition of density, he questioned whether the Commission is using net density or growth density and well as what is stipulated in the zoning ordinance. That should be the basis of the Commission's analysis. None of that is in the plan and there is no work that is shown in the plan. Those Commissioners who are familiar with a Growth Management Hearings Board know that one of the requirements is to show your work. That work cannot be found in the current plan. Secondly, there is a proposal, as he understands it, not to update the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) concurrently. He has not seen any work program that significantly provides an update to development regulations to be consistent with the new proposed comprehensive plan. Neither of those situations is permissible under the Act. There is a consistency requirement that requires the City to change its ordinances if policies are changed. That is a huge deficiency and it creates a litigation opportunity and a liability for the City at least as far as the Growth Management Hearings Board is concerned. There are also people in the community that are paying attention to this. Density overall is too low for the City. Approximately 59% of the total land area of the City is devoted to low density residential development. That density can be as low as four units per acre. The single-family residential classification is the only density classification where there is minimum density. Notwithstanding the current court case involving the 7-Eleven store on the west side with regard to interpretation of the ordinance, it appears that there is a problem that needs some attention. There have been various statements about this as an attempt to implement the existing plan. There are significant policy changes from the existing plan that are not very well identified and documented, and the impacts of those on the overall ability of the City in meeting the population and jobs requirement and successfully implementing it is lacking. As an example, Mr. McCormick pointed to the changes in views. There is now a long list of locations from which views to the capitol are to be taken into account. There is no indication of what that means and how it might affect either residential or commercial development. There is a small but previous change that previous language addressed about views of the dome. The current language protects views of Capitol Campus and the issue is whether all views should be protected for views to the fountain. One certainly could reach that conclusion. That is a huge change and there is no indication as to what kind of impact that may mean.

There is reference to industrial areas for existing and new. He questioned the regional strategy and how Olympia will factor industrial uses and the need for industrial areas. If there is a need for it, he questioned why the Commission is permitting noncommercial uses in that area. If there is a need then the Commission needs to plan for it as well as protect it for availability for industrial use. The plan indicates that transit needs 7 dwelling units per acre to support transit. Mr. McCormick said he doesn't believe that is current best science. There is a recent study out in Seattle/King County completed by John Owen and Greg Easton, two well-regarded practitioners, that speaks to the number of required rooftops necessary to support different kinds of development and transit service. That needs to be looked at through conscious decision-making of whether there is any other relevant information to consider. There is a great policy statement about the long-term viability of the Port and the plans along with a similar reference to West Bay. However, having had the opportunity to sit through more meetings than he can count on the Shoreline Master Program, there are inherent conflicts between what is proposed in the SMP and the policies within the comprehensive plan. That needs to be reconciled. Rather than supporting the viability of the Port on the peninsula, the proposed SMP would render all those uses as prohibited in terms of new uses and render existing uses as nonconforming.

Mr. McCormick suggested the Commission should consider postponing the comprehensive plan update. There have been numerous references to the aggressive schedule of the Commission. He suggested the Commission is being penny wise and pound foolish as there is no point in rushing the update. In fact, there are real advantages to delaying the work. One response is reconciling the SMP update with the comprehensive plan update. The City is under no obligation to update the comprehensive plan development regulations until 2016. The legislature extended that deadline because of budget impacts to local governments. The Commission should take advantage of that extension. Additionally, the City would be in sync with the other jurisdictions, which is a better way of ensuring plans are consistent with adjacent jurisdictions. It's one of the requirements of



**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 9 of 16**

the Act. The Sustainable Thurston process will also have completed its products by the end of 2015. If there is any interest in having Olympia becoming part of the sustainable community effort regionally, the Commission would have the benefit of those products. The OFM population GMA update numbers have not been finalized and are not planned to be finalized until fall. He suggested it would be prudent to wait until the figures are available before proceeding with the update. It would also allow the Commission to do an appropriate job of ensuring that all required elements of the comprehensive plan are updated and consistent with other plans and that necessary changes to development regulations could be adopted concurrently to ensure compliance if the City was challenged. The Commission needs to assume that the City would be challenged and it needs to do the work that supports the effort and that hasn't been done to date.

Commissioner Horn asked for more information on the study pertaining to density for supporting transit. Mr. McCormick said the old density standard of 7 units per acre is not generally accepted today. The minimum number that he has heard is 9 units per acre. He has encouraged Intercity Transit to consider density and become more aggressive about promoting densities the agency believes would adequately provide the rooftops to support transit. The study completed by John Owen and Greg Easton is a broader study and has more value in that it speaks to the number of rooftops that are necessary to support different kinds of businesses, and not only transit. That information would help inform the Commission's discussion.

Chair Tousley asked Mr. McCormick to include a link to the study in his correspondence to the Commission.

Commissioner Parker pointed out that the comments appear to point to the Commission's failure in certain areas. He stressed that the public hearing is for the Commission to receive comments on the draft prepared by staff. The Commission has not had direct input to the staff draft of the plan. While it is true that population projections are lower than previously forecasted, those projections are primarily econometric or trend projections. Based on weather maps within the last week across the nation, it is one area in the nation where people might want to locate. With sea level rise and other climate change related issues, the City could experience a much larger population increase rather than a lower increase. He asked Mr. McCormick about his thoughts on how tied the Commission should be to any one projection when the Commission considers the plan. Mr. McCormick replied that the Commission should be within the range that the City is allocated based on OFM projections, which is required by state law. If the City is not comfortable with the projection, it has the ability to request OFM provide a different projection.

Commissioner Horn requested more information on Mr. McCormick's concerns about delaying the Capital Facilities Plan update. Mr. McCormick said based on the realities of local government finance, the most challenging aspect of accommodating growth and development is the City's ability to finance necessary infrastructure, which is reflected in the comprehensive plan through the CFP. Without a 20-year CFP, it is impossible to ascertain how the City would meet its obligations under the Act. The City has a range of specificity as the projection extends outward. Given, the short-term financial issues of the City, the City may find that it has to change its plan because the statute requires the City to change its plan until the City can finance the obligation.

**Laura Citrin, 611 Governor Stevens Avenue SE**, said she is relatively new to the neighborhood and purchased her house in October 2011 after an extensive search around Olympia. As others previously stated, she chose the neighborhood for many of the same reasons mentioned. The neighborhood has an old fashioned feel and it feels like other places she previously lived in the Midwest where the houses are older. The houses on her block were built from the 20s to the 40s. There are sidewalks and it's a walkable neighborhood. It is common to see people walking and biking. The neighborhood schools are great because the neighborhood is so involved and active and supportive of the schools. There is a playground on Governor Stevens for children in the neighborhood and there are several local parks nearby. There is a greenbelt located across the street from her house that is active in the spring with frogs. It's an incredible beautiful place with houses placed closely together. The streets are narrow and filled with cars. It is one of the few neighborhoods in the Olympia area where it was possible to purchase an historic home that was relatively affordable for a typical family. She mentioned that the most recent historic house tour featured all homes in the three neighborhoods of Wildwood, Governor Stevens, and Carlyon. Her house was built in 1938 and was rented for some time. She believes she is the third owner. After many years of being a rental, it was in disrepair and if it was designated as an urban

corridor, it would have been a home that would have been torn down. Instead, her family invested time and money to maintain the historic value. It also doesn't make sense why the South Capitol Neighborhood, which is closer to the urban corridor is not designated an urban corridor when her neighborhood, which is located away from Capitol Boulevard is designated an urban corridor especially since her neighborhood can only be built on one side of Capitol Way because of the topography of the area. The entire west side of Capitol Boulevard south of I-5 consists of a steep embankment with wetlands below. If there was an urban corridor designation on one side, that would place increased emphasis on the neighborhood. The Thurston County Urban Corridors Task Force noted in their December 2011 report (called an Urban Corridors Task Force Proposal to Stimulate Transit Corridor Investments), "In order to support neighborhood scale retail and services, a minimum of 3,500 households within a half-mile radius is needed." Based on her husband's calculations, in the three neighborhoods, there are approximately 1,200 households within a half-mile radius of Capitol Boulevard. To reach the 3,500 household minimum, another 2,000 household would have to be added, which appears to suggest that all existing homes located within a quarter mile of Capitol Way would need to be replaced to meet the 3,500 goal. It is difficult to envision what it would look like with that kind of density. One possible way is the removal of all homes in the neighborhood replaced with three-story apartment buildings or condos, which sounds outrageous and ridiculous. However, when she initially learned of the proposal, it was a concern by many of the residents.

Commissioner Horn commented on the current construction of an office building next to the Sunset Insurance building, as well as an existing small shopping area. He asked if the neighborhood opposes that type of development. Ms. Citrin said she likes the small commercial strip of several businesses and was disappointed that the tea business left. It is being replaced by a produce business. Along Capitol Way near that commercial strip, there are historic homes. She questioned whether those homes would be demolished and replaced with other strip malls.

**Ben Ruder, 703 Governor Stevens Avenue, SE**, said he and his wife moved to the neighborhood approximately four years ago and he was selected as the president of the neighborhood association. He said he is proud of his neighborhood association. The neighborhood is a wonderful area to raise a family as some residents have previously testified. He offered to clarify any questions from the Commission as well as what information the Commission would like to have that the association can provide to demonstrate the importance of the neighborhood maintaining the quality and character without threat of further density in the neighborhood. In terms of the historic character of the neighborhood, three houses are on the historic register within the Governor Stevens Neighborhood Association. The Natasha Cole building is considered the Wildwood building and is located in the Wildwood Neighborhood and is on the historic register. There are a number of other homes in the Carlyon North Neighborhood and in the Wildwood Neighborhood that are on the historic register. The association can provide the information to the Commission. Mr. Ruder said he and his wife have considered placing their house on the historic register. The house was built by the Schmidt family in 1939. A number of other homes in the neighborhood were built by the Schmidt family. The historic character and quality of the neighborhood is certainly desirable and the residents enjoy the neighborhood and want to maintain it. There are many young families moving into the neighborhood that would like to preserve the historic qualities of the homes. For that reason, the neighborhood would hate to see any changes. He offered to provide the Commission with any information it may need in its decision-making.

Chair Tousley asked about the neighborhood's position regarding the expansion of the Sunset building. She asked whether the neighborhood provided testimony to the City of Tumwater regarding the expansion proposal. Mr. Ruder said the neighborhood was not as active in that change because it was included in the Tumwater plan. He said he understood that although it's under construction, there is no identified tenant and is being built for the sake of being built, which is a little disconcerting since trees were removed for the building. The neighborhood is not happy that some of the trees were removed for the building.

**Mr. See** said some members of the Board of the Carlyon North Neighborhood Association did testify before the Tumwater Planning Commission and to the Tumwater City Council in opposition of the proposed office building because of the value of that property to the entire neighborhood. A Carlyon family owned the property and a Carlyon house was located on the property and the value of that property has historical value to the neighborhood plus the trees and the view. The neighborhood did work with the developers about the attributes

of the property. The neighborhood is happy to have had some interaction that improved the building that under construction. It is disconcerting that the building is built as a spec and that there is no identified tenant. At first it was conveyed that the state was requesting the building. Later the neighborhood learned that the state did not request the space. Having the building built without a tenant is a concern as it represents another empty building and takes away from the value of the property.

**Dottie Lehuta, 4223 Park Drive SW**, said she lives in Westbrook Park. Her home in Westbrook Park backs up to a lovely old forest. Her family has seen Pileated woodpeckers and other rare birds as well as old growth fern. A stream eventually flows into salmon-bearing water below the hill. It's a quiet, safe neighborhood with a steep winding street and no sidewalks. It's not safe for heavy traffic use. The unique character of the area is what drew her family to it almost 20 years ago. Her neighbors are helpful and alert and there is a nice mix of families with a range of age from families with young children up to retired couples and a healthy supply of pets. The forest behind her home is on a hill and is quite rocky. In fact, there is a rock quarry within several miles of the neighborhood. That was helpful during the last earthquake because nothing moved much in Westbrook Park. The nature of the forest with the shape of the terrain and its rocky soil gives the wetlands and the lake at the Ken Lake development exactly the amount of water that's needed to maintain a right balance, whether in heavy rain or more dry periods. This natural system though isn't really well understood and it could be disturbed in ways that would be of concern to the neighbors and to her. The neighborhood was assured by the City Council that the Planning Department would undertake a study to evaluate the impacts of developing a property behind the subdivision, which would include traffic, water, the character of the terrain involved, and other issues affecting the stream, Ken Lake, the wetlands, and generally, the neighborhood's quality of life in Westbrook Park. The neighborhoods that would be affected were to contribute to the information gathered for the study. Although this study was authorized in 2010, to date it still hasn't been drafted. Appropriate zoning needs to be in place – it isn't at this time. What is in place doesn't adequately protect the neighborhood or the environment. The comprehensive plan does include a new policy, which calls for regulations for hillside development in addition to current landslide hazard regulations. This could be helpful considering the neighborhood's concerns regarding large scale earth movement in developing the hilly property behind the neighborhood. The forest is based on a rocky hill and would entail a lot of earth movement that nobody is sure what the impact might be on the surrounding area. The following are policy changes that are being proposed which would be extremely negative in their impact:

- Provision for developing clustering in environmentally sensitive low density areas. This change could allow apartment complexes with possibly 300 units to be built on this now forested property directly behind and above the neighborhood.
- Amendments and changes in the language and provisions concerning a connection of Park Drive to Kaiser Road. The street is a dead-end street and doesn't connect to anything. There is a good reason for that, as it was never meant to bear excessive traffic and it's very steep and very winding. One life changing accident has already been experienced in the area sometime ago with a brain damaged child because of an accident without the extra burden of traffic from other areas.

To protect the neighborhood and quality of life, she would like to see the following provisions added to the comprehensive plan:

- Remove Park Drive from the designation as a connecting street
- Remove the language that allows for extreme clustering in environmentally sensitive areas
- Develop appropriate zoning for the land above the subdivision

Before making decisions regarding these concerns, the Commission should visit the neighborhood and see the probable effect that improper or inappropriate policies would have on the citizens in the neighborhood. She said she forwarded her comments to the Commission in an email earlier in the day. She asked for any questions to be directed to Andy McMillian. She thanked the Commission for their work.

Chair Tousley said the previous Ken Lake comprehensive plan amendment has since been folded within the comprehensive plan update.

**Timothy Harris, an attorney representing the Port of Olympia,** said he anticipates providing more substantive comments on Wednesday, July 25, as well as in written comments. He addressed a point raised by Mr. McCormick in terms of the Port. It's important for the Commission to step back and take one of the plans at a time. There is no reason to complete the comprehensive plan and the Shoreline Master Program simultaneously. Clearly, the community is confused as there was a flyer that was distributed inviting the community to attend the Planning Commission to talk about the Shoreline Master Program, which is not on the agenda. Clearly, there is some misunderstanding about what is going on and there likely would be a better and more meaningful community involvement and less of a chance for confusion as well as internal conflicts between the two, if the Commission steps back and addresses one plan at a time. There is inherent conflict between this plan and the Shoreline Master Program and the Port is very concerned about preserving industrial uses. That is something that he will speak more about on Wednesday, July 25. However, at this point, he urged the Commission to step back and address one plan at a time.

**Steve Hassett, 2932 Marengo Road SE,** referred to some points that were raised that were somewhat confusing to him. Commissioner Horn raised the question at one point about the location of the termini of the transportation corridor. Manager Stamm had indicated it was out by the airport at Tumwater Boulevard. He emphasized that the neighborhood is only concerned with the portion of that transportation corridor that is within the City of Olympia from Carlyon Avenue north to the Interstate 5 bridge. He said he doesn't really understand the relationship between the transportation corridor and a high density urban corridor. Obviously, they are related. Another gentleman raised the issue of a certain level of density required for transportation purposes. If this density is calculated on the aggregate or the average for the entire transportation corridor that raises a serious concern because when considering large parts of the corridor in Tumwater if based on residential density as opposed to the number of people in an office building. There are large areas of Capitol Boulevard in Tumwater where there are no residential on either side of the road. There is I-5 between Trospen Road and Custer Way on one side and Tumwater Valley Golf Course on the other side with one small neighborhood in Tumwater Valley. There is the brewery on both sides in that area. If the density has to be averaged, the area between Carlyon North, Governor Stevens, and Wildwood Neighborhoods are actually some of the denser residential in that stretch, which should be considered. Commissioner Bardin asked about other alternatives or other ways to increase density from 4-7 units per acre as currently zoned. There well may be other ways. However, there could be unintended consequences. Before he moved in the neighborhood in 1999, he lived in Seattle for 15 years in the Wallingford Neighborhood that underwent a similar experience of developers tearing down perfectly sound house with many of them Craftsman bungalows from the 20s and 30s and building skinny houses of two to a lot to increase density. He understands the pressures on families trying to buy houses in Seattle with increases in home prices; however, it really changed the nature of neighborhoods by replacing those houses and it destroyed the character of the neighborhood in order to increase density. That would a concern that he would have.

Regarding the Sunset Life building and the new office building, it's doubtful that the Sunset building is on the historical register, but it's certainly a building with some historic character with beautifully landscaped grounds. A new building is being constructed that is located next to the sidewalk. As he understands from the testimony, there is no tenant. He commented that he worked for the state, offices continually moved to different areas in the county. In Woodland Square Loop, there were empty buildings for several years. Other buildings have been vacated on Plum Street. Next to the Attorney General's Office in Tumwater, a developer began developing a new building and installed the steel framework to comply with a deadline for Tumwater and then abandoned it. This raises the concerns of the neighborhood about development without any real foresight or planning. There are a number of unoccupied buildings in the area as well as strip malls that have been developed that are now sitting empty. The question is why another building is needed in Tumwater that destroys the character of a beautiful building already. However, more importantly, what does this mean to the surrounding neighborhoods and is this an indication of the sort development that the neighborhood fears if an urban corridor designation is maintained in that neighborhood and zoning should be raised. He raised that as a caution of unintended consequences. He is personally aware of nine houses within a four block radius of where he lives that have historical designations.

Chair Tousley continued the public hearing to Wednesday, July 25.

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 13 of 16**

The meeting was recessed for a break from 8:18 p.m. to 8:28 p.m.

Chair Tousley acknowledged receiving a letter from Steve Worcester representing the Wildwood Neighborhood Association. The letter supports testimony received from the Carlyon North and Governor Stevens' neighborhoods.

Chair Tousley reopened public testimony.

**Gretchen Christopher Matzen, 1816 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW**, expressed appreciation for the public hearing. She encouraged a marquee on the Washington Center. With the recent death of a Center supporter who worked many years to make the marquee possible, the center should have had a marquee because it's the lifeblood of a theater as well as for the performers. If citizens do not know what is happening at the center, citizens will not attend. Having the opportunity to drive by and read the marquee might spur someone on a whim to attend. It shouldn't be an exclusive organization where only those receiving mailings know of upcoming events. She understands that a marquee is included within the planned renovations. Comprehensive planning is very important and it would be considered comprehensive to take care of that issue at the same time as the renovations are completed.

Chair Tousley continued the public hearing to Wednesday, July 25.

## **Reports**

**Leadership Team** – Commissioner Leveen briefed the Commission on the outcome of the last Leadership Team meeting. Chair Tousley was unable to attend the meeting, which included Commissioners Horn, Leveen, and Richards. Members discussed the August 1 and August 8 meetings for selection of deliberation topics and the idea of utilizing a facilitator to assist the Commission through its process. Chair Tousley expressed interest in using the services of a facilitator. It was acknowledged that there are some concerns by other Commissioners. The Leadership Team proposes an option for discussion by the Commission. Members also discussed how to handle informational requests Commissioners might have regarding the comprehensive plan update and where possible informational needs for each deliberation focus items could be noted during the August 1 and 8 meetings. The CPU Subcommittee will flesh out informational needs, if possible, in the formation of a work plan proposal for the Commission. Staff mentioned that although it is not the only opportunity to request information, it would be helpful to know what is desired as soon as possible. Members did not address the feasibility of informational requests and there is no way to assess whether a request is possible. Members discussed concerns by Commissioner Parker and others regarding insufficient time for Commission deliberations. Members did not expend much time on the topic, as it's appropriate for Commissioners to communicate with the Council. However, members did share opinions that the concern might be premature as it is unknown what the CPU Subcommittee will propose for a work plan for the Commission following the early August meetings. It is possible for the Leadership Team to communicate with the Council regarding any shortfalls and request more direction. Councilmember Langer is invited to attend the August 1 meeting. Commissioners expressing timing concerns have been invited to attend the CPU Subcommittee meeting.

Commissioner Horn suggested inviting Councilmember Langer to attend a Finance Subcommittee as well. Commissioner Leveen suggested documenting those requests to avoid meeting conflicts and to refrain from overloading Councilmember Langer with too many meeting commitments. Commissioner Horn shared that it's unnecessary to have staff presence at the Finance Subcommittee meetings at this point.

Commissioner Leveen said staff also suggested scheduling the Leadership Team meetings strategically rather than as an ongoing scheduled meeting.

Commissioner Horn said the discussion on the facilitator is scheduled at the August 1 meeting to enable the entire Commission to decide on whether to seek the assistance of a facilitator.

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 14 of 16**

Commissioner Parker asked for clarification about the assignment to the CPU Subcommittee. Commissioner Leveen reported his reference was to a charter point for the Leadership Team as well as a reference that the CPU Subcommittee would be pursuing following the August 1 and 8 meetings. The role of the CPU Subcommittee following the August 1 and 8 meetings will likely result in a list of deliberation focus areas and any informational requests. That list will be provided to the CPU Subcommittee to flesh out for informational needs and to program in the remaining schedule for deliberation on various topics. That schedule will be presented to the Commission for discussion and approval.

Commissioner Parker said he believed the visit by Councilmember Langer was scheduled for August 13 rather than August 1. Chair Tousley said Councilmember Langer is scheduled to attend the next CPU Subcommittee. It's also important for Councilmember Langer attend the regular Commission meeting on August 1 as the Commission discusses comprehensive plan update topics.

**Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU)** – Commissioner Parker provided a report on behalf of Commissioner Richards. There was a consensus to invite Councilmember Langer to the August 13 Commission meeting to discuss issues related to the schedule. Members reviewed a draft letter prepared by Commissioners Parker and Ingman. The intent was seeking concurrence by the Chair to send the letter to Councilmember Langer on the topics to discuss at the August 13 meeting. The goal is to send the letter soon after review by all Commissioners. The letter addresses specific issues on the schedule.

Chair Tousley asked about the timing of receiving the letter for review by the Commission. She had some concerns pertaining to a paragraph that she couldn't support. She said she didn't realize that the topics for the August 13 had been changed.

Commissioner Richards said the next CPU Subcommittee meeting is Monday, August 13. The location will be determined later. The agenda includes a meeting with Councilmember Langer and a discussion on the deliberation process for the comprehensive plan update. The proposal will need to be finalized at that meeting for review by the Commission on August 20.

**Finance Subcommittee** – Commissioner Horn reported the subcommittee met on July 16 and discussed the 2011 CFP letter and potential ideas to move forward in the 2012 CFP letter. Next steps include a conversation on the long-range financial strategy at the July 30 meeting for the capital investment plan. For the first hour of the meeting, Commissioner Horn reported he invited Councilmember Langer and TRPC Senior Planner Thera Black to attend. Ms. Black has been working with the Urban Corridors Task Force. She will provide information on the recommendations of the task force. That information will help the subcommittee fold those recommendations into a long-range plan. Those recommendations pertain to transportation-oriented development at certain points along the urban corridors. There might be a public role in land accumulation, infrastructure, street lights, trees, and parks in those transportation-oriented districts. Those issues are important for the City when it begins forecasting 20 to 30 years into the future.

Councilmember Langer was assigned by the Mayor to assist the Finance Subcommittee and provide some guidance on the capital investment program.

The second half of the meeting is completing the letter and assembling some questions with City staff at the Friday, August 10 meeting. Jane Kirkemo has confirmed the meeting date. Commissioners are invited to attend. The intent is providing staff with the questions at least a week in advance to provide time for research.

Other meetings are scheduled on August 15 and August 27 with a goal to have a draft letter by August 27 for presentation to the Commission at its September 17 meeting.

**Liaison Assignments** – Councilmember Kiswa reported that at the last Design Review Board meeting, members considered four projects. One of the projects involves the Columbia Place proposal, which is an unusual building. Because of the review, she authored a letter to City staff requesting clarification on the internal process and compliance. Her concern is that the Columbia Place proposal is out of context and out of scale. The size of the building is larger than the state capitol building and is located between East Bay and

**Olympia Planning Commission Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting  
July 23, 2012 Page 15 of 16**

West Bay on fill. The height of the building is higher than surrounding buildings and is out of proportion. Her letter to City staff seeks clarification. The letter also points out why the building doesn't meet the goals of the comprehensive plan or the SMP. She asked the project architect about views and whether the building will block any views. The architect replied that based on the research, the building doesn't block any views. At that point, she wasn't able to respond as she knows the City has no available tools to verify view obstruction. The letter mentions view issues and the need to provide a computer program for enabling the evaluation of views. It's important to coordinate building design and site planning. In her opinion, the Board often focuses on details of the project and design often isn't the bigger picture, which is not a good approach in her opinion. She offered to provide Commissioners with a copy of the letter to staff.

Chair Tousley asked whether the review was the first review of the proposal by the Board. Commissioner Kizza said it was her first review of the proposal. The documents attached to the illustrations and plans were dated in 2006 with accompanying City staff forms. Someone marked that the proposal is not of human scale. Some form of evaluation likely occurred. She asked for clarification of the process because the project moved forward and now it has been submitted again and there has been no correct evaluation. The submission was to increase height from 5 levels to 6 levels. She said she is unsure about the process.

Another larger project pertained to the Washington Center for the Performing Arts. The project is a \$3.8 million renovation project. The illustrations reveal an attractive elevation of the building, which she supported. After attendance to the Finance Subcommittee, she learned about the requirement for the City to consider existing deficiencies. The facelift, although attractive, might not be entirely necessary. The current issue is elevation according to the architect. It is possible to repair the elevation issue at a cost of \$400,000 to \$500,000. The issue is whether the City has sufficient funds for the elevation work.

Commissioner Bardin reported the Utility Advisory Committee is not meeting during the summer.

Commissioner Leveen reported the next meeting of the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee is on Wednesday, July 25. He participated in a field check of enforcement of bicycle parking codes in new construction and significant remodels. He and Karen Messmer had pursued a similar follow up several years ago and learned compliance was lacking. They met with staff and shared the results of the field check. During this last field check, compliance is still lacking. There is approximately 16% compliance. Approximately 51% of the projects were rated as red reflecting that the code is not being enforced. Planning staff has been invited to the BPAC meeting for a presentation on the issue. Each instance of noncompliance undermines the comprehensive plan, which is disappointing. The purpose of the code is to help citizens view cycling as a viable transportation mode. If the City cannot support that goal in the comprehensive plan and development codes, and through enforcement, then due diligence is not occurring and the City will never increase the modal share from cycling.

Chair Tousley reported the next Heritage Commission meeting is also on July 25. There likely will be some attributions to late Heritage Commissioner Roger Easton.

Commissioner Parker asked about formalizing his appointment as the Commission's liaison to the Neighborhood Association. He was unable to attend the last meeting, which was during the Planning Commission's meeting. The Association is proceeding with a forum series with the first forum scheduled in late August on the Boys and Girls Club. Chair Tousley advised that the assignment is informal and expressed appreciation if Commissioner Parker continues to attend in an ex-officio capacity.

Commissioner Parker reported on his attendance to the Capitol Boulevard Planning Project. He urged the Commission to visit the website to learn about corridor development. Tumwater has done a good job of documenting the inadequacies of Capitol Boulevard in Tumwater. Several design proposals were developed. At least 80 citizens attended the meeting.

Commissioner Horn reported staff provided a notice to all staff liaisons to all advisory committee meetings inviting them to attend the public hearing on the CFP on August 6.

**Adjournment**

**With there being no further business, Chair Tousley adjourned the meeting at 9:13 p.m.**

---

Amy Tousley, Chair

Prepared by Valerie Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
Puget Sound Meeting Services, [psmsoly@earthlink.net](mailto:psmsoly@earthlink.net)