



City of Olympia

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Meeting Minutes Community Economic & Revitalization Committee

Thursday, March 6, 2014

4:30 PM

Room 112

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Committee Member Stephen H. Buxbaum, Committee Member Nathaniel Jones and Committee Member Julie Hankins

2. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Buxbaum called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.A** [14-0214](#) Approval February 12, 2014 Community and Economic Revitalization Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 4.A** [14-0196](#) Community Renewal Area Planning Process

Community Planning & Development (CP&D) Director Keith Stahley began the discussion by stating he would like direction on how to move forward with the overall planning process, using the outline that ECONorthwest prepared, to take the Community Renewal Area (CRA) from the current position to adoption of a CRA ordinance.

Mayor Buxbaum stated the substance of the plan and flow has been reported to the Council but they haven't taken action on it or the budget. He noted there are resources through the end of June, which includes the April design workshop. The Committee still needs to ask the Council to take a look at other funds for next steps, including the work of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). He indicated the Council wants to know the context of where the Committee is in the process and whether people are interested in proceeding with the planning process; then they will need to approve funding of the cost for the future work. Mr. Stahley said he anticipates putting the planning process memorandum on the March 18, 2014 City Council agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Jones discussed concern with making a budget

request March 18 because the Committee may have a better idea of what the budget requirement will be later. However, he said he doesn't want to stop the process.

ECONorthwest Senior Planner Lorelei Juntunen mentioned there is a sequencing issue in the plan; if the Council waits until April to determine whether to move ahead with a CRA, it will likely move the timeline back. She explained that without an approved budget, work such as specifying details of blight, identifying activities that need to be undertaken, and updating the market analysis will be delayed. Mayor Buxbaum stated he feels comfortable with ECONorthwest completing this work, because it needs to be done to write an ordinance. Mr. Stahley said he would like confirmation there is a budget to move forward. Mayor Buxbaum indicated he believes, with the last report, the Council is on the same page with the process and cost and has a general comfort level with continuing the process. The Committee agreed. Mr. Stahley will report a status update to City Council on March 18.

Mr. Stahley noted a discussion of the need for public comments must also take place. He suggested having the discussion after the April 5 design workshop and developing the plan before the design review meeting in May. Ms. Juntunen asked if the CERC members believe the open house scheduled in July, which becomes an important touch point for community members to review scenarios, will happen. Councilmember Hankins stated it is an important part of the process and can increase consensus in the larger community; however, there may be need for additional public review and input.

Ms. Kris Goddard and Olympia Planning Commission Commissioner Jerry Parker asked to share a few comments. Ms. Goddard said successful public projects need broad support, which includes utilizing the CAC as an advisory committee. She noted bringing Ms. Juntunen and Mr. Fregonese in as consultants provides an opportunity to create a new dynamic to the process, allowing for transparency, trust, and fresh ideas.

Mr. Parker expressed concern that focusing the design workshop on the isthmus property seems to imply the CAC approves. He asked the Committee to clarify at the 6:30 p.m. CAC meeting that the design workshop is a learning process and not a final decision.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones acknowledged the Committee needs to work on transparency and communication. The materials are all public, but they may need to be made more available. He said the question of whether this is about the isthmus or a larger area has been an ongoing discussion. He stated he sees potential in this design that

people may be interested in moving forward with the isthmus. The Committee is not focusing all efforts on the isthmus but is using it as a planning and learning exercise .

Mayor Buxbaum added he would like to continue the discussion at the 6:30 p.m. CAC meeting. He believes there are other CAC members who share the same concerns and should be included. He agreed he will confirm that the CAC did not agree to the isthmus and they had specific reasons for not wanting to pursue it. Ongoing communication is part of the work and it will be challenging.

Councilmember Hankins said she is new to the Committee and agreed there is a need for transparency and trust in the advice from the CAC. She emphasized the importance of hearing feedback to ensure the level of communication in general, and knowing clearly what the specific end goal is.

The discussion was completed.

4.B [14-0190](#) Isthmus Urban Design Workshop Process

Mayor Buxbaum directed the Committee to the CAC agenda. He asked for feedback on two issues: What comments need to be made at the beginning of the meeting and how to handle the City as a property owner, when discussing a vision for the future. In reviewing the CAC agenda, Mayor Buxbaum outlined his ideas:

- He will welcome participants and provide a brief description of work to date;
- Remind CAC members of the last meeting and acknowledge the long gap since they last met;
- Acknowledge the concerns the Committee heard about focusing on the isthmus.

Councilmember Hankins suggested he might explain what level of involvement the Committee is expecting from the CAC and how advice will be used. Mayor Buxbaum agreed the CAC is not just an advisory committee but a joint venture.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones suggested taking time for introductions and expressed concern the agenda appears to be laid out like the Committee is talking to them, when the goal is to provide an opportunity for the CAC members to talk to the Committee.

Fregonese Associates Principal Scott Fregonese explained the highly interactive nature of the upcoming CAC meeting.

Mayor Buxbaum agreed to emphasize that the Committee is asking the CAC to set the ground rules for the design process and be co-creators in what might happen. They will drive the process and the outcome may or may not be something that becomes part of the CRA action plan. Mayor Buxbaum stated he will add this to his

opening comments.

Mayor Buxbaum thanked property owners who attended the meeting and for their willingness to talk about what they want to see on their property in the future. Mayor Buxbaum said he will speak regarding the City-owned property. Councilmember Hankins added that the property is owned by everyone in the community.

As facilitator, Ms. Juntunen reviewed the agenda based on the discussion:

- The Mayor will set the stage for the conversation. Introductions of name and affiliation.
- Go through the overall process and how the workshop fits into the larger plan.
- Describe the workshop and what will happen with the concepts created at the workshop.
- Discuss public outreach.
- Isthmus property may benefit from the workshop.
- Emphasize how important the design workshop is and how it might change the whole plan.
- Allow property owners to provide their perspective for approximately 20 minutes.
- Mr. Fregonese will facilitate his portion of the agenda which is more interactive. This is where scenarios are discussed and it's noted plans are not yet made. There will be two activities -- stability, mapping exercise and review of the principles. The teams will sit at their tables and work. They will be asked for additional comments and notes.
- Mr. Fregonese will provide background on the 14 guiding principles. Each participant will have 12 dots to place according to importance. The Committee will tie back into the concepts and how to use them for measuring success. They can also add or amend principals and look at gaps.
- Take a break.
- Each table will report back about difficulties or learning from the exercise.
- Overview of the next workshop. Proposal of what to do on April 5.
 - o Instant polling.
 - o Visual preference survey.
 - o Mapping exercise.
- Next steps. Generally remind people where we are in the process and acknowledge the upcoming Council meeting.

The discussion was completed.

4.C [14-0194](#) Community and Economic Revitalization Committee Revised Work Plan

The committee reviewed the work plan and approved the revised schedule.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.