

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Environmental Board**

6:30 PM
August 9, 2023

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.
NW, Issaquah

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Board members:

Jamie Finch, Chair
Don McQuilliams, Vice Chair
Nancy Davidson
Anne Newcomb
Prajakta Ghatpande
Tom Anderson
Alix Lee-Tigner
Ashwin Kannan*

Administration/Staff:

Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability
Manager
David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator
Thomas Rush, Communications Manager
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planner

Janet Wall, Alternate

*Youth/young adult members

Ashwin Manoharan* (unexcused absence)
Joy Lewis (excused absence)
Dixie Bair (excused absence)

CALL TO ORDER

FINCH called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair introduced the minutes, which were included in the agenda materials. The minutes were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

- a) Minutes of July 12, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENTS

VYNNE MCKINSTRY noted that staff received one written comment on the agenda by CONNIE MARSH relating to feedback on the communications toolkit and the comprehensive plan update.

AGENDA ITEMS

- a) **Communications Overview and Public Engagement Toolkit (I)**
Presented by:
Thomas Rush, Communications Manager

RUSH provided an overview of the Communication team and the Public Engagement Toolkit update. Board Member DAVIDSON asked for clarification on what types of projects the Communications team is involved with, such as the Sewer Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan Update. RUSH confirmed engagement with these and other projects and highlighted upcoming projects such as an upcoming website update. RUSH touched on communications efforts related to the website, newsletters, podcasts,

and neighborhood meetings. Clarification was provided on how to connect with the Communications team if questions arise. Board Member ANDERSON explained that it would be beneficial to store and record newsletters and information provided by the city for historic preservation purposes.

RUSH walked through the Communication Toolkit and highlighted updates made including making the toolkit a worksheet that can be edited. Board Member MCQUILLIAMS asked whether the toolkit was required for large projects which was confirmed by RUSH. Board Member ANDERSON asked for more clarity on project specific communication and the ability for community members to sign up for specific project updates.

b) Comprehensive Plan Update (D)

Presented by:

Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

PADUA provided an overview of the comprehensive plan and informed the Environmental Board on the work that has been done so far on the new Environment Stewardship and Climate Resilience element (Environment element) of the plan. The new Environment element is not required to be incorporated into the Issaquah comprehensive plan until 2029 based on HB 1181; however, the Long-Range Planning team is working to include information in the current comprehensive plan update.

Board Member FINCH asked for clarification on the difference between this new section and the Land Use section. PADUA highlighted that the Land Use section will include policies related to the urban environment while the Environment section will be more focused on the natural environment and greenhouse gas emissions. In response to a question about moving targets asked by Board Member GHATPANDE, PADUA explained that more specific detailed goals will be found in the functional plans while the comprehensive plan is broader. PADUA walked through all the goals proposed to be in the new Environment element, section by section, and highlight any changes that might have been made if these goals were moved from other elements. Board Member FINCH noted that most existing policies are based around enhancing existing tree canopy and suggested continuing to explore opportunities for efforts to expand tree canopy.

Board Member FINCH noted that for the Steams, Wetlands and Wildlife section could benefit for clearer targets that efforts could be directed at. Board Member DAVIDSON recommended incorporating language around enhancing wetland buffers instead of just the wetlands themselves. Board Member MCQUILLIAMS asked why policy A14 was specific to parks. PADUA noted that it would make sense to change A14 to relate to all development instead of just parks.

Board Member NEWCOMB asked how the City is measuring and tracking GHG emissions. VYNNE MCKINSTRY highlighted that the City is currently participating in an effort to inventory GHG emissions at the community and municipal operation levels. Board Member DAVIDSON asked for an additional policy that would lead to more action by the community to help the city meet GHG emission reduction goals. Board Member FINCH recommended that the Land Use element include policies and goals that could help encourage community members and businesses reduce their GHG emissions. Board Member NEWCOMB recommended a policy based on tracking PSE to ensure an energy transition. VYNNE MCKINSTRY explained there are policies around tracking PSE in the ICAP and that city staff are tracking efforts conducted by other cities to lead within comprehensive plan policies. Board Member GHATPANDE recommended a policy that would pass along city sustainability goals to contractors and those working with the City of Issaquah. Board Member GHATPANDE asked that the inventory efforts be brought before the Environment Board for a more detailed discussion in the future. Board Member LEE-TIGNER, along with Board Member FINCH, expressed an interest in seeing other element updates that touch on sustainability and environment (for example Transportation and Land Use elements). Board Member FINCH asked City staff to explore what other cities are doing related to this topic in comprehensive plan updates.

Board Member DAVIDSON asked for additional policies within transportation that would focus beyond single occupancy vehicles and also be inclusive of heavy-duty vehicles and task vehicles. Additionally, Board Member DAVIDSON asked for policies that pushed for regional collaboration on these issues.

Board Member NEWCOMB recommended adding a policy that would encourage telecommuting for businesses. PADUA noted that the Transportation element is likely going to be updated to encourage additional reductions of single occupancy vehicle policies. Board Member ANDERSON asked for clarification on how the City tailors efforts related to Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) goals. PADUA provided some background on how CTR efforts are implemented in Issaquah. Board members expressed appreciation for the redlined version of the matrix.

Related to Climate Resilience policies, Board Member MCQUILLIAMS asked for additional policies that would support education and outreach efforts. Board Member LEE-TIGNER asked for clarification on whether the goal related to emergency service provision to 100% of the population took into account commuters, emergency situations, etc. Board Member FINCH and Board Member DAVIDSON reiterated that it would be valuable to consider how we evaluate goals and track and assess performance.

Board Member FINCH asked that city staff consider the results of GHG inventories to help guide identification of additional policies that should be incorporated. Board Member DAVIDSON recommended policies that would leverage city advocacy to drive action and innovation in the city. Board Member MCQUILLIAMS noted that we could be a leader encouraging local businesses to transition to EVs. Board Member FINCH highlighted that we could expand on tree and forest goals to include a connection to wildfire risk. Board Members NEWCOMB and MCQUILLIAMS asked city staff to explore policies that would encourage best practices on wildfire planning on both public and private property. Board Member LEE-TIGNER asked for additional policies related to improving equitable access to natural lands. Additionally, Board Member LEE-TIGNER asked for greater incorporation of equity language into policies. Board Member FINCH noted a gap related to policies that relate to climate resilience connected to animals in Issaquah such as salmon. In response to a question by Board Member LEE-TIGNER, PADUA noted that water quality is addressed more closely in the Land Use section. Board Member NEWCOMB asked for policies related to equity in climate resilience related to resources provided to vulnerable populations.

c) Facilities Update/Municipal Decarbonization Resolution (A)

Presented by:

David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator

REEDY provided an overview of ongoing and future assessments conducted at municipal buildings. This overview included discussion of Energy Benchmarking, the Facilities Condition Assessment, Energy Audits, and a Decarbonization Assessment. Board Members DAVIDSON and MCQUILLIAMS asked staff to include a review of pump stations in the assessments. Board Member DAVIDSON additionally recommended that the name of the resolution brought before the board be updated to reflect that it solely addresses existing municipal buildings versus a city-wide decarbonization effort. REEDY noted that staff would make the appropriate change. Board Member FINCH noted that the high proportion of GHG emissions from buildings and transportation made it even more important that the Environmental Board review comprehensive plan policy changes and updates that impact these emission sources.

Due to a lack of time, staff committed to bring the resolution and discussion back to the Environmental Board at the September board meeting for a recommendation.

REPORTS

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Updated Board Workplan

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

INQUIRIES