



City of Olympia

City Hall
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Olympia, WA 98501

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Meeting Minutes Land Use and Environment Committee

Thursday, September 27, 2012

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. ROLL CALL

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

STAFF PRESENT

*City Manager Steve Hall
Community Planning and Development Director Keith Stahley
Planning Manager Todd Stamm
Associate Planner Stacey Ray
Planning Commission Chair Amy Tousley
Code Enforcement Officer Brian Wilson
Police Commander Steve Nelson*

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Councilmember Langer at 5:30pm.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.A [12-0182](#) Approval of August 23, 2012 Land Use & Environment Committee Minutes

Attachments: [1. Minutes](#)

Councilmember Roe moved, seconded by Councilmember Hankins, to approve the minutes. Motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Chair Langer, Councilmember Hankins and Councilmember Roe

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

4.A [12-0573](#) Annual Annexations Briefing.

Planning Manager Todd Stamm addressed the Committee on the status of pending potential annexations. Mr. Stamm stated that progress on annexations has been delayed due to staffing limitations and that the next steps in a future annexation proposal will be to re-contact property owners of the areas proposed to be annexed.

Referring to a map titled, "City of Olympia UGAs and Commitments to Annex," Mr. Stamm indicated that the most likely annexations in the City's future would be the islands labeled #9 and #10 on the map, both of which are located on the westside of Olympia. Mr. Stamm stated that these islands are a priority because they cause

inefficiencies in various services - such as garbage pickup - by being outside City limits.

Mr. Stamm stated that under a relatively new statute annexations are possible by getting the agreement only of the relevant Fire District, the City, and the County. Mr. Stamm stated that the new statute is somewhat controversial because it does not require property owners' permission before the annexation can be accomplished.

Although property owners in the areas under discussion have resisted annexation in the past, Mr. Stamm stated that changes in the area, including recent subdivision activity, may have changed the dynamics relative to the community's acceptance or support of annexation. Mr. Stamm stated that the alternative of using the "old" method of annexation, which requires the agreement of property owners, is still being considered.

Councilmember Roe asked about island #4 in Eastside Olympia and about previous staff statements that it was going to be "cut loose" from the annexation proposal. Mr. Stamm stated that what staff meant by that was that the Westside was going to be a priority for the time being.

Councilmember Langer asked Mr. Stamm to explain the process going forward.

Mr. Stamm stated that the next steps would be to meet with the residents and/or owners of the subject properties and to mail out a "Frequently Asked Questions" flyer that would discuss issues such as taxes, basic services, fire protection, etc. Following an outreach effort with the communities, staff would then come to Council and request a hearing date. If the annexation were to be processed under the new statute, then a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the County and the appropriate Fire District would have to be completed.

Councilmember Langer asked whether the traditional annexation method would only include the property owners, or would residents (e.g. renters) also have a say. Mr. Stamm stated that the petition method of annexation would only include property owners, and that the 60 percent threshold required to require a hearing on a proposed annexation is based on those property owners who represent 60 percent of the assessed value of the proposed annexation area.

Mr. Stamm stated that the voting method of annexation is not used by the City because of the cost of the election process.

Councilmember Langer asked how many lots in these areas are in favor of annexation. Mr. Stamm replied that there is a map which shows those parcels whose owners have been in favor in the past, but the current number of property owners who would be in favor is an unknown and would have to be determined as the annexation process goes forward.

Councilmember Langer asked for the Committee's consent to pursue annexation areas 9 & 10 over the next year. The Committee as a whole gave its consent to move forward.

The report was received.

4.B [12-0563](#)

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Approaches

- Attachments:** [1. Scope of Comprehensive Plan Update](#)
 [2. Implementation Strategy - Comprehensive Plan Update](#)

Director of Community Planning and Development Keith Stahley presented a Powerpoint presentation to the Committee to present implementation examples from other communities and alternatives for the Committee to consider.

Mr. Stahley stated that the message from the public has been that they love the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, but it is not clear whether the Plan was ever actually implemented. The direction has been that the next Comprehensive Plan should have a clear implementation component. Mr. Stahley stated that the implementation plan could take the form of a work plan.

Mr. Stahley presented several slides for the following communities:

- *Victoria B.C. – As a City it has many similar features to Olympia. Victoria's Comp Plan was adopted in July, 2012, with plans to develop a more detailed implementation plan at a later date.*
- *Beaverton, OR – Beaverton's implementation plan is more like a strategic plan. The plan itself is very reflective of an active community outreach effort.*
- *Portland, OR – The City of Portland has a very detailed implementation plan.*
- *Hillsboro, OR – A very well-designed and organized implementation plan.*
- *Ventura, CA – Went through a planning process in 2005 to develop a General Plan, which was then refined into a Downtown Plan, which was then further refined to identify specific implementation items, such as form-based codes, parking plans, etc.*
- *Grays Harbor County, WA – This effort was not a Comp Plan, per se, but rather more akin to a strategic or economic development plan.*

Mr. Stahley summarized by stating that there are many different approaches Olympia could choose from. Mr. Stahley listed some potential action items that could be used to get underway or perhaps become the basis of an implementation strategy:

- *Unfinished elements of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan.*
- *The Imagine Olympia process included several areas, including, Subarea Planning, Viewsheds, Urban Corridor Focus Areas.*

Mr. Stahley stated that staff have also heard from the community that there are items which need to be addressed and which could also become part of an implementation plan:

- *Update development regulations*
- *Downtown master planning*
- *Waterfront visioning*
- *Public spaces planning*

Mr. Stahley concluded the presentation with 4 questions for the Committee to consider:

1. *Are there 3 to 5 projects the Committee would include in a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Work Plan?*
2. *What form should this plan take?*
3. *Should we seek implementation partners?*
4. *How would we maintain the plan?*

At the conclusion of the presentation Councilmember Langer stated it would be good in the future to also have a hard copy of presentations to aid in taking notes.

Councilmember Roe asked what the timeframe for developing the Plan would be. Mr. Stahley replied that the goal is to bring the Comp Plan to Council for adoption in 2013, with a public hearing to be held in November 2013. The Planning Commission's timeline is to finish its work sometime during 2012.

Councilmember Roe asked how the Planning Commission's work on the Comp Plan fits into the discussion about the top 3 to 5 projects. Associate Planner Stacey Ray replied that in some communities the implementation strategy is part of the Comp Plan and in others it is separate. To the extent that the Planning Commission is identifying areas in the Comp Plan that have implementation requirements, those features of the Comp Plan could be elements of the implementation plan as it is developed.

Councilmember Langer stated that the Planning Commission also has a role in reviewing any implementation plan that is developed as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Commission Chair Amy Tousley stated that she sees the Planning Commission's role as one of helping to identify potential implementation items to bring to the attention of the Council. She stated she also see other advisory boards having input.

Councilmember Langer stated he would like to make sure the timing for making recommendations is managed to ensure that the various advisory boards are given adequate opportunities to provide meaningful input.

Councilmember Langer stated that it is important to be clear about the fiscal implications of various alternatives in an implementation plan and stated he would like to get "reality checks" from the Finance Committee. Ms. Tousley agreed and stated that the Planning Commission has developed some metrics.

Mr. Stahley stated that budget constraints are critical, e.g. form-based codes planning is not currently in the budget.

Ms. Ray noted that many communities who developed their implementation plans separate from their Comprehensive Plans, had implementation plans that were much more grounded and budget conscious.

By consensus the Committee agreed that the top 3 implementation areas to pursue should be:

- 1. Development code updates*
- 2. Development of form-based codes*
- 3. Sub-area planning*

By consensus the Committee agreed that the Implementation Plan should be developed as a separate document from the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Roe stated that she preferred the people-friendly approaches of communities like Hillsboro and Beaverton, OR.

Ms. Ray stated that Plans that were developed with lots of community outreach tended to be more vibrant.

Councilmember Roe stated that the City needs to do more outreach with the public to

explain what a Comprehensive Plan is. Councilmember Hankins agreed that the public needs to be involved and that the process needs to include a feedback component to make sure the public is made aware they have been heard.

Ms. Ray stated that a good example of utilizing Imagine Olympia public involvement feedback is to represent the themes heard during their outreach efforts as organizing elements of an Implementation Plan (cites Beaverton as an example of separating an Implementation Plan into overarching goals).

Councilmember Hankins stated that we need to provide feedback now on the Comprehensive Plan update because she feels we have been losing peoples' interest and attention along the way.

Mr. Stamm stated that the Comprehensive Plan update began in 2009 and that staff held a public meeting last May to see whether they "got it right" with respect to addressing the public's comments. A key message from that meeting was that there needs to be a commitment to implementation, which is what tonight's meeting is about.

Councilmember Langer stated that he would like to see any implementation plan maintained by the Land Use and Environment Committee, with annual updates informed by public input, including advisory committees.

Ms. Ray stated that staff can look at other communities to see how Councils, staff and citizens worked together to craft, implement and maintain their plans.

Councilmember Langer stated that among the implementation partners he would like to see the Olympia Downtown Association involved in the Downtown Plan as soon as possible to be able to provide Council with solid, detailed information. Mr. Stamm stated that the October 8th meeting will discuss this issue, i.e. whether there should be a separate Downtown Plan, or whether it should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Stahley stated he would like to come back to the Committee in December to present a more detailed recommendation based on the feedback received tonight.

Councilmembers Hankins and Roe reiterated the need for a more detailed analysis that would include costs.

Councilmember Langer asked whether there has been any progress addressing the issue of urban agriculture.

Ms. Tousley stated that in the Planning Commission there has been some discussion about whether code changes need to occur, and she believes a few code changes could be taken on, such as livestock and selling food from home. The Planning Commission would need direction from the City Council whether to take on these issues and it would need to amend the Planning Commission timeline.

Councilmember Langer recommended picking some "low hanging fruit," and to get going on the discussion rather than waiting.

Ms. Tousley stated that it may be possible to make some of the easier changes to the Comprehensive and/or Implementation Plans, but is worried about revising the scope of the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Langer stated that he does not see this as something that would

require a scope amendment.

The report was received.

4.C [12-0583](#)

Oral Report - Status Reports and Updates

Downtown liaison Brian Wilson provided a brief update on the construction of the downtown parklets. The parklet located in front of Darby's restaurant is fully open, and the parklet in front of Jake's nightclub is due to open in "a day or two."

Mr. Wilson stated the Downtown Ambassador program is in its 9th week and there has been a lot of positive feedback. The program provides 7 days of coverage, and the Clean Team has removed 250 bags of trash and dozens of graffiti tags from buildings. The Ambassadors have referred 12 people to housing services. Community Youth Services is also expanding outreach to youth, and the City will partner with them.

Mr. Wilson reported that the Alcohol Impact Areas program is finishing up month five of a six-month voluntary period. The task force is reviewing data and will present findings on November 20th. Mr. Wilson noted that five stores are not participating in the effort.

Mr. Wilson presented an update on the artesian well. He stated there is no change in the lighting yet, but plans are underway to install LEDs to replace pressurized sodium lights on the old Olympia Outfitters building, which should create a lot more light. Other improvements are also being considered.

Councilmember Langer asked whether the new lights would result in energy savings and Mr. Wilson replied that they would.

Councilmember Roe asked why so many people are now hanging out at the artesian well and whether it was like this before the improvement we made to the well area. Police Commander Steve Nelson replied that previously the lot was owned by Diamond Parking and because it was private, the owner could invoke the trespass law. Now the lot is public and open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Councilmember Langer asked whether there is any way to create some type of hybrid between a park and a public place in order to get more control of the situation? He stated he would like to see the City reclaim the public space for use by the public as a whole.

Councilmember Hankins stated there needs to be "public plaza rules of conduct" and that addressing the artesian well issues should be placed on a timeline.

Mr. Wilson stated that an internal committee is being formed to develop a strategy and the committee will be comprised of Rich Hoey from Public Works and police officer Paul Lower, among others.

Mr. Stahley suggested that the matter be placed on the agenda for the October meeting.

Mr. Wilson stated he has started looking into the Pedestrian Interference Ordinance and would like some direction from the Committee regarding timeline and scope.

Councilmember Roe stated "the sooner the better" because the City made a commitment to have this completed in the Fall.

Councilmember Langer stated he would like to reconvene the people who were at the Place Making meeting to discuss results and progress and have the meeting hosted by the Land Use and Environment Committee. Mr. Stahley stated that the meeting could also be used to launch the Downtown Objectives for 2013.

The Committee agreed by consensus that the Pedestrian Interference Ordinance should be completed before the end of the year.

Councilmember Roe stated that she would like the public to hear an update on the Ambassador Program and would like to see it on the Council's agenda before November 1st.

Councilmember Roe also requested an update on the Mithun Group since their presentation at the August meeting.

Mr. Stahley said the Mithun Group submitted a proposal to model downtown and its shorelines. He stated it should be a powerful tool to show setbacks, heights, etc. for development of plans and codes, especially for the Shoreline Master Program. The cost of their proposal is in the range of \$30,000-\$50,000, which is not currently in the budget.

Councilmember Roe urged her colleagues to support the proposal.

Councilmember Hankins asked whether the model could be built upon for use in other efforts, such as the Comprehensive Plan, and Mr. Stahley replied that it could.

The Committee agreed by consensus to move forward with the Mithun proposal.

Mr. Stahley stated that if quick progress can be made getting an agreement with the Mithun Group, it could be useful for the Shoreline Master Program work currently underway.

The report was received.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.