



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Amy Buckler
(360) 570-5847

Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, March 11, 2013

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting for Comprehensive Plan Update

1. CALL TO ORDER

These minutes include the March 11 meeting, and the continuation of this meeting which occurred on March 13.

1.A ROLL CALL

All Commissioners were present on March 11. Commissioner Richards was absent for the continuance on March 13. Chair Parker participated by telephone on both evenings.

Present: 9 - Commissioner Roger Horn, Commissioner Paul Ingman, Commissioner Agnieszka Kiswa, Commissioner James Reddick, Commissioner Rob Richards, Commissioner Amy Tousley, Chair Jerome Parker, Vice Chair Judy Bardin, and Commissioner Larry Leveen

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Bardin clarified the proposed order of discussion topics for the evening: High Density Corridors/Neighborhoods (Item #A3), Values/Vision, and proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Map (Item #A3, Non-Consent Item #11, Substantive Change #30)

A request was made to assign time allotments to each topic; High Density Corridors/Neighborhoods was allotted 45-60 minutes.

Commissioner Richards moved, seconded by Commissioner Kiswa, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Chris van Daalen (Northwest EcoBuilding Guild) announced an Urban Corridors Vision-to-Action event on Friday, March 15. He distributed flyers.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Horn shared that he contacted a community member who was unable to comment at the last meeting. This citizen was concerned about sea level rise, encouraging development along the shoreline, and relying on private development to create the necessary sea walls.

5. QUESTION TIME

Staff was asked whether they will remove additional or unnecessary language from Commissioners' recommendations that does not match the writing style of the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update. For example, some Commissioner-approved policies begin with the unnecessary statement: "The City will..."

Associate Planner Amy Buckler responded that the Commission may make a motion to direct staff to take such action, and Ms. Buckler can assist in providing suggested language for that motion.

Vice Chair Bardin expressed concern about getting through all the topics on the evening's agenda and asked staff what day would work for a potential continuance. Ms. Buckler responded that Thursday would be staff's preferred day if a meeting continuance were needed.

The Commission decided to continue the evening's meeting to Wednesday. Ms. Buckler reminded Vice Chair Bardin not to formally adjourn the meeting at the conclusion of the evening's deliberations.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

[13-0213](#) Final Deliberations on the Comprehensive Plan Update

TOPIC #A3: Urban Neighborhoods

Commissioner Ingman introduced the proposal and distributed three handouts to Commissioners: Proposed goal and policy language for "urban neighborhoods," a compilation of goals and policies in the existing Comprehensive Plan that support urban neighborhoods, and an "urban neighborhoods" map drafted by Commissioner Ingman.

Commissioner Ingman moved, seconded by Commissioner Kizza, to adopt the proposed "urban neighborhoods" goal and policy language. Commissioner Ingman withdrew his motion so Commissioners could review the proposed language in the handout and associated map.

Discussion:

Commissioner Ingman clarified that the Commission's High Density Corridor Subcommittee had not yet identified the policies or goals in the July draft that should be augmented or changed in relation to the proposed language. He described yellow areas on the map as intended to delineate dense, urban neighborhoods. Red lines indicate where to focus development. The grey circle outlines where increased density and urban neighborhoods should be focused. The area would include mixed uses, in addition to specifically designated neighborhood centers indicated with small purple dots on the map. The locations of the purple dots are the same as what is proposed in the July draft for locations of neighborhood

centers.

Concern was raised that areas where mixed uses would be allowed are limited as shown on the map.

A conflict was noted in proposed policies two and three; many areas in downtown are low-density. Are the proposed high-density areas defined specifically by streets? Additionally, is there sufficient existing area to landscape along all corridors and gateways?

How does a proposed "civic boulevard" differ from what exists in various areas around the City? Would the proposed policy require retrofitting existing streets?

Commissioner Ingman responded that City boulevards currently do not meet the requirements of the existing Comprehensive Plan, noting Plum Street as an example of a street that was supposed to be tree-lined. However, South Capitol Way does meet the intent. Trees would create a cohesive theme, while more natural vegetation means landscaping besides grass lawn. He clarified the gateways concept is not in the July draft, and the intent is to demarcate where low-density areas transition to high-density areas.

Concern raised that the July draft lacks the emphasis for tree-lined boulevards as found in the existing Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Horn proposed a revision to the second sentence in proposed Policy 1, so that **Policy 1 shall read: "Establish 8 gateways that are entry/exit pathways along major streets to downtown Olympia and our Capitol. These streets will act as tree-lined civic boulevards that present a unified streetscape that enhances the grandeur of our Capital City."**

Concern raised that the gateways noted on the map are not at the city limits proper; example noted is the proposed gateway at Harrison and Division on the west side.

Commissioner Ingman responded that gateways can be viewed as a greenbelt that indicates a more subtle shift than signage would. The proposed locations are governed by topography or where streets intersect. They are intended to draw one into downtown and create a distinction between high-density areas/urban corridors and more suburban, or low-density, areas.

Concern raised that the proposed policies may trigger a subsequent upzone or downzone for parcels in the identified areas; this represents a dramatic change. Concern also that duplexes and triplexes would not be allowed outside the proposed high-density areas, which may limit affordable housing options.

Commissioner Ingman noted that allowed uses under existing zoning would remain, but nothing larger would be allowed outside the designated high-density areas. The intent is to maintain and protect what is currently existing in established single-family neighborhoods.

It was noted that density in the range of 25 dwelling units per acre will require allowing for

greater heights.

Concern about recommending policies with specific density thresholds and numbers in the Comprehensive Plan. Removing the specificity would be in line with a recommendation approved two weeks ago by the Commission to remove specific threshold figures from a different policy regarding density of housing units.

A proposal was made to remove the language "25 dwelling units/acre" from proposed Policy 2. **Policy 2 shall read: "High-density neighborhoods concentrate housing into a number of designated sites: Downtown Olympia; Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and West Capital Mall. Commercial uses directly serve high-density neighborhoods and allow people to meet their daily needs without traveling outside their neighborhood. High-density neighborhoods are primarily walk-dependent. At least one-quarter of the forecasted growth shall be in downtown Olympia."**

Commissioner Ingman proposed removing the language "with 8-24 dwelling units per acre" from proposed Policy 4, and adding some language. **Policy 4 shall read: "Allow medium-density Neighborhood Centers in low-density neighborhoods to include both civic and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Neighborhood Centers emerge from a neighborhood public process."**

A proposal was made to eliminate the language "which have 4-7 dwelling units/acre" from proposed Policy 3, and add some language. **Policy 3 shall read: "Protect and preserve the existing established low-density neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high density development in existing low-density neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers."**

Commissioner Leveen proposed that proposed Policy 5 be eliminated, and that the proposed goal language read: **"Olympia's neighborhoods provide housing choices that fit the diversity of local income levels and lifestyles. They are shaped by public planning processes that continually involve neighborhoods, citizens, and city officials."**

The revised goal language reinforces planning at the neighborhood level. Perhaps sub-area plans should be adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Suggestions were made to remove the specific number eight from the proposed Policy 1, and to remove Policy 1 altogether. Commissioner Ingman noted that the concept of gateways is critically linked to the other policies because it is intended to identify a transition from low- to high-density, and that one is entering a valley topographically.

Commissioner Richards moved, seconded by Commissioner Ingman, to adopt the proposed urban neighborhoods goals and policies as amended.

Discussion:

Strong concern was expressed about where or how to integrate the proposed language into the July draft and ensure consistency. Support expressed for forwarding the language as a

concept developed by the Commission to direct growth and protect neighborhoods with caution about the potential for subsequent changes in existing zoning.

The concept can be adopted with a clear request to Council that additional work on this topic be completed as part of the Commission's future work plan.

Concern was expressed that the July draft is in conflict with the Growth Management Act (GMA), in that it promoted urban corridors, which is urban sprawl. Preference expressed for the "pearls on a string" concept, or focused areas of growth, as anti-urban sprawl; the proposed language is more in alignment with the intent of GMA.

Proposed language needs additional work; there ought to be more gateways identified.

The proposal was a fundamentally different concept; a mix of what was in the existing draft and what was proposed in the July draft. A recommendation should be made to Council that this concept be incorporated, and the Council decides where to insert it. Support was expressed for the goal and policies to be located in the Land Use Chapter.

Commissioner Horn proposed that the motion under consideration be amended to state that the Commission recommended adoption of the concepts discussed today as amended, with the intent of moving this forward as a concept (language) supported and recommended by the Planning Commission, but which needs continued work to incorporate it into the final Comprehensive Plan. Topic sponsors, Commissioners Richards and Ingman accepted the amendment to the motion.

Commissioner Tousley noted she was unable to support the motion because of concerns about consistency with other goals and policies in the July draft.

The motion passed by majority vote. Commissioners voting in favor of the motion: Kisza, Ingman, Reddick, Horn, Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioner Richards, Chair Parker. Commissioners Opposed: Tousley. Commissioners Abstaining: Leveen.

TOPIC: Transportation Chapter (non-consent item #24)

No revisions recommended for Policy PT16.4 currently in the July draft.

No revisions recommended for non-consent item #12: Land Use & Urban Design Chapter, Appendix A-Low Density Housing, currently in the July draft.

No revisions recommended for non-consent item #13: Land Use & Urban Design Chapter, PL13.9, currently in the July draft.

Concern regarding proposed revisions to proposed Policy PT 12.1, in that downzoning within the City encourages negative sprawl. Policy intent is to centralize growth and reduce sprawl by concentrating growth in the downtown core.

The City has an established Urban Growth Area (UGA) with established case law that intends for density to occur within that UGA.

A proposal to revise **Proposed Policy 12.1** to state: "Consider upzoning areas in the downtown core and along parts of the urban corridor, while maintaining low densities in the periphery of the City. "

Regarding proposed Policy PT 12.2, fee structures can't be modified without reflecting the cost of infrastructure due to growth; needs to be a justification, logical basis, or connection to a project. The example of the City waiving collection of impact fees in downtown to spur development in certain areas was noted. Concern expressed that has not been effective.

Proposed Policy PT 12.2 was revised to state: "Consider a geographically influenced impact fee based on costs that would likely incentivize development in the downtown core and along parts of the urban corridor."

No revisions recommended for proposed Policy PT 12.3.

Proposed Policy PT 12.4 was revised to state: "Promote infill in neighborhoods and densification in activity centers and downtown, in order to reduce sprawl, reduce motor vehicle trips and make the best use of the existing transportation network."

No revisions recommended for proposed Policy PT 12.5.

Proposed Policy PT 12.6 was revised to state: "Allow Neighborhood Centers in residential areas to reduce commute and errand trip distances and increase the feasibility of alternatives to driving alone."

Correct a typo in Policy PT 14.1 in the July draft so that it reads: "Retrofit City streets in urban corridors to City street standards to attract new development and increase densities."

No revisions recommended for Policy PT 14.2, which is currently in the July draft.

Policy PT 14.3 was revised to state: "Encourage public agencies to build in the urban corridors, so that they are easily accessible by walking, biking, and transit and support the City's transportation-efficient land use goals."

Concern regarding proposed revisions to Policy PT 14.4; that promoting corridors in low-density neighborhoods conflicts with earlier proposals put forward by Commissioner Ingman and agreed upon by the Commission. A suggestion was made to remove reference to "land use objectives." It was noted that the land use component makes the corridors work.

Neighborhoods should determine the land use objectives from a grassroots level; land use objectives are not determined through a "top-down" regional process guided by government officials. Commissioner Leveen clarified the intent of the recommended revision to PT 14.4

wasn't to assign density along the whole corridor, but to coordinate with other cities to support transit.

The policy proposal is consistent with the regional transportation plan, and there is a consistency issue with the goals and policies approved earlier in the evening. Not everyone agreed there was an inconsistency.

No revisions recommended for Policy PT25.3, which is already in the July draft.

Commissioner Leveen moved, seconded by Commissioner Tousley, to approve the transportation policies referred to the Commission by the Urban Corridors Subcommittee as amended, with the exception of PT 14.4. The motion passed by majority vote. Commissioners voting in favor of the motion: Tousley, Kizza, Ingman, Reddick, Horn, Vice Chair Bardin, and Commissioner Leveen. Commissioners abstaining: Richards.

Commissioner Tousley moved, seconded by Commissioner Leveen, to approve the language as amended in PT14.4: "Partner with the cities of Lacey and Tumwater to pursue the coordinated transportation and land use objectives associated with the region's premier transit corridors of Martin Way, East 4th and State Avenues, Pacific Avenue, and portions of Capitol Way." The motion passed by majority vote. Commissioners voting in favor of the motion: Tousley, Reddick, Chair Parker, Commissioners Horn, Leveen. Commissioners opposed: Richards, Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioner Ingman. Commissioners abstaining: Kizza

At 9:45 p.m. Vice Chair Bardin announced the meeting will be continued to City Hall, at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 13.

Meeting Continued on March 13, 2013 ...

In attendance: Commissioners Tousley, Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioners Horn, Leveen, Reddick, Kizza, Ingman and Chair Parker (by phone.) Absent: Commissioner Richards.

The Commission agreed to action only minutes for this evening's items, as only one staff member is in attendance (Associate Planner Amy Buckler.)

Future Land Use Map (item #A3, non-consent item #11, substantive change #30)

Commissioner Tousley moved, seconded by Commissioner Reddick, to recommend retaining the Light Industrial designation in the South Bay area, and to recommend the Industrial designation on the Future Land Use map be split into "Light Industrial" and "Industrial." The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Reddick, to recommend the Henderson Park area designation be changed from Captiol Campus/Commercial Services High Density to General Commerce, as proposed in the July draft. The Commission did

not reach a majority vote, so the staff recommendation moves forward. Commissioners voting in favor of the motion: Reddick, Horn, Chair Parker, Commissioner Leveen. Commissioners not in favor: Vice Chair Bardin, Commissioner Ingman. Commissioner Tousley recused herself from the vote, and Commissioner Kizza abstained.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Tousley, to recommend the LOTT treatment plant area designation be changed from Industry to Urban Waterfront, as proposed in the July draft. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Tousley, to recommend the Kaiser Road area designation be retained as Light Industrial, along with the separation of Light Industrial and Industrial on the Future Land Use map. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Tousley, that the Urban Neighborhoods map presented on March 11 and the elements of the Future Land Use map affected by this evening's discussion be integrated with other changes and addressed as part of a future work plan item. Following discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

The Commission agreed that Commissioner Ingman will integrate the Urban Neighborhoods map with the Future Land Use map and present it on Monday. The final motion on the Future Land Use map was tabled to Monday, March 18.

There was a suggestion for the implementation stage: create a chart outlining which zones link to each designation on the Future Land Use map.

Commissioner Reddick left at 8:18 p.m.

Commissioner Ingman left at 8:20 p.m.

Values & Vision statements

Commissioner Horn described the proposal put forward by the Values & Vision Subcommittee. They broke the Olympia's Vision chapter into two chapters: Introduction, and Values and Vision. They added new key challenges, and removed unnecessary language. They removed Goal 1, PO1.1 and PO1.5, and edited the "Key Challenges" section to express these concepts. They moved PO1.2, PO1.3 and PO1.4 to the Public Services chapter.

Commissioners suggested some minor edits to the proposal.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Leveen, to move PO1.2, PO1.3 and PO1.4 as proposed. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Kizza left at 9:45 p.m.

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Leveen, to recommend the Introduction and Values & Vision chapters, as amended. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of the five members still in attendance: Horn, Commissioners Leveen, Tousley, Vice Chair Bardin, and Chair Parker.

Public Participation #B6

Topic Sponsor, Commissioner Horn, described his proposal to add a goal and policies section to the Public Participation chapter.

Commissioner Tousley moved, seconded by Commissioner Leveen, to add the goal and policies as proposed. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of the five members still in attendance: Commissioners Horn, Leveen, Tousley, Vice Chair Bardin, and Chair Parker.

Urban Neighborhoods #B14

Topic sponsor, Commissioner Tousley, described the work she did to compile the goals and policies in the July draft that relate to sub-area planning. She provided this information for purposes of discussion, and is not recommending any changes. The Commission thanked her for the work.

Earthquakes & Liquefaction #B9

Topic sponsor, Commissioner Horn, described his proposal to add three new policies to the Public Services chapter regarding Cascadia subduction zone earthquakes.

Commissioner Tousley moved, seconded by Commissioner Leveen, to recommend the new policies as proposed. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of the five members still in attendance: Commissioners Horn, Leveen, Tousley, Vice Chair Bardin, and Chair Parker.

Historic Preservation #B20

Topic sponsor, Vice Chair Bardin, described her proposal to revise GL3 and GL5, and add a new policy regarding collaboration related to historic preservation. She checked with Rachel Newman and Holly Davies of the Heritage Commission before submitting her proposal to the Planning Commission. The Commissioners made a few editorial suggestions.

Commissioner Leveen moved, seconded by Commissioner Tousley, to approve the proposal as amended. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of the five members still in attendance: Commissioners Horn, Leveen, Tousley, Vice Chair Bardin, and Chair Parker.

The recommendation was discussed and closed.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[13-0220](#) Approval of February 25, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

This item was tabled.

The minutes were postponed.

8. REPORTS

There were no reports.

9. OTHER TOPICS

[13-0217](#) Leadership Team Notes from March 1, 2013

The report was completed.

[13-0218](#) Commission Information Request

The report was received.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned March 13 at 10:04 p.m.