



# City of Olympia

City Hall  
601 4th Avenue E  
Olympia, WA 98501

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

Contact: Amy Buckler  
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Monday, September 24, 2012

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

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### Special Meeting

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

**Present:** 8 - Judy Bardin, Roger Horn, Paul Ingman, Agnieszka Kiswa, Vice Chair Larry Leveen, Jerome Parker, James Reddick, and Chair Amy Tousley

**Absent:** 1 - Rob Richards

#### 1.A ROLL CALL

#### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved by consent.

#### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

#### 5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Chair Tousley announced that Commissioner Bardin will participate by phone at a future meeting in October.*

#### 6. BUSINESS ITEMS

**12-0575**

PUBLIC HEARING & Initial Deliberations on Comprehensive Plan

Update: Environment

**Attachments:**

[OPC Initial Deliberation Topics](#)

[Topic Summary. Sustainability](#)

[Topic Summary. Climate Change and Adaptation](#)

[Topic Summary. Critical Areas and Geologically Hazardous Areas](#)

[Topic Summary. Low Impact Development and Development on Steep Slope](#)

[Topic Summary. Urban Forestry Land Preservation and Management](#)

*Chair Tousley provided an overview of the Commission's Initial Deliberation process and asked for additional comments from the Commission that generated the following points.*

- A comment response document for both the April and July Drafts organized into major topic groupings would be helpful. Staff responded a document of that type would be a significant use of staff resources that could impact staff's ability to provide other information requests. It is possible to provide this document if a majority of the Commission feels it would be helpful in order to make a recommendation.

- Commissioners can coalesce around issues and take positions during the initial deliberation phase, but reserve the right to remain open while the public record is open.

- Go deeper with topics, such as neighborhoods.

- Commission needs to begin to deliberate Draft Comprehensive Plan issues already identified by the Commission and start narrowing the scope at each meeting.

Chair Tousley opened the deliberation session beginning with the Environment topic by providing a brief overview of the Planning Commission's September 17th Foundations and process and assumptions deliberation session. The Commission spoke collectively generating the following points:

- Staff were asked to include qualifying language in the Plan of two issues affecting growth population projections; climate change and state of the economy.

- A revised version of the current Draft Plan will not be provided to the Commission for the October 29, 2012 public hearing. The current versions of the Draft Plan consists of Staff recommendations and now the Commission decides the context to change or where further clarification is needed in the current Draft Plan.

*- The Draft Plan needs some level of performance measurement.*

*- Staff was requested to provide a summary document with proposed text changes for the Commission to use for review and voting purposes.*

*The Commissioners spoke collectively to growth population projections with the following comments and suggestions.*

*- The Commission provide the City Council with a cover letter to the Draft Plan describing the challenges of consistent major population drivers.*

*- Staff was asked to provide the number of people currently living in Olympia neighborhoods and identify which areas the projected population growth of 20,000 is expected to reside. This information is pertinent to the environment, open space, and determining whether GMA targets are met.*

*- When discussing neighborhoods, numbers are less important; it is more important to understand the particular development pattern for that neighborhood.*

*- Uncertain whether there is a requirement to show more specificity other than there is enough buildable land to support the population allocation.*

*- Do not lose the concept of livability and let it be the touchstone to reviewing the Draft Plan.*

*Associate Planner Stacey Ray provided an overview of the topic summaries for tonight's environment topic, introduced City staff Liz Hoenig who provided a brief overview of the sustainability topic summary, and Andy Haub who spoke to climate change.*

*Staff Hoenig explained the staff team decided to present goal and policy language that defines how the City will attempt to help Olympia become a more sustainable community without being too constraining.*

*The Commission spoke collectively to the Sustainability topic with the following comments.*

*- The Sustainability Action Map is available as an active tool on the City website .*

*- Policy PO1.1 is new policy with potential impacts to the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) by creating the expectation that every project in the CFP requires cost/benefit analysis.*

*- Vision chapter - Better define "sustainable city" in an introductory paragraph rather than the end of the chapter. The term "sustainability" is vague and elusive; use the term "sustainable" only when referring to something specific.*

*- Add urban agriculture to the Sustainability section - urban agriculture is a sustainable practice.*

- Place the urban forestry six objectives and one goal into the Sustainability section, or perhaps another section of the Plan.

*PUBLIC HEARING:*

Chair Tousley called for Public Comment on the Climate Change and Adaptation topic at 7:50 p.m.

- 01:17:30 Mr. Bob Jacobs, 720 Governor Stevens Avenue, Olympia, provided two documents, including: 1. a letter from Friends of the Waterfront, and 2. information regarding earthquake subduction zones. He read some information pertaining to liquefaction/earthquake impacts in our region, including downtown. Submitted written comment.

- 01:23:30 Mr. T.J. Johnson, 319 Sawyer St. NE., Olympia, expressed surprise that urban agriculture was not a topic identified for discussion at the Commission's initial deliberations. He urged the Commission to put strong language into the Plan to increase Olympia's food security and food resilience. The language should include information about urban agriculture in the local food system, specific targets for production of local food, goals for sourcing, and how to organize neighborhood-scale food production.

- Staff was asked to provide background information to the Commissioners explaining why Urban Agriculture isn't in the Plan and where it could be addressed.

- Recycled/reclaimed water can play into Urban Agriculture. There are certain corridors using reclaimed water for community gardens.

- There should be specific policies regarding urban agriculture throughout the plan.

- *Urban Agriculture fits well within the Parks Policy PR9.1 - Provide opportunities that promote a mentally and physically active lifestyle and healthy food choices.*

- *Suggestion: Add a new chapter to the Plan, "Sustainable Neighborhoods."*

- *Asked whether it is important to set aside land for Urban Agriculture, Mr. Johnson responded Urban Agriculture should be on the same pedestal as providing enough land to support population growth.*

- *01:39:00 Mr. Pat Lavonnette, 3905 Park Drive, Olympia, representing the West Park neighborhood. Mr. Lavonnette read a letter submitted by Mr. Andy McMillian regarding low impact development and clustering. Submitted written comment.*

- *Suggestion: The Plan doesn't adequately explain why clustering would be useful or helpful; consequently as a result, confusion exists between low density and low impact. The proposal lacks sufficient context defining these issues raising public concerns.*

- *01:47:00 Mr. Mike Lee, 2331 Kaiser Rd NW, Olympia, provided his initial reactions to the July Draft commenting that there is a lot of good language; the definition of sustainability has almost no meaning; building more roads versus not expanding car capacity; and controlling invasive plants without the use of pesticides.*

- *01:51:40 Ms. Rachel Newman asked how were decisions made regarding what to include and what not to include in the Draft Plan? Without those decisions, public comment appears to be a mere formality. Ms. Newmann shared thoughts about the September 17 Planning Commission meeting regarding Foundations, including that the Plan needs programming elements and urban design experts.*

- 01:58:38 Mr. Walt Jorgenson, 823 North St, Tumwater, spoke about the Thurston Regional Planning Council's July 2012 population and employment forecasts and the guiding assumptions. Mr. Jorgenson recommends the Commission pay close attention to those criteria and assumptions for developing the Plan.

- Suggestion: Identify proportions of land for buildable areas, conservable areas - not just critical areas, but also urban agriculture, low impact areas, and green space for the health of the community in terms of future planning.

- Suggestion: The Plan suffers from a certain lack of specificity suggesting densification would benefit by a discussion of the amount of undeveloped lots giving context to these broad policies and objectives.

02:12:00 At 8:40 p.m., Chair Tousley called on Staff Andy Haub to provide a brief overview and answer questions regarding Climate Change and Adaptation Topic Summary. The Commission spoke collectively to the topics with the following comments:

- Are softer approaches like sustainable beaches and living walls being considered as possible solutions to potential flooding due to sea level rise. Staff Haub described some European advances to sea level rise impacts by reducing hydraulic energy from waves from the North Sea. Staff Haub further explained the City of Olympia's focus is mainly on traditional engineering approaches with hopes to build in more environmental aspects in the future.

-Why are Policies PU11.1 through PU11.4 placed in the Utility chapter of the Draft Plan. Staff Haub responded sea level rise is a flooding issue under the umbrella of Public Works and addressed more as a stormwater utility issue.

*-Referring to PU4.6, advancing the use of reclaimed water, does the policy include citizen's use of reclaimed water? Staff Haub explained the intent is to distribute reclaimed water to citizens but unsure of the method through LOTT. Staff Haub will investigate and follow-up with the Commission.*

*-Staff asked to make a stronger connection between Goal GN4 pertaining to water quality in Budd Inlet due to upland impacts and shoreline preservation and restoration, and Policy PN4.4 talking about protecting Olympia from and adapting to probable impacts of sea level rise.*

*- Although tsunamis are relatively rare in our area compared to a dramatic landslide from Mt. Rainier, earthquakes could dramatically affect water levels in the downtown.*

*- Staff Haub was asked to obtain a copy of the liquifaction study which maps areas across Washington state where liquifaction is a danger. The study was done by the University of Washington.*

*- Referencing PN5.1 - Reduce the rate of expansion of impervious surface in the community; and PN5.2 - Increase the use of permeable materials in construction projects, Staff Haub was asked how the City can reduce impervious surface while increasing the amount of construction projects? Staff Haub responded impervious surfaces reduce by smaller parking lots, narrower streets, and vertical building.*

*- Can neighborhoods serve as first-responders to a regional emergency? Staff Haub replied the City has an Emergency Mitigation Response Plan with the County that serves as the response plan for the region.*

*- Since there is so little knowledge about sea level rise, a policy may be warranted for the City's role in monitoring sea level rise.*



- *Wouldn't be wiser just to say don't build on infill? Staff Haub replied the City Council gave staff direction to find out what it would take to save downtown from 50 inches of sea level rise. Not building downtown is a major policy decision that has not been made, and staff is not at the stage of recommendation or implementation. Meanwhile, we permit development downtown.*

- *Near-future development may see impact due to risk of liquifaction; any development by insurance companies to place the financial burden of impacts on the public? Staff Haub replied that insurance companies will be the first to deal with effects of sea level rise. Staff Haub further explained the federal government through FEMA has not added sea level rise to any of its flood plain maps.*

- *Staff confirmed there is a policy in the Comprehensive Plan about liquifaction.*

*02:42:00 Chair Tousley announced a five minute break at 8:42 p.m.*

*(Chair Tousley announced a five minute break at 8:42 p.m.; however Ms. Carolyn Roe provided public comment following the break announcement.)*

*02:33:06 Public Communications: Carolyn Roe. Commented that tonight's conversation regarding natural disasters is not as important as kids on the street and other social issues.*

*Chair Tousley reconvened the meeting at 9:25 p.m.*

*The Climate Change and Adaptation Topic Summary session reconvened at 9:25*

*a.m. with the following comments:*

*- Context proposal forthcoming to include language about climate induced migration in the Draft Plan.*

*MOTION:*

*- Commissioner Ingman moved to review the Capital Facilities Plan recommendation letter, to continue discussion regarding the Environment topics, and to discuss the proposed process to the Planning Commission meeting for Monday, October 1, 2012.*

*- Commissioner Horn seconded the motion.*

*- Vote - motion passed 5-3 abstained.*

*PUBLIC HEARING resumed at 9:40 p.m.*

*03:01:30 Mr. Bob Jacobs, 720 Governor Stevens SE, Olympia - Clarified some information about earthquake liquifaction and tsunamis. Mr. Jacobs also gave suggestions about the Commission's public involvement process: 1) had suggested that the July Draft be a red-lined version, stating it's too much for the public to read the draft a second time; 2) figured tonight would be about the natural environment chapter. Doesn't understand where topics are coming from - not clear what chapter to read to prepare for these meetings; 3) photos should be eliminated from the Plan because it's a legal document.*

03:06:00 Carole Richmond, 3003 Langridge Loop NW, Olympia - Agrees with many comments about what sustainability is and that it needs to be better defined in the Plan. Also proposes that the City measure resources (i.e., baseline of green space we have; environmental quality). Targets are needed. Measuring resources means carrying capacity. Believes policy needs to be very clear, but that targets can be in an implementation document.

03:11:40 - Gus Guethlien, 3222 Wiggins Rd., Olympia - Likes idea of having a broad-based trends and gems public response to April and July Draft comments. Should be a mix of prioritizing and encouragement (i.e. - alternative transportation modes.) Liked comments about identifying conservable lands; heat islands, green spaces - instead of just measuring resources, assign some community values to these.

03:15:12 Lou Guethlien, 3222 Wiggins Rd., Olympia - County is preparing a "Map Your Neighborhood Seminar" on Thursday, September 27. On October 13, St. Martin's is hosting an Emergency Management Expo. with information about how to protect yourself in a catastrophe.

## 12-0577

Final Deliberations on CFP Recommendation Letter to City Council

**Attachments:** [Draft CFP Recommendation Letter](#)

Commissioner Horn reviewed how the Commission's draft Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) letter has been edited since the Commission reviewed it on September 17. Commissioners suggested a couple changes.

**Commissioner Parker moved; Vice Chair Leveen seconded; all approved moving the CFP letter as amended to City Council.**

## 7. REPORTS

Commissioner Horn reported that the Mayor has asked the OPC Finance Subcommittee to provide a recommendation letter on the long-term finance strategy. The subcommittee will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct 3, to discuss.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

