



## Planning Commission

### Continued Debrief of OPC Annual Retreat and Next Steps

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**Title**

Continued Debrief of OPC Annual Retreat and Next Steps

**Report**

**Issue:**

Discuss communication protocols and short, medium and ongoing actions that could implement the Planning Commission’s ideas from the annual retreat on June 21, 2014.

**Staff Contact:**

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**Presenter(s):**

Amy Buckler

**Background and Analysis:**

\*\*Update on August 5, 2014: Further discussion of the procedure for grievances and role of the Leadership Team will be put on hold pending direction from City Council. There are some important questions presented within the proposal, and this may be something the Council would wish to consider for all advisory boards. Staff will work with the Council to figure out the next steps. OPC will proceed with discussion of the Framework for Actions, and discussion questions 2 (regarding the Action document) and questions 4&5.

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The Planning Commission’s annual retreat was held on June 21, 2014. One topic was Effective Communications between each other, staff and the community. At the retreat, the Commission broke into small groups and brainstormed ideas to improve communications between each other, staff and the community. Flip chart notes were provided in the July 21 meeting packet.

At the July 21 meeting, retreat facilitator Kendra Dahlen presented a draft proposal for next steps in response to the Commission’s work from the retreat. The attached documents include:

- A Framework of specific actions for improvement, and

- The development of an agreement to guide the Commission in how to resolve misunderstandings, disputes and grievances

The documents also include feedback from the Commission provided at the meeting, as well as comments from Commissioner Bardin which were provided to staff via email.

Kendra Dahlen has completed her contract for retreat services, and staff will continue to be on point for issues pertaining to retreat follow-up.

The Leadership Team and staff have identified the following five questions for the Commission to consider this evening.

### **1. Should the Planning Commission continue to have a ‘Leadership Team’ going forward?**

#### BACKGROUND

According to the City’s Advisory Board Bylaws, the Chair sets each agenda with the staff liaison. To support and enhance this process, in 2011, the Planning Commission started using the ‘Leadership Team’ format for agenda setting. The Leadership Team is comprised of the Chair, the Vice Chair and Subcommittee Chairs. They meet every other week (about 10 days before each OPC meeting) to set the next agenda and coordinate process (e.g., the joint meeting last April with Coalition with Neighborhoods, retreat logistics, public hearings, etc.) The Leadership Team is careful not to deliberate on policy or business matters pertaining to the City or work of the Commission; such conversation must be had in a public meeting and involve all members.

One reason the Leadership Team was formed in 2011 is, at the time, the Commission was involved in the Shoreline Master Program, the Comprehensive Plan and review of the CFP, so there was a particular need for coordination among the Chair and Subcommittee Chairs. Another reason is that past Chairs have found it beneficial to have the perspective of the other officers when considering what type of information or structure may be needed to adequately bring an item forward to the full body.

Similar to the Agenda Setting meetings held by the Mayor, Mayor Pro-Tem and City Manager, Leadership Team meetings are not publically noticed with an agenda and packet. A list of potential topics is sent the officers a few days in advance, the group meets with staff for an hour at City Hall and the outcome is needed direction to staff. One additional Planning Commissioner is welcome to attend any meeting, and may bring forward process issues or come just to see what the group does.

One idea that arose during the retreat is to publically notice the dates and agendas for the Leadership Team meetings. However, the CP&D Director has determined the Department does not have the resources to support further committees or bodies with regular meetings with public notice and record requirements. (Staff resources are already stretched thin; it takes 2-4 hours of background work to support a public meeting, including populating multiple calendars, creating electronic agendas, emailing groups, creating minutes, reviewing minutes, closing out Legistar, etc.)

Thus, the Commission must decide whether to return to a Chair/Staff agenda setting system, or to continue the practice of having a Leadership Team as currently structured. If the latter, one suggestion for improving communication with the full Commission would be for upcoming Leadership Team topics to be emailed to the full Commission and for report-outs to be more structured to ensure OPC understands what the group is discussing.

Another idea that was posed by Kendra Dahlen is to ask the City Council to formalizing the 'Leadership Team' by adopting a description of their form and function into the Bylaws. This could be an option if the Commission feels the ongoing support of such a Leadership Team is necessary for the long-term function of the Commission.

Whether a team is present, or just the Chair, agenda coordination with staff is absolutely essential to the function of the Commission.

- 2. Discuss the form and function of each document. Do the details support it?**
- 3. Does the Commission prefer the Agreement regarding potential conflicts to be an agreement of the body that is reviewed annually, or that it be formalized by the City Council as part of the Bylaws?**
- 4. Go through the Actions document, ensuring each Commission has the opportunity to make suggestions or comments. What are the Commission's priorities for staff to work on?**
- 5. Would the Commission like to assign a formal liaison to the Coalition of Neighborhoods, which meets the second Monday of every month at City Hall?**

**Financial Impact:**

Retreat and follow-up discussion included in base budget.