

Amy Buckler

From: Comcast <kandjgoddard@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 11:04 AM
To: Amy Buckler; John Owen; Keith Stahley
Cc: Cheryl Selby; Julie Hankins; Nathaniel Jones; Jim Cooper; Jessica Bateman; Jeannine Roe; Clark Gilman; Kendra Dahlen
Subject: Re: City of Olympia News Release | Downtown Strategy Public Hearing - Feb 27

Dear John, Amy and Keith.

I am so grateful for the work you and your teams have accomplished during Year One of the DTS, and for the projects slated to continue or begin during 2017. As I have mentioned in the past, you have exceeded my best hopes of laying the groundwork for a high-quality, long-view revitalization plan for Downtown. I am particularly delighted that to date 3500 people from Olympia and surrounding communities have shown up at workshops, etc. and/or completed online surveys. That, I think, is a clear indicator of (1) your keen focus on the value of meaningful public outreach and (2) how deeply people care about our downtown's best future.

I am so sorry that I'll miss the 2/27 OPC public hearing covering the draft Downtown Strategy. Jewel and I are off to Maui that same morning where we will be greeted by rain, which is in the forecast the entire first week. So much for MY planning!

My sincerest thanks to all of you and yours.
Kris

P.S. Please pass along kudos to your outstanding graphics teams for communicating this story powerfully, artfully and understandably.

On Feb 21, 2017, at 3:05 PM, Nancy Lenzi <nlenzi@ci.olympia.wa.us> wrote:

<image001.jpg>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOWNTOWN STRATEGY PUBLIC HEARING – FEB 27

Date of Release: February 17, 2017

Contact:

- Amy Buckler, Senior Planner
- 360.570.5847
- abuckler@ci.olympia.wa.us

Public Hearing on the draft Downtown Strategy

The Olympia Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the draft Downtown Strategy on Monday, February 27 at 6:30 pm at City Hall, to receive public comments prior to making a

recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposal. Anyone interested is invited to attend and present testimony regarding the draft proposal, which is available online at www.olympiawa.gov/DTS. The draft includes a summary and seven more detailed chapters about each of the strategy elements.

During 2016, the City hosted an extensive public process to form a strategy that will move forward our community's vision for Downtown. Over 3,500 community members from around the region participated at meetings and online. What emerged is a holistic design framework and set of priority actions for enhancing Downtown. The Strategy will guide City actions over the next 6 years to address housing, homelessness, transportation, design, retail/business and land use development. It is also a tool for communicating our vision and commitment to action for Downtown.

Public testimony may be presented orally or in writing. Written statements may be submitted to the Commission in care of the Olympia Community Planning and Development Department, PO Box 1967, Olympia, WA 98507-1967; to cpdinfo@ci.olympia.wa.us or by fax to 360.753.8087. Written comments must be received prior to 5 p.m. on Friday, March 3 and may be presented at the hearing. If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please call (360) 753-8314, at least 48 hours in advance and ask for the ADA Coordinator.

Following the hearing, the Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council. The Commission may recommend that the strategy be adopted or not adopted, or may recommend an alternative or a variation.

###

Connect With Us!

<image002.jpg> <image003.jpg> <image005.jpg>

2/21/2017 3:05 PM

Amy Buckler

From: JacobsOly@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2017 9:37 PM
To: Amy Buckler
Subject: FOW Testimony on DTS Draft
Attachments: DTS Underline Version, Feb 2017.docx

Amy -- attached is the written FOW testimony in electronic form. I handed out hard copies this evening, but thought you might want it in electronic form too.

BobJ

Written Testimony of Friends of the Waterfront for the Olympia Planning
Commission's Public Hearing on February 27, 2017 Regarding the
Draft Downtown Strategy

Friends of the Waterfront was founded seventeen years ago and is registered with the Secretary of State's Corporations Division.

"Friends of the Waterfront is a group of Olympia area residents and businesspeople who see the waterfront as a treasure -- a central feature that is vital to the health of the whole community. We advocate managing the shoreline and adjacent lands wisely and developing them for the community's greatest net benefit over the long term, as determined through an inclusive visioning process."

We have closely followed the development of the Downtown Strategy draft. Our comments will focus on three areas: (1) the waterfront in general, (2) the Isthmus, and (3) views.

Waterfront

We are pleased to see that the waterfront receives appropriate recognition in this report as a wonderful community asset. This includes:

- Improving pedestrian connections between the waterfront and downtown attractions and the capitol campus.
- Maintaining the waterfront as a public gathering place.
- Promoting waterfront recreation activities.
- Completing the Olympia Waterfront Route (Big W Trail) around the peninsula.

However, we are disappointed there was no attention given to the need for appropriate regulations to assure quality public access. When the Shoreline Master Program was passed recently, councilmembers chose to adopt the minimum 30-foot setback required by Ecology (in order to preserve regulatory flexibility). At the time they said that additional setback space (and stepbacks) could/would be added via local zoning changes. We urge the commission/council to make this part of the downtown strategy and give it high priority in work plans.

(1) Setbacks. Thirty-foot setbacks provide only about twenty feet of flat ground for public use, the other ten or so feet being the slope to the water. Twenty feet of flat ground is not quite enough for a standard walking path cross-section for this kind of area (21 feet). It

provides no space at all for waterfront-related outdoor facilities such as outside restaurant seating, nor for potential sea level rise barriers. We strongly urge an additional 25 feet of setback (55 feet total) to provide space for these uses. Many localities have even wider spaces along their waterfronts. Olympia has relatively narrow strips of flat waterfront land in some areas and little undeveloped waterfront land in others, so this proposal would be appropriate for our local conditions.

(2) Stepbacks. Substantial stepbacks above the second story are needed to provide an open, airy, bright space for waterfront users. It is important to avoid a sense of confinement between tall walls and water.

We strongly urge that appropriate setbacks and stepbacks be included in the DTS, be added to the 2017 Planning work plan, and also be included in the city's sea level rise planning that is now beginning.

Isthmus

We regard the isthmus as part of the waterfront area and support the efforts of the Olympia Capitol Park Foundation.

1. Capitol Center Building. We saw a reference to possible redevelopment of the Capitol Center Building in the draft, but no mention of its removal. Removal of that out-of-place building has been a community priority for many years. This was reconfirmed recently by a professional public survey during development of the Parks Plan. Removal of this building has appeared in parks plans for a number of years. Action is overdue.

We strongly urge the commission/council to include in the DTS the removal of the Capitol Center Building and use of this space for parks and for future transportation contingencies.

2. Fountain Block and West Parcels. We strongly urge the city to develop the Fountain Block and West Parcels in as open a way as possible, thus adding/preserving important views of the capitol from this area. Views should be important considerations as this area is redeveloped. Any structures that are added should be low and small, serve public uses and preserve views.

Views

Background

The importance of view protection cannot be overstated. Whether public or private, important views are treasured, and give significant value to communities. Thus, we support GL8, "Community views are protected, preserved, and enhanced". FOW has advocated this for a number of years, and we are pleased that views are finally being addressed.

We note too the gravity of view protection actions. Any views not protected now can well be lost forever.

Throughout the public process regarding view protection, we observed a clear bias of development over view protection, expressed as stern warnings to the effect that view protections could reduce the chance of achieving the city's goals for housing development downtown. We found these warnings without merit because (1) most of the new housing is planned for the Southeast Neighborhood, which has little to no impact on important views, and (2) the remainder of downtown appears to have far more space than would be needed for the projected additional population.

In addition, mention of potential legal problems and "unfair economic impacts" from view-protecting zoning changes seem to be of questionable merit.

We therefore urge the commission and council to significantly discount reported development-over-views opinion survey results. This is in addition to the fact that these surveys are not statistically valid.

Specifics

1. We are chagrined that this report recommends that views of the capitol protect only views of the dome, rather than the dome and drum. The dome alone appears small and unimpressive from a distance. The dome and drum together make a real visual statement and need protection to maintain the dominance of the capitol on our skyline. Including the structure beneath the drum would be even better, though the dome/drum make a strong impression.
2. View 1, State Capitol Campus Promontory to Budd Inlet. This item is defined too narrowly. It should also include northward views from the north basin of Capitol Lake. This is easily the biggest view issue facing Olympia. The Capitol Center Building is a huge blot on our city and on the state capitol. It is completely out of scale with its surroundings, blocks important views, and violates the historic design of the state capitol campus, which was planned around the northward view from the land that Olympia founder Edmund Sylvester donated for our "capitol place". Removal of this structure is a very popular idea and would immeasurably improve our downtown. It was also important in passage of the Municipal Parks District measure. We strongly recommend that this structure be removed and be replaced with public open space, and urge that this project be included in the DTS.
3. View 5, West Bay Park to Mt. Rainier. We support this recommendation.
4. View 7, Percival Landing to Capitol Dome. Under this item, the view from just a single point was analyzed. We believe this approach is too narrow. Percival Landing is an important and

heavily used public park. Important views from public parks are vital to the public interest and should be protected. Thus, we recommend that the entirety of Percival Landing be analyzed for view protection. We also urge that the remainder of the Olympia Waterfront Route be similarly analyzed. Language should be inserted to provide view protections as the Big W Trail is completed in the future.

5. View 8, East Bay Lookout to Capitol Dome, and View 9, East Bay overlook to Capitol Dome. These two views from East Bay to the Capitol Dome illustrate what we and others believe to be an inappropriate constraint that was placed on the view analysis exercise. In some cases important views are enjoyed as much from vehicles as from walking. Therefore a stretch of a street rather than a point along the street should be the view analyzed. In this specific case, we believe the stretch to be protected should be from the southernmost residence along East Bay Drive to the East Bay Overlook. Because of the view over the water to the capitol, this is a very pleasant stretch. It could become part of a "scenic drive" in the future.

6. View 10, Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier. We support preservation of this view.

7. Freeway views of the capitol. We believe I-5 was designed to showcase views of the capitol. Thus, we recommend analysis of I-5 to capitol views for possible additional view protection.

8. We do not know the original reason for the Capitol Height District, but it appears to have had something to do with views of the capitol. This ordinance has not been reviewed in many years. It is time to do so as we have recommended in the past.

Amy Buckler

From: JacobsOly@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 8:25 PM
To: Amy Buckler
Subject: Additional Comment on Draft DTS

Planning Commission Members:

I would like to respond to a comment made by a representative of the Olympia Master Builders at yesterday's hearing.

The OMB representative said that view protection could reduce the amount of buildable land so much that the city would be unable to reach its goal of housing 5,000 new residents in the downtown area in the next twenty years.

The FOW written testimony addresses this idea in a general way, but I want to offer some actual numbers.

Judging by the density achieved in the 123 Fourth Avenue building (136 units plus inside parking and ground floor commercial space, all on one-half block), it should be very easy to get 250 units on a full city block.

Taking the high estimate of 3,500 new housing units needed, that means 14.5 blocks.

Much if not most of those new units are expected to go into the southeast neighborhood, in the general vicinity of the library. Housing in that area will have little or no impact on views.

The rest of the housing (perhaps 7 or 8 blocks worth) would go in the flat areas of downtown and Plum Street. That area has many, many blocks that could be redeveloped, so giving up some potential density would not significantly affect the potential for housing.

I hope these comments will prove useful.

Bob Jacobs
352-1346

