

**REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

November 9, 2011

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Hinman, Vice Chair Franz Wiechers-Gregory, Commissioners Biethan, Flynn, O'Hara and Miller

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Commissioner Chandorkar

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Churchill and Sarah Stiteler, Redmond Planning Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lady of Letters, Inc.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

No changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES AND SUMMARIES:

Ms. Stiteler requested that the public hearing for the Community Indicators be held first. Then, after the closing of that hearing, the briefing would be held on the Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan for the Microsoft campus, which was Item 6 on the agenda. After that, the study session would resume for Community Indicators. Chairman Hinman agreed with the suggested change.

Commissioner Gregory made a motion to approve the meeting summary from the October 19, 2011 meeting. He asked if all Commissioners favored a permit process regarding small animal husbandry, which was reflected in the unanimous passage of a motion on this issue. Ms. Stiteler noted that before the motion, there was a straw vote that initially divided the Commission between the concepts of registration versus permitting. After discussion, all Commissioners agreed on the permitting process. Commissioner Gregory did not have a problem with that distinction; he merely wanted to make sure the permit process would be instituted. He had no other questions on the meeting summary of October 19, 2011 and did not have any corrections or comments on the meeting summary of October 26, 2011. Without objections, the meeting summaries were approved.

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

There were no items from the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, Redmond Community Indicators and Implementation Actions, presented by Jeff Churchill, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Chairman Hinman opened the public hearing. Mr. Churchill, Senior Planner, noted this was an update to the Redmond Community Indicators program. The indicators have two parts: a list of actions that, as a set, help to carry out the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and a set of

indicators that help measure progress toward achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The feedback from the indicators helps inform future Comprehensive Plan updates. The main proposal is to make sure high-quality indicators are used, and that the indicators are aligned with the Budgeting by Priorities dashboard measures when possible. In addition, the implementation actions will be updated to reflect progress made in the last six years when the actions were first adopted. Staff proposes the filtering of some actions that are not really discrete actions, but programmatic. There are also a number of capital projects that will be reflected in the capital investment strategy document. Transportation-related indicators will be developed as part of the Transportation Master Plan update, as that moves along, as well as climate and energy-related actions as part of the Climate Action Plan for the City.

At tonight's meeting, the Commission will hear public testimony, study the topic further, and time permitting, reach a recommendation. Next week, Mr. Churchill will brief the City Council Planning and Public Works Committee on this proposal and the Planning Commission's discussion of this proposal. Further Council review will occur in December and potentially January. Chairman Hinman confirmed that no one was in the audience who wanted to offer oral testimony on this topic. He deferred the study session until after the next agenda item and asked if the written portion of the public hearing should be left open. Mr. Churchill does not believe there will be any written comments received on this topic; he has not received anything thus far. Chairman Hinman closed the oral portion of the public hearing and moved to agenda item six, the pedestrian and bicycle plan for the Microsoft Campus, with a plan to return to the study session on Community Indicators later in the meeting.

BRIEFING, Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan for Microsoft Campus, presented by Jeff Churchill, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Mr. Churchill introduced three people to discuss this agenda item: Jim Stanton, a Senior Community Affairs Manager at Microsoft, Ryan Haines from Gensler Architects, a project manager, and Jeff Haynie, a principal with TENW, a transportation firm. Mr. Stanton began the presentation and noted that since the early part of the last decade, Microsoft noted that it was building lots of space, but doing so incrementally without much thought given to the growth of the campus. Because of rapid growth, Microsoft decided about six years ago to undertake a development agreement with the City and look toward the future. The City approved a development agreement in 2005, and development activity continued.

There has been a lull in this activity for the past two or three years, which has given Microsoft a chance to go back and look thoughtfully at the idea of stitching its campus together. The company wants to make it easier to move around and provide opportunities for non-vehicular access and mobility with a consistency of bike and pedestrian facilities. Also, there is a plan for more coherence around the fitness trail. All of these goals support an overarching goal of a healthier workforce and providing for the HR programs that support that. In talking to employees, a benchmark has been established about what people liked about other campuses and what the desires were for improvement. In "brown bag" sessions with employees, workers have been asked specifically about their use of the campus and the improvements they would like to see. Pedestrian and bicycling have been the focus, but other recreational opportunities have been discussed as well.

These discussions have helped generate a set of recommendations that the company is trying to implement through a multi-year plan. The recommendations include improvements to landscaping for sight distance triangles to large infrastructure projects. Mr. Stanton will talk about bicycle and pedestrian improvements at this meeting, with a short discussion of running trails. Some projects are obligations Microsoft is moving forward on; others are projects where the company would like to see the City as a partner.

The goals of the pedestrian and bicycling system include the following:

1. Providing consistency.
2. Providing and encouraging alternatives to vehicular use on campus.
3. Improving circulation opportunities to make it a more walkable campus, in support of wellness activities.
4. Encouraging bicycle use, as seven hundred bicyclists regularly bike to work. That number goes up to a few thousand during the summer months. Bike lanes, bike racks, showers and other amenities need to be considered to make that viable.
5. Addressing the issue of safe and secure storage for those bicycles rather than having people bring their often expensive bikes into their offices.

A map of bicycle infrastructure on and around campus shows some improvements on Bel-Red Road, the State Department of Transportation Highway 520 trail, the new 36th Street Bridge going into the west campus area, and the trail from 150th Avenue NE north going up to NE 51st. Those are the only pieces of infrastructure noted as bike facilities, which indicates to Microsoft there is a lot of work to do to support bicyclists. Regarding fitness trails, the company wants to provide a coherent system throughout campus as a mode of walking transportation, as well as jogging and running opportunities. Much of the original trails on campus have been obliterated by development. The goal is to restore a trail network through the extended campus areas to the north and west.

Microsoft has mapped out the projects that need to be done in the public right-of-way as well as projects on private property. Many are intersection improvements providing connectivity through the internal street system of Microsoft, meaning new sharrows or bike lanes where possible. Microsoft is also discussing a possible new pedestrian and bike bridge across Highway 520 at the Overlake Transit Center to make a connection to Microsoft's west campus. The company feels a strong need for that connection to the future light rail station at Overlake Transit Center, which should improve ridership and also provide better connectivity to the various parts of the Microsoft campus divided by the highway. Mr. Stanton noted his plan represents several million dollars worth of work on the campus and in the public right-of-way over the next few years.

The most important public projects include work along NE 40th Street, which the company has studied. Pedestrian bridges across Highway 520 will be a longer effort in partnership with the City and Sound Transit to determine how to pay for those. Microsoft will take part in the TMP open house on November 17 for public discussion. Mr. Stanton believes some of this information could be part of the discussion around the City's new Transportation Master Plan. He would like to work with the City and Sound Transit regarding the projects that are fairly sizable in terms of cost. Mr. Stanton also noted the company has had a good working relationship with the City,

which was developed in the 2005 Development Agreement. In that agreement, with Microsoft paying for projects up front, the company would receive impact fee credit back from some portion of those projects. Mr. Stanton believes that has been a good opportunity for the City and Microsoft.

Chairman Hinman thanked Mr. Stanton for his presentation and presence at the TMP open house. Chairman Hinman noted this was very much in line on the public-private partnerships mentioned in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner O'Hara asked about the timetable for Microsoft's overall plan, and whether much of it was tied to Sound Transit. Mr. Stanton noted that many of elements of the plan were dependent on the company's ability to fund these projects on a year-over-year basis. The Master Plan should allow some progress over the next three to five years, assuming the funding is in place and assuming that Microsoft will have momentum moving forward. The pedestrian bridges over the highway are longer-term projects, but very important infrastructure to Microsoft.

The two game-changing projects for Microsoft are these bridges across the highway, specifically the one at the Overlake Transit Center, and the possible underpass at NE 40th and Highway 520, which would take the trail under NE 40th. That particular trail would have a lot of vehicular, bike and pedestrian conflicts at that location. These are big-ticket projects but high priorities for Microsoft. Mr. Stanton noted that the south entrance and exit to the campus along Bel-Red Road was something Microsoft was not necessarily happy with. The company helped fund that, but it does not afford safe pedestrian crossing and limits turning movements. Microsoft is hoping for an improvement at that location. Another spot for improvement would be in front of the new Nintendo headquarters, where the road narrows considerably around a turn, which could be dangerous for cyclists.

Commissioner Miller said he was happy to see this project. He wanted Microsoft to refer to bicycles as *vehicles*, not *non-vehicles*. He said that change of nomenclature could help in the upcoming open house meeting. Commissioner Miller agreed on the importance of the bridges; Sound Transit has been working on the Overlake bridge project for more than fifteen years. Commissioner Miller said he has not seen a corridor study on NE 51st similar to the one that was done on NE 40th. He was curious as to why a similar treatment has not been given for the trail, at least in concept, at that location. He noted there were many issues shared between NE 51st and NE 40th. Commissioner Miller asked about the facility plan concept.

Mr. Stanton noted that north-south travel on 148th and 156th Avenues NE is challenging due to traffic volumes and roads that do not have bike lanes. Microsoft believes an alternative for a slower-speed, lower-volume street would be 150th, which would provide access between NE 51st and NE 36th. The idea is to separate motorized and non-motorized travel. That is more of a challenge going east-west on NE 51st and NE 40th. A corridor study showed an opportunity for bike lanes on NE 40th, with five-foot lanes on each side, but that may create an unsafe bike lane by narrowing lanes for motorized traffic. The overall idea is to separate non-motorized traffic from motorized traffic. Commissioner Miller said the system needs to be permeable for outside users on the campus. He brought up the idea of a cycle track, separate from a sidewalk, as a new philosophy.

Mr. Hainey noted that focus groups with employees helped him gather information on the bicycling issue. He added that no final decisions have been made regarding components of these plans, as of yet. Commissioner Miller noted that at one time 156th Avenue NE and NE 51st had shared bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the sidewalk, and it was a disaster. Commissioner Miller is asking why on-street options have been considered rather than off-street, and if consistency with the Overlake Plan has been considered. Mr. Stanton said he has seen the Overlake Plan, which includes some bike lanes behind parked cars. No specific cross-section concept has been decided. Microsoft is not proposing pulling back curbs, which would cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Commissioner Flynn liked the plan presented. He would be interested to know if Microsoft would share facilities on the campus with the local community; for example, making running trails on the campus available for the public to use. Mr. Stanton said the idea of providing access and security was an ongoing challenge. He was not aware of security officers actively kicking people off campus for having people walk or bicycle through it. There are some issues of who should not be on campus, and security officers are very sensitive to that. Mr. Stanton said having amenities that draw people in is not necessarily in the company's interest. The idea is to provide facilities for employees and potentially the community to use that are safe, but are not an advertisement to come onto the campus.

Commissioner Miller said more specificity regarding the on-street plan for Microsoft would be very useful, meaning a concept of sharrows, bike lanes, or buffered bike lanes. Commissioner Miller noted that this was not only a route for Microsoft commuters, but also recreational users and other people in the Redmond community. Commissioner Biethan reminded the Commission to recognize what is private property and public property. He noted that private property use is at the owner's discretion. Public-private partnerships are helpful, but ultimately, there are public rights-of-way and private property.

Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Stanton how the Commission could help. Mr. Stanton recommended having the staff contact him about areas of the presented plan that need improvement or infrastructure that is important based on TMP discussions and other policy discussions. Mr. Stanton said it was important for Microsoft to create an integrated system between the public rights-of-way and the private areas, to create better connectivity and the best use of construction dollars. Most of the issues noted in the Microsoft plan presented this evening came from employees literally marking maps with pens. Chairman Hinman asked if there was a list of irritant points.

Mr. Stanton said anywhere there were public right-of-way issues such as bridges over the freeway, would be expensive, long-term projects. Microsoft could use the Commission's support for increased connections to the Highway 520 trail, such as providing breaks in the fencing to allow bicycle access. Mr. Stanton asked the Commission to consider the opportunities to partner with Microsoft around public-side improvements that complement what will be done on the private side. Chairman Hinman suggested presenting this plan to the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee. Mr. Stanton noted that 40% of the campus population is using means other than driving a single-occupancy vehicle, which is 10% better than downtown Bellevue and what

he considers a good start. For health and sustainability reasons, he said this work was very important.

Chairman Hinman thanked Mr. Stanton and his group for bringing these issues forward, and anticipated more discussions about this in the future. Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Stanton if a corporate bike share plan has been considered. Mr. Stanton said such a plan has been considered, but it would be a challenge to implement incrementally or to pilot on a five hundred-acre campus with around seventy buildings. The campus has twelve charging stations for electric vehicles, but no final plans on corporate bike share. Mr. Churchill reminded the Commission about the Transportation Master Plan open house happening a week after this meeting on November 17, at 6 p.m. In three weeks, the Commission will receive a Transportation Master Plan briefing.

STUDY SESSION (CONTINUED), Redmond Community Indicators and Implementation Actions, presented by Jeff Churchill, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Commissioner Flynn thanked Mr. Churchill for all the information provided on this topic. He asked about the fact that these indicators are measurable and why there was a goal of N/A listed for some indicators. Mr. Churchill noted that in some cases there was less of an exact number and more of a trend the City was shooting for. That explanation will be in the final document. Chairman Hinman added that reiterating sustainability principles in the preamble could be a good idea. He asked about the waste and recycling section for single family customers. He said there was a challenge going to multi-family and asked Mr. Churchill why that was not a growth area. Mr. Churchill said that the data for multi-family recycling is not as reliable as the single-family data, but there is hope that data will become available in the future. Half the households in Redmond are multi-family, and more multi-family homes may join that number with the growth of Overlake Village. Mr. Churchill said this indicator may be getting an upgrade and more visibility on the budget dashboard, which Chairman Hinman said was a good idea.

Commissioner Miller asked about the access to parks and trails, and the target of providing 0.35 trail miles per thousand people city-wide. He wanted to know if that would be newly-developed trails or existing trails. Mr. Churchill said that number represents existing trails, and the City has hit that mark already. He added that staff has looked at this number by neighborhood, which may be a better indicator. This number is reflected in the PARCC Plan, as well.

Commissioner Flynn followed up with the waste indicator question that Chairman Hinman asked, and if yard waste was included in that number. Mr. Churchill noted that the number was for garbage, recycling, and yard waste. Commissioner Flynn asked if yard waste should be included in that indicator, as a way to reduce greenhouse gases. Mr. Churchill noted that the indicator in this report was a better measure of how much the City was reducing and recycling rather than yard waste measurements. Chairman Hinman asked if yard waste would be included in a future plan. Mr. Churchill said in the future, progress would be noted on the indicators listed for this Community plan. However, with the upcoming Climate Action Plan, there would have even more indicators related to greenhouse gases. The Climate Action Plan will come before the Commission as well.

Commissioner Biethan asked about one of the indicators dealing with changes to regulations in order to incentivize developments incorporating renewable energy. He asked if the point was to change regulations or add incentives, which he saw as two different methods. Mr. Churchill said the idea was to include the whole scope of all development regulations, including all the incentives. He added that in any case changes in connection to this indicator would come before the Commission.

Chairman Hinman asked about implementation actions to be removed. Commissioner Miller asked about deletion of the street trees indicator. He agreed that counting street trees by themselves was not a good indicator, but he asked why that number was not considered as a ratio of the number of trees of the number of miles of City streets. Mr. Churchill said that was another option, but staff has been struggling regarding what this number should be. Chairman Hinman said another way to look at this issue was the idea of tree canopy, but that could be a difficult number as well. Commissioner Biethan would like to see this idea revisited.

Commissioner Flynn asked about deleting the small and medium-sized business measure, and how that number was captured. Mr. Churchill said that the number of businesses have been counted through the number of businesses with licenses, and the number of businesses that have had licenses for more than seven years. The idea would be to show the health of businesses in Redmond. Commissioner Flynn said this would be a good indicator for the economic development that the City is working on with the business community. Mr. Churchill noted that the business license database could be broken down via number of employees.

Chairman Hinman asked about the indicators of community engagement, and about the fact that the City receives a survey from residents on how they feel about community events and programs. Chairman Hinman said that the level of participation or attendance in neighborhood network meetings, CAC participation as the City revamps neighborhood plans, and the Academy are all ways of engaging citizens. Chairman Hinman would like to figure how those factors could impact this indicator via a public service component of some sort. Mr. Churchill said that as part of the Budgeting by Priorities effort, all the budget offers come with performance measures. The neighborhood planning offer has a performance measure tracking the type of participation Chairman Hinman is suggesting. Staff is collecting that data and it could be displayed with this indicator.

Chairman Hinman commented about outreach indicators, such as response the City receives from the Impact Redmond website. He also asked about creating economic and marketing strategies, which are noted in a few places in the list of indicators. Chairman Hinman suggested that staff should indicate these strategies appear in the Economic Development Strategic Plan, which would help add some context. Chairman Hinman asked if there was a way to wrap up this agenda item. Mr. Churchill said that he could take the ideas noted at this meeting from the Commission and incorporate them into the packet so that they move on to the City Council. A formal report is not required with these indicators. The City Council will adopt a resolution noting that its members looked at these indicators and that the indicators are a way to implement the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Churchill said a motion to note that the Commission has fully reviewed the indicators would be good step.

Motion by Commissioner O'Hara, and seconded by Commissioner Biethan, to approve the Community Indicators in concept and move them forward to the City Council. Motion approved unanimously (6-0). Chairman Hinman closed the public hearing to include written comments.

REPORTS/SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S):

Ms. Stiteler, Senior Planner, said that the City Council met on the Monday before this meeting and dealt with the topic of finishing out remaining issues related to the Comprehensive Plan, which included small animal husbandry. The Council noted that chickens would be allowed in residential areas, and changed the number of chickens that would be allowed in various areas. Right now, one-half acre lots or larger would be allowed ten chickens, and the Council will keep that number. Everything else remained the same in terms of numbers, with the exception of R-8, which Council removed entirely as an allowed zone for keeping chickens. Chickens therefore would be allowed in R-3, R-4, R-5, and R-6. Council also decided that a mandatory registration would be sufficient. Council did not go with the permit requirement and favored the idea of no cost associated with that registration. The measure passed 6-1 with Councilmember Cole voting against.

Chairman Hinman spoke next about a HUD grant that would study transit communities along the Sound Transit corridors, which the Commission has discussed before. An East Corridor Task Force has been formed for that study, and Chairman Hinman and other representatives of the Redmond community will serve on that task force. He will keep the Commission updated on any new developments. Ms. Stiteler said there is an oversight committee for this project, of which the Mayor of Redmond is a member. Chairman Hinman offered his congratulations to Commissioner Flynn, who was just elected to the City Council and will be leaving the Commission in the future.

ADJOURN

Chairman Hinman adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:13 p.m.

Minutes Approved On: Planning Commission Chair