

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Environmental Board**

6:30 PM
August 14, 2024

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.
NW, Issaquah

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Board members:

Don McQuilliams, Chair
Alix Lee-Tigner, Vice Chair, excused absence
Nancy Davidson
Mina (Alexandra) Jun*, excused absence
Prajakta Ghatpande
Dixie Bair, excused absence
Tom Anderson
Jamie Finch
Kiran Pan*

Administration/Staff:

Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Sustainability
Manager
David Reedy, Sustainability Coordinator
Nick Horn, Civic Spark Fellow
Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor
Stephen Padua, Planning Manager

Chris Peiffer, Consultant, PlanITGeo

Anne Newcomb, Alternate, excused absence
Keith Gonzalez, Alternate
Jonathan Smith, Alternate

*Youth/young adult members.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR DON MCQUILLIAMS 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 10, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENTS

CONNIE MARSH from Squak Mountain provided feedback on the lack of passion for the environment in the Urban Forest Management Plan and Comprehensive Plan, as stated in the City's vision statement. MARSH identified the lack of a vision and mission statement in either of these documents and a lack of representation of who the community is as represented in the plans. MARSH also acknowledged appreciation for the Board and the passion they bring to their role.

AGENDA ITEMS

- b) **Draft Urban Forest Management Plan (D)**

Presented by:

*Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor
Chris Peiffer, Consultant, PlanITGeo*

PEIFFER and HINTZ provided an overview of the purpose of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), the process to develop the UFMP, key findings, draft content, and next steps for finalizing the UFMP.

Board members asked several clarifying questions and provided initial input on the UFMP. The Environmental Board advised staff that the Board should act as the liaison for the UFMP, emphasizing that the plan's goals align well with their mission of enhancing canopy cover and addressing climate issues. The UFMP needs to present a realistic assessment of whether the 55% tree canopy goal from the Issaquah Climate Action Plan is achievable and identify potential challenges. Regular updates and progress tracking are essential, and the plan should incorporate more opportunities for youth engagement. The UFMP should place greater emphasis on forest understory and clearly define key terms like "Tree" and "Tree Canopy."

The Board recommended a clearer framing of equity in terms of access to green space, prioritization of conifers in invasive-prone areas, and specific outreach strategies for private landowners. They identified the need for staff to improve engagement with utility companies on tree maintenance. Protection of existing tree canopy, particularly on private lands, should be more prominently featured in the plan. Additionally, the Board expressed concern about funding for UFMP implementation. Finally, the UFMP should identify strategies to incentivize canopy expansion among commercial landowners and provide education on wildfire risk management. Concern for state policies for defensible space was expressed.

Next Steps: Board members will send feedback on the UFMP by September 2. VYNNE MCKINSTRY will compile comments into a memo for review by the Board, Chair and Vice Chair prior to submitting to Park staff.

c) **Draft Comprehensive Plan (D)**

Presented by:

Stephen Padua, Planning Manager

CHAIR MCQUILLIAMS and VYNNE MCKINSTRY summarized the written feedback provided by Board members on the non-Environment elements (e.g. Land Use, Transportation, Utilities, etc) of the Comprehensive Plan. The review included a summary of themes from the comments. CHAIR MCQUILLIAMS made a motion and FINCH seconded the motion for staff to include the specific recommendations within the memo because the summary of themes do not capture the detailed comments fully. The Board approved the motion unanimously. The Board felt it was important for the level of detail to be passed to other Commissions and Council. Staff will also provide the matrix of staff responses to Board comments to the Planning Policy Commission.

VYNNE MCKINSTRY summarized the written feedback provided by Board members on the Environment Element that will be considered as part of the Issaquah Climate Action Plan update in 2025-2026. Comments submitted that will be incorporated into the ICAP discussion were removed from the memo. These were primarily focused on new policy proposals as well as proposals to strengthen policies. Staff felt more discussion was needed with the Board and community prior to advancing in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

REEDY summarized the written feedback provided by Board members on the Environment Element for discussion. These comments were for consideration for immediate revisions to the Environment Element. The Board discussed the comments, particularly around youth education, wildlife, and some revised language to existing policies. The Board provided feedback on which comments to incorporate immediately into the Element.

Next Steps: Staff will finalize the Environment Element based on feedback from the Board on immediate changes. VYNNE MCKINSTRY will finalize a memo with detailed Board feedback on the Comprehensive Plan and send to staff for inclusion at future Planning Policy

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Commission and Council meetings.

REPORTS

- a) Natural Environment Checklist

- b) Youth Report

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Environmental Board Workplan

VYNNE MCKINSTRY offered to provide written updates to the Board on several topics due to the meeting running late.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.