



City Council

Planning Commission Membership - Recommendation from General Government Committee

Agenda Date: 8/21/2012
Agenda Item Number: 6.A
File Number: 12-0484

Type: report **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Agenda Item:

Planning Commission Membership - Recommendation from General Government Committee

Issue:

Should the number of members on the Planning Commission be changed from 11 to 9 by Ordinance?

Committee Recommendation:

On a 2-1 vote, the General Government Committee recommends that the number of members on the Olympia Planning Commission be changed by Ordinance from 11 to 9.

Note: The dissenting member voiced potential support for the proposed change in a future year, but not in 2012.

City Manager's Recommendation:

Provide guidance on whether to prepare an Ordinance for Council action to reduce the number of Planning Commission members.

Staff Contact:

Cathie Butler, Communications Manager, 360.753.8361

Presenter(s):

General Government Committee
Cathie Butler, Communications Manager

Background and Analysis:

After completing Planning Commission interviews, General Government Committee recommended holding two positions open this year and changing the Ordinance to reduce the number of Planning Commission members from 11 to 9. Currently the Planning Commission has nine members and two vacant positions.

In 2007, the City Council consolidated most committee/commission provisions into a single chapter in the Olympia Municipal Code, OMC 2.100, and standardized many of them. Currently, all Olympia Council-appointed advisory committees and commissions have 11 members, except for the Design Review Board (9 members) and the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (5 members), OMC 2.100.040. Until the 2007 standardization, the Olympia Planning Commission had 12 members.

From internet research earlier this year, here is Planning Commission size for some western Washington jurisdictions:

- 9 Members: Lacey, Thurston County, Tumwater, Renton, Tacoma
- 7 Members: Kirkland, Lakewood, Redmond, University Place, Vancouver, Yelm

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

General Government Committee met with advisory chairs in May and asked them their opinion of whether committees should have 11 or 9 members. The Arts Commission and Heritage Commission representatives said that 11 members works well for them since they have subcommittees that do various implementation and/or research activities. Other representatives said that they could function with either 11 or 9 members. It was pointed out that 9 members may allow for more efficient discussion and meeting action, although 11 gives two more community members the opportunity to participate.

Options:

1. As recommended by General Government Committee, direct staff to prepare an Ordinance changing the Planning Commission membership from 11 to 9.
2. Defer consideration of an Ordinance change until 2013.
3. Do not change the Ordinance.
4. Refer the issue to the Planning Commission for comment before Council decides on a course of action.
5. Schedule a Public Hearing to accept comment on the proposal (not required).

Financial Impact:

None.