

**REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

September 15, 2010

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Hinman, Vice Chair Gregory, Commissioners Biethan, Flynn, Bontadelli and Julinsey

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Commissioner O'Hara

COMMISSIONERS CURRENTLY SERVING ON THE CODE REWRITE COMMISSION: Phil Miller, Vibhas Chandorkar

STAFF PRESENT: Kim Dietz, Jeff Churchill, Sarah Stiteler, Pete Sullivan, Redmond Planning Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Kathryn Kerby, Lady of Letters, Inc.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Hinman in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Ms. Stiteler suggested that items 4 and 5 be switched. Also, since both are public hearings yet it appears there may be no public testimony, she suggested that those hearings be held sequentially. Finally, after those hearings are opened and closed, then the discussion could cover both. The agenda was so modified.

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

There were no items from the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update: Participation, Implementation and Evaluation Element, presented by Jeff Churchill, Redmond City Planner

Chair Hinman opened the public hearing and asked if any members of the audience wished to comment. No one came forward, but Vice Chair Gregory pointed out that with the agenda change, there could be people planning to attend the public hearing at its originally posted time. So Chair Hinman left the hearing open at least through that timeframe. He also deferred the discussion until after the second public hearing item.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update: Neighborhoods, presented by Kim Dietz, Redmond City Planner

Chair Hinman opened the public hearing, and then turned over the meeting to Vice Chair Gregory since he was the lead for this section of the Comprehensive Plan review. He suggested that Ms. Dietz go ahead and begin her presentation. Ms. Dietz pointed out that

Mr. Churchill should make his presentation first since he could only be at the meeting until a certain time.

Mr. Churchill proceeded with his presentation. He was working primarily with the Participation, Implementation and Evaluation Element of the Comp Plan. He explained that this section of the Plan contains policies regarding:

- 1) Public participation
- 2) Consistency in planning
- 3) How to amend the Plan
- 4) Development review procedures
- 5) Plan monitoring and evaluation

Four key updates were:

- 1) Plan update timing, after the state mandated updates every seven years
- 2) Incorporate elements of sustainability, regarding fair and equitable access to services, plus long-term health of the community
- 3) Remove duplication in concepts:
 - a. concepts addressed in policy #26 is found in policies #19 and #20
 - b. concepts addressed in policy #19 is found in policy #18
 - c. concepts addressed in 29 is found in policy #4 and other elements
- 4) Ensure Plan policies reflect current practice
 - a. Need to overhaul the Evaluation and Monitoring section
 - b. Plan needs to reflect what the City has learned while implementing Redmond Community Indicators

The Planning Commission's review of these changes can occur during the current meeting, but can also continue during the next scheduled meeting as needed.

Chair Hinman introduced the issues matrix, consisting of three questions. Planning Department staff had already commented on them:

- 1) Chair Hinman had requested that the adjective *collaborative* be added in conjunction with *action*, to create the phrase *collaborative action*, to describe the City's preferred method of interaction. There were no objections or further changes. Issue #1 was closed.
- 2) Issue #2 regarded the use of geographical consistency when describing how the Comprehensive Plan is expressed. Commissioner Biethan asked that the original text be available so that edits would be clearer. Chair Hinman agreed that would be helpful to have in the future. Chair Hinman asked if there were any further questions or comments, but there were none. Issue #2 was closed.
- 3) Vice Chair Gregory explained that Issue #3 was a grammatical change, to clarify that Redmond has state-mandated responsibilities, but does not have statewide responsibilities. Chair Hinman asked if there were any other questions or discussions, but there were none. Issue #3 was closed.

Chair Hinman asked if there were any additional questions or discussion. Commissioner Biethan asked Mr. Churchill to provide a very general overview of the changes made in Section D, on page 4. Mr. Churchill replied that:

- 1) Policy #22 was deleted, because that language will be incorporated into Policy #20.
- 2) Policy #26 was deleted, because that language will be incorporated into Policy #19.
- 3) Wherever the Community Development Guide is listed, the staff has tried to use the term *development regulations* for several reasons:
 - a. The Development Guide itself is going away as a result of the Code Rewrite Commission's work.
 - b. If the Development Guide's successor document is also retired at some point, the Planning Staff wanted the existing language to refer to the language used in those documents, not the document names themselves.

Commissioner Biethan said that he understood the changes made. However, on the other hand the primary task of the Code Rewrite Commission (CRC) was to clarify existing language so that development standards were clear and easy to understand for anyone needing to reference them. He felt that future code users would also want and need specific timeline information. While both of those needs were covered in previous versions, these latest edits seemed to sacrifice that standalone clarity for the sake of brevity. Chair Hinman pointed out that clarity and certainty is definitely the priority for the CRC, and furthermore that Mr. Churchill was also working with the CRC. As such these recommended edits were consistent with that work.

Commissioner Biethan asked if there was a place in the Introduction to include a value statement to that effect. Mr. Churchill asked him if the existing second and third sentences were sufficient. Commissioner Biethan agreed that those sentences were acceptable.

Commissioner Flynn asked how the five-year versus seven-year Comprehensive Plan review cycle corresponded with the City's budget cycle. Mr. Churchill replied that it would not synch up very well since the City's budget is reviewed on a two-year cycle, on even years. The state's mandate requires that the City review its Comprehensive Plan every seven years but allowed for the City to complete that analysis early if desired, which could help match it with the budget cycle as needed. Mr. Churchill also pointed out that the Mayor recently described the Comprehensive Plan as the long-term image of what the City should be working towards, while each budget cycle was a short-term plan for how to get there. So the two review processes do not necessarily need to be synched up. Mr. Churchill added that in addition to the short-term budget, there are a variety of other longer-term budget planning tools which are also in effect at any time.

Commissioner Flynn asked about the reference to the four previous annual updates. He asked if that would change if the City went to a different review interval. Mr. Churchill said the intent was that the Planning Commission did not need to evaluate any given policy unless something about it had changed. Chair Hinman added that sometimes the

reviews simply serve as a reminder of what was last reviewed and when, so that the Commissioners did not need to wonder when any given policy had last been reviewed. Ms. Stiteler added as permits come in, they will require review of various policies just in the context of approving the permit, offering another opportunity for review.

Commissioner Flynn asked how the City measures citizen participation, and how the City would determine whether participation stimulus efforts had been successful. Mr. Churchill said that a variety of measurements existed, such as survey response or meeting attendance, but each of those individual measures had limited usefulness. The City's general strategy is to offer a diversity of avenues for participation. Chair Hinman added that when meetings are televised, at least some citizens who would have attended in person will watch at home and thus be invisible. So in a way, increased access may actually sometimes make measuring participation even more difficult. Ms. Dietz said that the City staff does track attendance not only at meetings and survey replies but also how many people visit the various City web pages.

Chair Hinman asked if there were any further questions. There were none. He pointed out that no additional meeting attendees had shown up to provide comment on this topic, so he closed both the oral and written portions of the testimony. He asked staff what would be the next step for this element. Mr. Churchill explained that this element did not need a second pass, so the report will be written up and it will be available in two weeks. He added that if the Commission was ready to make a recommendation on this element at the current meeting, then the only task remaining would be to review the report for accuracy. Vice Chair Gregory motioned to recommend the edits provided by staff. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor of acceptance.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update: Neighborhoods Element, presented by Kim Dietz, Redmond City Planner

Ms. Dietz opened the presentation by saying they were focusing only on the Introduction section of the Neighborhoods element, which would describe the neighborhood plan update:

- 1) Goals
- 2) Process
- 3) Timeline
- 4) Techniques and toolkit
- 5) Communication
- 6) Implementation

The Neighborhood element changes or refinements included:

- 1) Incorporate City's goals, vision, framework and sustainability (Goals)
 - a. Include diversity, inclusiveness, communication and long-term healthy and active living criteria in neighborhood planning
- 2) Reflect budgeting by priorities and City direction (Process)
- 3) Introduce policy for building common knowledgebase
- 4) Use a new tiered approach for neighborhood plan review:

- b. Create annual meetings to discuss current neighborhood plan to address emergent issues prior to the six-year review
- c. Keep the existing six-year refinement cycle
- d. Introduce a 12-year, in-depth update as needed

The City's new Neighborhood Network would include:

- 1) Pilot process created and first meetings in 2010 (Grass Lawn's neighborhood group served as the initial pilot group)
- 2) Annual meetings with all neighborhoods to :
 - a. Check in on neighborhood plan
 - b. Set annual goals
 - c. Identify/prioritize neighborhood projects
 - d. Identify/prioritize small neighborhood improvements
- 3) Maintain communication

The City's goals for offering a common knowledge base for interested citizens consisted of a Citizen Academy:

- 1) To be offered at regular intervals (proposed 2-year interval)
- 2) Open to all interested citizens, including those who work in Redmond and live elsewhere
- 3) Attendees would learn about various disciplines within Redmond government
- 4) Serve as a prelude to the Neighborhood Plan update
- 5) Foster citywide leadership and stewardship

The Planning staff had also suggested bumping out the planning horizon to 2030.

The Neighborhood Element is scheduled for a public hearing and study session during the current meeting, but the Planning Commission would also have time to review during the scheduled September 22nd meeting if needed.

Commissioner Julinsey commented that she had gone through the Citizen Academy which had given her a good basis from which to then participate first in a Citizen Advisory Committee and then to serve on the Planning Commission. Ms. Dietz provided some information about how the City is advertising the next upcoming class, and details about what will be covered.

Vice Chair Gregory introduced the issues matrix. Chair Hinman has raised Issue #1 about the revised plan review schedule. He was concerned about what would happen if issues came up in between scheduled reviews. He was satisfied with the staff response. The issue was closed.

Issue #2 concerned the Neighborhood Network and how best to continue to get citizens involved in multiple ways. Vice Chair Gregory asked if anyone had any comments on the Neighborhood Network concept or implementation ideas. Commissioner Flynn said he thought it was a good idea, and much better than simply scheduling a review every six years. Commissioner Bontadelli agreed. Chair Hinman added that staff's response

satisfied his concerns, and he looked forward to seeing how well the pilot project would proceed. He closed Issue #2.

Issue #3 regarding small neighborhood projects, and addressing those without a larger plan review. There had been a concern raised earlier about liability issues with only indirect City involvement. Ms. Dietz recalled that came up during the Idylwood neighborhood plan, which was resolved. She asked if the Commission was concerned enough beyond existing staff response. Both Chair Hinman and Vice Chair Gregory were satisfied with the response, and no one else needed to discuss it further. Issue #3 was closed. Chair Hinman asked if there were any other issues regarding the Neighborhood element introduction.

Commissioner Julinsey commended the City's actions to increase knowledge among residents via programs such as the Neighborhood Network, but asked if the City had also considered how to retain that knowledge by encouraging residents to stay in Redmond long term rather than moving to other communities. She was concerned that residents would gain this education then move and take that experience with them. Ms. Dietz replied that yes, the City does look at resident retention as a multi-faceted need and priority. That priority is addressed in a variety of other planning elements, but had not been specifically included in the Neighborhood element per se. Ms. Dietz asked if Commissioner Julinsey wanted to add it. Chair Hinman asked if Commissioner Julinsey meant retaining residency, versus retaining interest in being involved in City government. Commissioner Julinsey compared City residence to an employer hoping to retain employees. Ms. Dietz said yes, the City did recognize that and had that philosophy embedded in a variety of programs. Vice Chair Gregory added that Redmond is a growing, changing city, and he saw value in both training citizens for more accomplished involvement in City management, but also in sharing that expertise as folks move elsewhere. He also saw value in the influx of new residents with their new ideas.

Commissioner Biethan asked Ms. Dietz to explain the difference between the 6- and 12-year plan review process. Second, he asked at what point the Planning Commission would see each neighborhood plan under this revised schedule. Ms. Dietz explained that the six-year review would essentially be an annual check-in but with an eye toward refining the plan as needed. The 12-year plan is the more robust planning cycle, which would include formation of a Citizen Advisory Committee, and a more thorough review process. The results of the 6-year plan review may or may not come before the Planning Commission, depending on whether changes needed to be made at that point, but the 12-year review would likely come before the Planning Commission as part of a more thorough review. Chair Hinman asked what the existing interval was. Ms. Dietz replied that the full, robust review was currently scheduled every six years. The proposed change would allow neighborhoods to propose smaller refinements at the 6-year interval, but preserve the ability to review each plan more deeply at the 12-year interval.

Commissioner Biethan asked if the new schedule would result in a loss of citizen engagement and/or Commission involvement in the neighborhood planning process. He was concerned that reducing the six-year review into merely being another annual review

might result in some loss of involvement. Ms. Dietz replied that the City already had experience with that issue. When City planners and neighborhood residents created the North Redmond Neighborhood Plan, one of the results of that process was a sub-area plan for the Redmond-Woodinville Road area. That sub-area plan featured a stakeholder group and a modified Citizen Academy to address the remaining issues. The format allowed residents to come and go without participating in the full series. The group was still able to build an inventory of items, then use normal evaluation and public input tools to work through those issues without the creation of a full-scale Citizen Advisory Committee, and on a shorter timeline than the normal review process would have required.

Commissioner Biethan asked if that mechanism was documented. Ms. Dietz replied that rather than writing down that exact mechanism, the City wanted to remain flexible and open to whatever combination of features and tools would best suit the needs of any particular neighborhood at any particular time.

Commissioner Biethan was still concerned that the energy expended on these efforts may not match up well to the benefits gained, and he asked if those with more experience on the Commission had the same concern. Chair Hinman said he was interested to see how the Neighborhood Network concept would work out as an alternative to more typical planning tools, and he hoped it would prove to be an effective means to address those concerns quickly and practically. Chair Hinman agreed that the Commission and planners are certainly justified in finding a balanced approach to answering issues in a timely manner without undue workload requirements for anyone. Ms. Dietz added that both the 6- and 12-year reviews would include the public hearing process, along with all three models utilizing the web presence and questionnaires. The intent is to keep the channels open, and for each subsequent annual neighborhood review to be further refined and more efficient. Vice Chair Gregory added that the neighborhood plans are fundamentally about the neighborhoods. He felt that the Neighborhood Network gave the residents an annual review opportunity instead of waiting six years between. An annual plan with a 6- and/or 12-year review if needed, would serve the neighborhoods best. The Commission may not see the neighborhood plans as often, but the neighborhoods would ultimately be better served with that more frequent check.

Commissioner Biethan agreed, but asked how the Commission would then get feedback for the types of issues the neighborhoods are facing and solving. Chair Hinman replied that perhaps a useful option would be an informal check-in after each annual review. It would not need to be a formal rule, but rather simply incorporate that into the annual code review process. If anything substantial did come up, it could then be added to the next available Commission agenda.

Commissioner Flynn agreed that getting feedback only once every 12 years is much too long an interval. He also wanted to get feedback from the annual meetings. He also pointed out that language in the associated text was ambiguous regarding when the Commission would get written feedback; whether it be after the annual, the 6-year or the 12-year review. Chair Hinman suggested to Ms. Dietz that this topic merited some

additional staff comment, and she replied she would be happy to solicit comment prior to their next meeting.

Chair Hinman asked if there were any additional questions or comments. Commissioner Flynn asked about the text reference to promoting citizen leadership. He was uncertain whether that referred to leadership within the neighborhood, within the community, or within City government. He would like that sentence clarified. Ms. Dietz said she would clarify that language. Chair Hinman asked if there were any other issues. There were none. He closed the public hearing for oral testimony but kept open the written portion of the testimony in case any comments came in prior to their next meeting.

BREAK

BRIEFING AND RECOMMENDATION: 2010/2011 Comprehensive Plan Update, presented by Sarah Stiteler and Pete Sullivan, Redmond City Planners

Mr. Sullivan opened the briefing by going over the Comprehensive Plan Update's Statement of Intent. The Statement of Intent document has been in development for several months, and has applications beyond the Comprehensive Plan Update.

First, the concept of sustainability is a recurring theme throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update series. However, the linkages between each of the Comprehensive Plan elements, and how each element seeks to achieve sustainability, are not so clearly defined. Nor is the connection between the goal of sustainability and implementation in policy. The concept must be defined and made actionable before those goals can be realized. This draft Statement of Intent is a means to communicate:

- 1) How these updates are to be implemented
- 2) Describe the process for each element in the plan
- 3) Describe the concept of sustainability and how that concept will be the over-arching framework for how the update will be carried out in both the Comp Plan updates and other City actions.

Mr. Sullivan invited the Commissioners to either make comments or ask questions about this Statement of Intent, after which time the Statement of Intent document will be presented for City Council approval along with the other Comprehensive Plan Updates.

Chair Hinman commented that he appreciated the difficulties of bridging all the different issues they have been considering as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. He was pleased the City was trying to address the over-arching sustainability concept and describe how it would relate to implementation. He opened the topic for conversation.

Vice Chair Gregory said he found this draft document to be very clear and accessible. Additionally, he was pleased to see that this document addressed not only the environmental aspect of sustainability but also the economic and social aspect as well. He felt any concept of sustainability must feature those three aspects to adequately address various quality of life issues. Vice Chair Gregory does not know how this document will

be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan in general, but he was very pleased to see this general statement and the links it attempted to make.

Commissioner Biethan thought it was a very good value statement and he would not change anything. Commissioner Julinsey asked if some of the language had originally come from the PSRC. Mr. Sullivan confirmed that they had referenced the PSRC while drafting this. Commissioner Bontadelli said he was interested to see how this document would be included in the CRC's work. Chair Hinman asked Mr. Sullivan whether he had presented this document yet to the CRC.

Commissioner Flynn said he was glad that the document would tie together the sustainability concept with all of the various Comprehensive Plan updates. He asked if there was some graphical way to illustrate the three-sided relationship between environmental, social and economic aspects of that concept. Mr. Sullivan said they could certainly add some kind of graphic to for illustration.

Chair Hinman asked if anyone else had any other questions or requests for clarification. Commissioner Flynn asked if staff could provide examples of where the sustainability issue would result in language changes. Ms. Stiteler replied that several elements throughout the Comprehensive Plan would be impacted, such as Natural Environment and/or Economic Vitality sections. However, she indicated that all of the elements would eventually be reviewed to see where this sustainability concept should be strengthened. Chair Hinman added that in initial conversations about this concept, some had proposed making this a separate element. Eventually that was abandoned and this over-arching concept was chosen instead, because it touched on so many other elements. Additionally, the general concept had become such a familiar one throughout general society that staff felt that concept should be woven throughout the Comprehensive Plan rather than isolated.

Chair Hinman asked what the next step would be for this document. Mr. Sullivan said that City Council will review the document October 5th. Ms. Stiteler added that a City presentation was scheduled at a community meeting on November 3rd, covering both the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan. The City would be advertising that event in the next several weeks.

Ms. Stiteler asked whether the Commission was ready to vote on making a recommendation. Chair Hinman invited the Commissioners to make a formal motion. Commissioner Biethan motioned that they accept the report as it was presented for forwarding to City Council. Vice Gregory made a friendly amendment to specifically mention that it reflects the sense of the Commission. The motion was seconded, and it passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Chair Hinman reported that several of the Commissioners attended the Redmond Connector community event earlier that afternoon to speak about the Commission’s work. Commissioner Julinsey said there was a good turnout and the Commissioners received some good comments from other attendees. Those comments would be compiled by staff and available soon.

SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S)

The Commission discussed the issues to be addressed in upcoming meetings.

ADJOURN

Chair Hinman adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Minutes Approved On: Planning Commission
