



City of Olympia

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360-753-8447

Meeting Minutes - Draft Land Use & Environment Committee

Thursday, July 25, 2013

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. ROLL CALL

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

STAFF PRESENT

City Manager Steve Hall, Community Planning & Development Director Keith Stahley, Deputy City Attorney Darren Nienaber, Planning Manager Todd Stamm, Associate Planner Amy Buckler, Associate Planner Jennifer Kenny, Housing Program Manager Anna Schlecht, and Downtown Liaison Brian Wilson.

2. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Langer called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.A 13-0600 Approval of June 27, 2013 Land Use & Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Hankins moved, seconded by Committee Member Roe, to approve the minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Chair Langer, Committee Member Hankins and Committee Member Roe

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

4.A 13-0509 Discussion of Sub-Area Planning Status Report

Associate Planner Jennifer Kenny addressed the Committee. She noted that during the Imagine Olympia process many community members expressed interest in sub-area planning. She also noted staff and representatives from the neighborhood associations have been discussing sub-area planning for several years. Recent efforts have focused on developing an active role for the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (CNA), while gaining a better understanding of where the Downtown Master Plan fits into sub-area planning.

In the next 6 months staff will be creating a template and a proposed process for completing sub-area planning. Ms. Kenny stated the purpose of tonight's overview is to get feedback from the Committee on expected outcomes and a preferred process for doing sub-area planning. In particular, staff is seeking guidance on how the City Council would like to pursue sub-area planning and coordination among the CNA, Planning Commission, and community at large.

At the Committee's request, Ms. Kenny presented examples from other jurisdictions, including Bellevue, Tacoma and Seattle. She noted much of the difference between jurisdictions was a difference in process, but said all the jurisdictions include sub-area plans in their Comprehensive Plans. She noted that while the sub-area plans generally begin with the same template, by the time they are completed they are tailored to reflect the unique character of the neighborhood(s) they include.

Committee Member Hankins stated she likes Bellevue's inclusion of the history of the area being planned for and also their inclusion of an inventory and clear statements of policy direction. From Tacoma she likes the policy statement that the sub-area plans should inform the development regulations, and from Seattle she approves of the implementation schedule that includes the activity, timeframe and cost for action items.

Eastside Neighborhood Representative Mike Dexel stated that the neighborhood planning process should include community outreach and involvement.

Northwest Eco-Building Guild representative Chris van Daalen stated the Downtown Master Planning process may need some outside expertise and referenced the process the City of Tumwater is using for the Brewery District planning effort.

Chair Langer stated he is concerned about finding ways to engage areas not represented by neighborhood associations; also to ensure sub-area plans and the Comprehensive Plan are tightly coordinated. He stated the plans should go through the Planning Commission and City Council so that they become meaningful documents. Last he stated financing has not been worked out, and involvement of the Finance Committee and budget experts is needed to ensure the effort is funded.

Committee Member Roe stated she has concerns about setting expectations for neighborhoods that could get changed at the Planning Commission or Council level. City Manager Steve Hall indicated this can be prevented by making sure the sub-area plans are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Committee concluded the discussion by directing Ms. Kenny to share the examples of other jurisdictions with the CNA to initiate a collaborative sub-area planning process with them.

The discussion was completed.

4.B 13-0310 2013 Planning Commission Work Program

Associate Planner Amy Buckler addressed the Committee. Ms. Buckler submitted a proposed 2013 Planning Commission Work Program as well as a proposal for a Downtown Master Planning Task Force.

The proposed Task Force would work with staff to develop and recommend a future downtown master planning process. The Task Force would be guided by the Land Use and Environment Committee (LUEC) and supported by the Downtown Liaison and other City staff as needed. The Task Force would present a recommendation to the LUEC in late 2013.

Proposed members of the Task Force include representatives from each of the following:

1. Olympia Planning Commission
2. Olympia Downtown Association
3. Parking and Business Improvement Area
4. Downtown Neighborhood Association
5. Coalition of Neighborhood Associations

Ms. Buckler noted that a much larger group would be involved in the actual planning process. She indicated she is looking for the Committee's feedback on the proposed Task Force members and scope of work.

Chair Langer stated we should look at other jurisdictions to see what they have done, such as Bellingham, Spokane and Tacoma. The Committee was in agreement with the proposed Task Force composition and the scope of work.

Planning Commission Vice Chair Judy Bardin suggested there should be two Planning Commission members on the Committee.

The recommendation was discussed and closed.

4.C 13-0599 Oral Report - Status of the Alcohol Impact Area

Downtown Liaison Brian Wilson addressed the Committee. He reported on the June 19 public hearing before the Liquor Control Board (LCB) regarding the City's request to establish an Alcohol Impact Area (AIA). Mr. Wilson stated there were 30 letters in favor of the AIA and 6 opposed. He stated the Liquor Control Board has issued a memo asking the City for additional evidence that there is a need for an AIA, based on comments received from alcohol distributors.

Chair Langer stated the LCB appears to have changed its standards due to the involvement of the distributors. City Attorney Darren Nienaber agreed.

Committee Member Roe asked what has changed to cause the LCB to review Olympia's request differently than previous requests. City Manager Steve Hall stated the LCB appears to be looking for more involvement in the voluntary restriction on sales by owners and said more data concerning that program will be useful. Mr. Hall also indicated it might be

useful to invite the lobbyists to the next LUEC meeting.

Chair Langer stated the voluntary program the distributors have proposed does not meet the needs of downtown. He said he would be interested in hearing more from the distributors and their lobbyists. He indicated he is willing to speak with them on the City's terms, however, and not theirs.

Committee Members Hankins and Roe stated "everyone" needs to attend the next LCB meeting on this request so they understand the City's resolve.

The Committee agreed to invite the distributors/lobbyists to the next LUEC meeting.

The report was received.

4.D 13-0575 Discussion of Low Barrier Shelter Potential Locations and Siting Criteria

Housing Program Manager Anna Schlecht addressed the Committee. Ms. Schlecht provided an explanation of low-barrier shelters and also noted that providing more capacity is important because as many as 59 beds that are currently available to the homeless could be going away this coming winter.

Ms. Schlecht presented a matrix showing proposed criteria and potential locations for siting a low-barrier shelter in Olympia. Among the potential locations presented, the following four were listed as the most promising candidates:

1. Olympia Court Annex - Building Owner: City of Olympia
2. Professional Arts Building - Owner: State DES
3. Old Commission on Hispanic Affairs Building - Owner: Miller Monroe Properties
4. Associates Building (Old City training facility, currently the Powers Ballroom)

Recovery Center Executive Director Heather Moore explained a map showing the location of potential facilities. A discussion ensued on the relative merits of each of the locations. The Annex building is small compared to the others. The Associates Building has ADA access issues. The Professional Building is in State ownership and could have leasing issues - it has 5,500 square feet per floor. The 10th Avenue Building is currently the most ready for occupancy with 4 ADA bathrooms and outdoor space - it would need a conditional use permit and outreach to adjoining neighborhoods.

Chair Langer asked for the Police Department's perspective. Officer Paul Lower noted the top 3 ranked shelters are near schools and felons and sex offenders could present an issue. Homeless advocate Meg Martin stated she has spoken with St. Michael's and they would be supportive of the shelter that would be near them if selected.

There was an extended general discussion of a variety of issues concerning homelessness and what the provision of a low-barrier shelter alternative might mean for the community.

Committee Member Hankins wanted to ensure the impact on neighborhoods is taken into consideration. Travel paths with direct routes to the shelter should be available. Outreach to neighborhoods is important.

Ms. Moore stated there will be a forum on August 6 at the Community Center from 6:00 -8:00 p.m. with plans for outreach. There will be continuing discussions with the Olympia Downtown Association, the LUEC and the County, with the aim for broad participation.

Committee Member Roe complimented the work that has gone into developing these options.

Downtown Liaison Brian Wilson stated he can assist with outreach.

Chair Langer stated we are building consensus and there appear to be good options. He said this work will be helpful in addressing emerging shelter needs and issues.

City Manager Hall stated he supports the idea of low-barrier shelters. They require thoughtful design, a management plan, and neighborhood outreach. He posed the question of who will take the lead on communicating with the HOME Consortium.

Chair Langer indicated he could sign the letter to the HOME Consortium requesting money for the low-barrier shelter. Mr. Hall recommended that the Mayor sign the letter and suggested the letter should include how the low-barrier shelter will help replace the cold weather shelter capacity that we will likely be losing this coming winter.

The discussion was completed.

4.E 13-0595 ORAL REPORT - Status Reports and Updates

There were no reports or updates.

The agenda time will come forward at the Land Use & Environment Committee meeting August 26, 2013.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2013.