

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION

City Council Chambers
Port Angeles, Washington 98362
May 23, 2018 6:00 p.m.
REGULAR MEETING

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Schwab opened the regular meeting at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Pamela Hastings, Duane Morris, Andrew Schwab (Chair),
Steven Hopkins (Vice-Chair), Amy Powell, Benjamin Stanley

Commissioners Absent:

City Staff Present: Nathan West (*Director*), Allyson Brekke (*Planning Manager*),
Ben Braudrick (*Assistant Planner*)

Public Present: Eric Evans, Anne Murray, Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Hopkins moved to approve the May 9, 2018 minutes. **Commissioner Hastings** seconded the motion. **All were in favor.**

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS/OTHER BUSINESS

Comprehensive Public Hearing

Community and Economic Development Department Director Nathan West introduced the Staff Report for the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Major amendments include Staff edits for document accuracy, clarity, and policies; inclusion of the AIA SDAT study into the Comprehensive Plan's vision; revision of the implementation matrix; inclusion of performance measure metrics for each City department; and suggested edits to the Plan's policies by the Planning Commission. In addition, Staff took the opportunity with Port Angeles Bike Month (occurring in the month of May) to have a Community Bike meeting to provide input on bike related policies and transportation maps.

Director West laid out the three options that the Planning Division was giving to the Planning Commission options for recommendations:

1. Continue the public hearing to the regular June 13, 2018 Planning Commission meeting to incorporate further suggested changes to the 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Application No. 18-23);
2. Provide suggested changes to incorporate into the 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Application No. 18-23) and recommend approval to the City Council citing the 3

conclusions in support of that action; or

3. Approval of the 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Application No. 18-23) to City Council citing the 3 conclusions in support of that action

Director West concluded the staff report of the item and recommended the Planning Commission open the public hearing.

Chair Schwab opened the Public Hearing for PZ 18-23 Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Anne Hastings Murray 316 Lopez Street, Port Angelse

Ms. Hastings thinks the Comprehensive Plan is an impressive document. Land use and housing elements work together to address low, medium, and high density housing. She supports mixed use in all zones. Lives in a 1950s neighborhood that has a mix of uses including churches and schools and multi-family units that are not very conspicuous. She supports appropriately sized multifamily developments. For different neighborhoods, Sections 3C.01 and 6A.15 could handle both of those interests.

She would like to establish formal neighborhoods within the City with a Planning Commissioner assigned to each neighborhood. Section 3H.05, was concerned about LNG uses and it was not clear where those uses are allowed. She didn't think they should be located on the harbor. She supports policies related to alternative forms of energy. The document shows how the City sees its role in housing and there are very interesting policies on affordable housing. For many people who are in rental housing, the housing can be unaffordable because it is older and not weatherized. She asked whether it may be legal or if there are standards for regulation requiring updates for weatherization for future rent or sale? She felt that the crosstown route portions of the plan had not been entirely clarified as to where will occur along Lauridsen Blvd. 4B.02 refers to a route to divert truck traffic but does not explain where that is. Section 4B.03 provides Whites creek as an option but she didn't feel that was feasible. In Section 4B.04, only one of two routes was identified. Section 4B.05 provides the guidance to improve Lauridsen toward Lincoln, which seemed to her to point to the cross town route. The time table talks of improvement of intersection of Lauridsen Blvd East of Race Street, but not West of Race Street. She felt there needs to be clarification on the transportation routes.

Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin, 306 W 3rd Street, Port Angeles, WA

Mr. Schromen-Wawrin feels that the challenge for comprehensive plan is that is a laundry list of things we want to happen but haven't gotten to or have not specifically identified as to where they will happen. In addition to level of service, measureables, and mapping bike routes, he wants to see more maps that show the future and incorporate maps to help

envision what the city will look like in the future. The plan could be shorter and more concrete. The Comprehensive Plan is a challenging concept because it is mandatory through the Growth Management Act, it must be comprehensive in nature, and there is an element of understanding that if a proposal is not in the Comprehensive Plan the City cannot go after grants for funding. The Plan has multiple goals and also has to provide a clear vision. He thanked the Planning Commission for assisting the City Council in this process.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Stanley asked if every policy was in the implementation table. **Director West** responded that to comply with the Growth Management act, Comprehensive Plans operate through a series of goals, policies, and objectives. Policies guide decisions, and many of the decisions the City makes are reviewed to ensure that those decisions are supported by the Plan. The breath of policies in the plan help decision-making. Staff took the Plan's objectives and placed them in an implementation matrix. Objectives help to make the decision measureable, and fall under policies. Every objective is in the matrix, in addition to AIA recommendations and vision and last year's council created strategic plan elements and department performance.

Chair Schwab asked where the goals come from. **Director West** responded that they come from core functions of the City government. He gave the example of the façade improvement program, which uses linear feet of façade improved as a performance measure. **Chair Schwab** asked if each department creates their own goals. **Director West** answered that they did.

Commissioner Morris felt that the goals and policies are well constructed and have focus. Section 6a.18 states there is an indication that the City would like to come back with strategies for homelessness. What is the city doing now with its policies to positively affect the homelessness issue?

Director West responded that City Council has made homelessness a top level issue using creative ideas such as a temporary housing ordinance, and being supportive and assisting the Mount Angeles View development project, which it assisted with a \$1,000,000 CDBG grant and \$164,000 match through the City's housing rehabilitation fund. Homelessness is an issue that requires the community to be creative, innovative and willing to find new solutions for.

Commissioner Morris continued that Port Angeles has a relatively small population of 20,000. It's amazing how many people see the homeless population and don't know what to do. We need guidance from the Planning Division and City Council. He suggested putting implementation in the policies as well as strategy, and added that "the homeless" includes individuals as well as families. It's an important issue, but there are few answers. We might not have as large a homeless population as a major city, but it's still a noticeable issue. He would like to see City Council take this as a priority issue and not turn their heads, and appreciates what Staff has done to assist find solutions for the topic.

Commissioner Hastings asked if staff knew how many homeless there are in the City. **Director West** responded that we do not.

Chair Schwab inquired about the annual homeless count. **Director West** responded that the City is working on a housing needs assessment that will assist in understanding this issue.

Commissioner Hopkins encouraged the Commission and Staff to think of the housing issue as an important issue for everyone. If there is not appropriate housing stock, there may not be a home that is appropriate or affordable for a family or individual at every income level. There is a pricing out of available housing for those in need and it has a trickle-down effect for housing.

Commissioner Stanley felt that everyone is talking about the same fundamental issue and wondered what the barriers to higher density and affordable housing are. He wanted to understand who owns the lots that are vacant but developable. **Director West** responded that the housing needs assessment will assist in understanding the reason those markets are not being built out. Already, the City allows for overlay zones providing density and flexibility incentives are available in any zone. Serenity House and Habitat for Humanity are partners that have used these tools. Private developers are not currently building multifamily in the City. Most housing development is single-family and single-story. A paradigm shift within the development community needs to occur to facilitate the multifamily development, and the City's development code can potentially assist with this.

Commissioner Morris mentioned that our economy has come to the point where you either have a lot of money or relatively little money. Developers are building for those that can afford larger homes. How do you incentivize smaller units or houses? He added efficiency studio as an idea to follow. The market determines the type of development. He used to live in a college town that he was priced out of. He couldn't afford to live there any longer.

Chair Schwab asked when staff will have a completed housing needs assessment. **Director West** responded that it is in the City's work plan and staff will have a RFP on the street in two and a half weeks. He mentioned that Staff has already started gathering background information. A recent study of the City's utilities showed approximately 176 residential units without utilities active. Staff needs a more thorough understanding of the reasoning behind this by contacting owners or doing a survey. The city has a weatherization program, low interest loan for renovation, and there are other tools the City has available to make housing more affordable. We need to learn about the why in vacant housing. The same research has identified full parcels of land with utility development and without house. There are many subdivisions that are not yet built out within the City.

Commissioner Hastings added that the City should also look to assist the elderly and aging in place. How can we make that easier for elderly residents?

Chair Schwab mentioned the program to provide for energy efficient light bulbs to utility users. He still has his and supports the program.

Commissioner Hopkins asked if utility rates are the same for each unit or home, or if there is an efficiency clause for multiple units on the same property. He stated that utilities cost him 6 times the number of when he lived in Spokane. **Director West** stated that the City has done a cost of service assessment. The assessment helps how to best move forward to meet the long term interest of the community. Along with this there is a utility base affordability index that was last done in 2013. The study compared Port Angeles to 16 different cities in Washington State.

Commissioner Hopkins commented that a Comprehensive Plan should help envision how neighborhoods look in the future. It is a difficult vision to draw out.

Chair Schwab asked what the neighborhoods are and if they could be adjusted to colloquially how neighborhoods are built. **Director West** responded that the neighborhood boundaries are not arbitrary, but not perfect. Staff would love to drill down to each neighborhood. Best practice is following up Comprehensive Plan Amendment process with adoption of individual neighborhood plans during annual amendment process.

Commissioner Hastings added that money is always an issue. **Director West** agreed.

Commissioner Hopkins wondered if there was a way to create a demonstration neighborhood plan that is specific to a particular area that is ripe for development. **Director**

West responded that good example neighborhood would be a great first step and Staff could look into such a suggestion

Chair Schwab agreed that highlighting a neighborhood was a great idea. He wanted to work on that, but knew that this was not something that could happen immediately. **Director West** responded that a project of this nature would need to be considered in the future.

Commissioner Stanley stated that he had a little bit of experience with Phoenix, Arizona and how the city incentivized downtown development. One of the big challenges was obtaining a critical mass of land. City could purchase properties to give to developers and check some of the boxes for affordable housing and mixed use development. **Director West** agreed this was something that could happen, and has happened in the downtown with the Gateway project.

Commissioner Stanley asked if there still time for inclusion of changes. **Director West** responded that the last thing staff wants is to rush the document. Unfortunately there are State guidelines for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. He mentioned the public hearings that were required for Planning Commission and City Council. He stated that he was reluctant to delay the final approval too much. Also, he reminded the Planning Commission that the annual amendment isn't supposed to be a full overhaul of the document. He was respectful of City Council's interest in seeing a better plan and wanted to see a balanced approach. Staff could schedule another special Planning Commission meeting specific to the Comprehensive Plan early in the following week if need be to further consider the Plan.

Commissioner Hopkins added that this was the most robust conversation in his Planning Commission career, but doesn't envision that in ten days the Planning Commission could complete a comprehensive more thorough review of what has already been done. He felt that this should be a conversation that continues for a potential 2019 amendment or the next state mandated update. The topics that have been discussed are significant.

Commissioner Hastings asked if there was an opportunity to continue fine-tuning the Comprehensive Plan in an amendment next year. **Chair Schwab** responded that there was an opportunity each year, but the Comprehensive update process occurred every 7 years. **Director West** stated that a yearly amendment was very much less than desirable. The annual amendment process was designed provide a way for a developer or property owner to make minor modification based on unanticipated fixes that resolve an issue such as an underlying land use condition not allowing the correct rezone. He would never recommend yearly amendments. Each amendment allows State agencies to scrutinize the City's

development regulations and requires changes. The substantial City workload issue is not a small one. Staff tries to take the amendment to at least two Planning Commission meetings and at least two City Council meetings, which takes a significant amount of Staff time.

Commissioner Hastings asked if the City was at risk now. **Director West** responded that no, all of the current edits are great adjustments. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update process was not provided enough time to allow for comprehensive changes to the document, and this has led to Council to request to improve the plan the last two annual amendment cycles. **Commissioner Hastings** asked if there was any area of the plan that will limit the community in the future. **Director West** stated he did not see any.

Chair Schwab stated that the crosstown route is now not defined in the Comprehensive Plan, and has been left to stating the need for one. He felt that this needs to be defined at some point. **Chair Schwab** had looked over his own notes and felt most of his suggested changes had been followed through with by Staff. He asked about Internet availability in Policy 8B.07, and why commercial development had not been included in the matrix. **Assistant Planner Ben Braudrick** responded that he had followed the matrix for cable, which did not include mandatory requirements for commercial development. **Chair Schwab** thought internet should be mandatory requirement. Everything else seemed to be covered.

Commissioner Stanley asked about the Planning Commission's role in the prioritization process. **Director West** responded that prioritization was a Council process. The prioritization process is frequently done through the Capital Facilities Plan, which is an implementation plan of the Comprehensive Plan document. The City's Wayfinding project is a good example. The project started as a recommendation from the AIA vision, made it into the Comprehensive Plan, onto the Capital Facilities Plan, and was recently granted funding from the Lodging Tax Fund.

Planner Braudrick gave presentation on the Bicycle Survey that was completed as a part of Bike Month and the May 9th Community Bicycle Meeting. He went over each question in the survey and detailed the preferential bike map that was created from the survey information. There are many north/south route options, but because of natural barriers only a few east/west routes. **Commissioner Stanley** mentioned that 5th Street intersection in his experience does not recognize bicyclists. **Planner Braudrick** responded that these types of details were important because they contribute to a bicycle transportation system that works and would increase ridership and ridership safety. **Chair Schwab** asked what the City Bicycle Advisory Committee was defining as problem areas referenced in the

Committee's map on Attachment G. **Planner Braudrick** responded that most of those points were gaps in the transportation system, and gave two examples. **Commissioner Hopkins** mentioned his appreciation for the survey and its results, and commended Staff in its efforts. He felt that this is great data that shows not only where people are going by bike, but by all forms of transportation. It looks much like the Clallam Transit bus route map as they are the natural routes through the city. As the City moves forward it should make sure that these routes are multimodal. **Commissioner Stanley** agreed that the data was great, but felt that the barriers question could combine drivers, parked cars, gaps, cars, and intersections because they were all similar types of barriers for bicyclists. It would make it even clearer that gaps in the facilities are the main concern. **Chair Schwab** agreed that the survey results were well put together.

Director West stated that ultimately this map will inform the Capital Facilities Plan and inclusion of bicycle related facilities in transportation development.

Commissioner Hopkins stated that this is a great map to focus on gaps.

Chair Schwab asked if staff was going to put the year to date results in the performance measures. **Director West** stated that they were not because they don't want to date the document. Those year to date results could be included in yearend reports and other similar documents.

Commissioner Stanley asked about the performance results for grants dollars rewarded. **Director West** responded that this metric was for projects that are quality of life related. Those projects normally go above and beyond standards and require grants to be completed. The Façade Grant program has an overall small dollar amount as compared to the annual budget and staff felt that the measurement of linear feet of improvement is more meaningful. The measurement is related to positive change in the community from a visual standpoint. The before and after pictures of the projects are a great way to demonstrate this.

Chair Schwab called for a motion from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Hopkins made a motion to approve PZ 18-23 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendment citing 3 conclusions in the Staff Report, Commissioner Hastings seconded. Chair Schwab asked for discussion. Commissioner Hopkins stated that the motion was made with the understanding of the timeframe that Staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council was facing. **All were in approval.**

STAFF UPDATES

Manager Brekke stated that **Commissioner Amoroso** has stepped down from the Commission due to a conflict with work. **Chair Schwab** asked if any recent applicants are still of interest. **Manager Brekke** responded that she will talk to the City Clerk and continue to consider recent applicants.

Manager Brekke announced that on May 24th **Director West** will be Acting City Manager. Current **City Manager Dan McKeen** has announced his retirement in early September. **Manager Brekke** will be Acting CED Director. She mentioned that Planning Technician Jeff Gepper has moved to Oregon, and there are currently 19 application for the position.

REPORTS OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commissioner Hopkins announced that Tumwater Bridge had been resurfaced, but not the sidewalk/bike lane. He felt it would have been worthwhile to pave the entire width of the bridge. He also announced the passing of former **Mayor Patrick Downie**. He stated that City Council has been involved in interesting topics as of late and that Commissioners might want to attend some of their special meetings. **Manager Brekke** mentioned that it was important that Planning Commissioners remember their ethics training and make sure to distinguish their role as a community member and Planning Commissioner and not speak for the Planning Commission when making public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Ben Braudrick, Secretary

Andrew Schwab, Chair