

Planning Policy Commission
5-12-16

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

May 12, 2016

City Hall South
Council Chambers

135 E. Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA 98027

PPC MEMBERS PRESENT

Carl Swedberg, Vice Chair
Ron Faul
Joy Lewis
Troy Rahmig
Jon Stob
Justin Walsh
Salim Juma, Alt.

STAFF PRESENT

Trish Heinonen, Policy Planning Manager
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Sheldon Lynne, Public Works Director

CALL TO ORDER

SWEDBERG, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

(Note: Alternate Members participate in, but do not vote on, decisions at tonight's meeting as there is a quorum of Regular Members present.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY WALSH, SECONDED BY LEWIS that minutes of the PPC meeting on April 28, 2016 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED BY THE UNANIMOUS VOTE OF ALL PPC MEMBERS PRESENT.

PPC MEMBERSHIP

SWEDBERG noted that new members are joining PPC tonight (JUMA, RAHMIG, STOB, FAUL).

PROPOSED 2017-2022 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Lynne made staff's presentation. He gave some background on the 2017-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), including why the TIP is prepared and the process used. He explained that the TIP list is not in priority order in the format being presented tonight; it is prioritized when the City Council deliberates, takes action, and allocates budget to the projects on the list. He continued with the schedule for reviewing and approving the TIP, leading to submittal to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) by June 30, 2016.

He continued with a description of the variables and factors that influence the process by which the TIP is developed, including the City's plans and actions by WSDOT, Sound Transit, King County, and Sammamish. He displayed the list of all 45 projects on the TIP and said he will highlight those tonight for which spending is expected in the next six years. FAUL asked Lynne in describing the projects, to please also indicate which projects were considered and recommended by the Traffic Task Force. Lynne said he plans to address the Traffic Task Force's work later in the presentation.

He continued his presentation by describing the more near-term transportation projects around the City for which construction is taking place in 2016-2017, and showed their location in red on an overhead map. He described the more mid-term projects expected to take place, shown in yellow on the overhead map. He noted that other projects also exist, adding up to more than \$300 million

Planning Policy Commission
5-12-16

total on the books for City transportation improvement projects. He showed a diagram of the 2017-2022 Six Year Transportation Improvements as a whole.

STOB asked how the Sound Transit planning (ST3) fits into this. Lynne replied ST3, which will be put to a vote this fall, proposes to bring light rail to Issaquah at some date in the future that is yet to be determined. He said the City is watching activity around that vote very carefully, and will be assessing how these projects would fit with the results of the ST3 vote.

RAHMIG asked does the City do any outreach to communities to the south of Issaquah about traffic issues, and noted a lot of traffic impacts in the City come from the south. Lynne described the coalition of cities that lobbied for improvements last year along the I-90 corridor, including the bottleneck at I-90 and Highway 18. He said the City is working with King County now, who has indicated their interest in a corridor study of Hobart Road in terms of making some improvements to traffic problems there. It's a good question, he continued, and yes, the City does work with neighboring jurisdictions on ways to solve traffic issues.

FAUL said in looking at the projects at the TIP, he doesn't see much financial information, or how the project cost estimates are broken down. He used #7, NW Holly Street, as an example. He said he would like the public to be able to look at the projects on this list and see what the true cost to them, as taxpayers, is. Lynne gave the Administration's projection of grant revenues for the NW Holly Street project. He said projections, however, are just projections, and not certainties. FAUL said he understands that, but in order to make this list more of a living document that is more useful and transparent to the public, he would favor including more detailed financial information. Lynne added some of that information is included in the detailed sheets about each project, and also is carried forward to the CFP (Capital Facilities Plan) which is the list of projects to which the Council has allocated budget during the budget deliberation process.

SWEDBERG said staff has said that the TIP is not a prioritized list, but it sure looks like one. He said in the ten or so years that he has been on the Commission, for example, the Providence Pointe interchange has shown up on the TIP every year, but it never seems to go up in priority. If projects are not prioritized as part of the TIP process, then how do they end up in the position they are in on the list. Lynne explained the difference between the TIP and the CFP. He said the TIP is a list that is provided to the State as part of a Growth Management Act requirement, and the order of the projects does not make any difference to the state. He used the East Lake Sammamish Parkway project as an example of a project that was half-way down the CIP list, but federal funds became available and it moved up the list as a result of that opportunity.

LEWIS asked how the work of the Traffic Task Force aligns with the work done by staff on the CIP. Lynne explained the Traffic Task Force's work resulted in nine traffic projects that it recommended to Council, and showed the list on the overhead screen. He referred to the City's website, specifically Go Issaquah, and played a video that gave more details about what the City is doing in terms of meeting transportation challenges and the activities of the Task Force. He noted the City has a large backlog of transportation projects in addition to the nine projects recommended by the Task Force. STOB asked so any of the nine projects could jump up in priority. Lynne replied yes, if the Council decided to put one or more of them on a ballot and the result was a "yes" vote. He explained resources available on the City's website about the City's transportation planning, and noted the Council is currently deliberating the Task Force's recommended nine projects, and explained the schedule for the Council's decision about moving forward.

LEWIS said she also was hoping for more financial information in finer detail about each project, such as any contributions from developers. She said information that is both broader and in more

Planning Policy Commission
5-12-16

detail about funding for each of these projects is needed, including a breakdown or evaluation of the anticipated costs and grants. Lynne said he understands LEWIS' comments, and explained the uncertainties of grant funding, particularly for the more future-years projects.

FAUL asked for an explanation of REET (real estate excise tax) on page 16 of 61. Lynne explained there are several types of REET, which is basically a fee collected upon the sale of property. FAUL suggested including a legend that explains what REET is so that this document can be more easily understood by the average citizen. He gave other suggestions for optimizing and simplifying the document in order to make it more transparent and understandable. People should be able to see how much of their tax dollars are contributing to these projects. Lynne said REET is not a general tax; it is a property tax that is collected on the sale of real estate. JUMA said he agrees with FAUL about making this document more transparent, and said if someone is selling property or multiple pieces of property, the REET they pay is coming from their pocket, and they should be able to see where it is going.

LEWIS asked on page 57 of 61, is Laughing Jacob Trail technically part of the City of Sammamish as a result of the recent annexation of Klahanie. Lynne replied no, it is still within Issaquah's city limits.

WALSH said he has the same issue as LEWIS about the lack of financial detail on the TIP. He suggested adding a column to show overall costs, particularly on projects that are low on the priority list, so the general public can have an opportunity to lobby Council to move a project up the list. He also suggested including an introductory page on the Go Issaquah site that explains more about what the TIP and CFP are, how they are developed and reviewed, and so on, and also how people can access them from the website.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Connie Marsh, business owner at 1175 N.W. Gilman Blvd., Suite B-11, Issaquah, and Issaquah resident, referred to an e-mail she sent staff earlier today, and said she assumes that PPC members have received it, so her comments will reflect more on the presentation made tonight. She said the Council has not had an opportunity to prioritize the CFP for the last two years because it was not presented to them by staff. She said when she asked Councilmembers for an explanation, they said they asked for it but did not receive it. In prior years, the Council just took the top six projects or so from the TIP and used them to create the CFP. She explained her perspective on how the prioritization process works, and said if staff finds out that grant funds for a project are available, then the project goes up the priority list. She used the Holly Street Bridge as an example, and noted that the City will now have two pedestrian bridges over Issaquah Creek within two minutes' walk from each other, because grant monies were available. She continued with her assessment that a spreadsheet is needed with all financial details, potential impact fees, potential grants, and how much the citizenry is projected to spend for each of the projects on the TIP. She said she does not think the public or the Council has been getting sufficient information to make adequate budget decisions in this situation. She said other problems with the TIP she sees are lot of deficits in transit service, where the money to maintain transit facilities will come from over time, and trails and other ways of getting around being under-represented. She said she would also suggest including a park-and-ride at I-90 and Highway 18, which would be outside the City limits but which would do a lot to benefit the traffic situation in Issaquah.

FAUL asked Ms. Marsh what a solution would look like to the concerns she raised. Ms. Marsh replied the Council needs to get a CFP in front of it that it can actually study and prioritize. In addition, the City needs a strategic funding plan, so that we can understand where the money comes from and how to get more without necessarily increasing taxes. She said it is difficult for

Planning Policy Commission
5-12-16

citizens to get the proper information to educate themselves about these issues; it is not immediately apparent how to get it from the City's website, and without the right information, we can't make sound decisions, she concluded.

Commission Deliberation

WALSH asked staff to speak to the issue raised in Public Comment about presenting the CFP to Council the last few years. Lynne said it is correct that the Council did not deliberate the CFP last year due to workload constraints, although Council did see it the year before last. The Administration is working hard to get the list in front of Council for deliberation this year. Ultimately, he continued, the budget document produced during the Council's budget deliberation process effectively prioritizes the projects in the TIP. WALSH asked Lynne to compare the TIP presented tonight with previous TIP lists; what has been added, and what has been deleted, for example. Lynne replied nothing has been deleted. Some projects have been combined, and some smaller-scale projects have been incorporated into planning efforts, such as Complete Streets. WALSH asked were any projects considered but not included on the TIP. Lynne replied no. STOB asked how often are third-party consultants used to assist, help identify feasibility, and so on. Lynne replied the City updates its concurrency program, and engages a consultant to analyze projects and make recommendations as part of that program. STOB asked do those recommendations feed directly into the TIP. Lynne replied yes.

STOB noted a multi-modal map that could be easily accessed from the website would be useful. Lynne replied the City does have those maps in its Comprehensive Plan, and they are available online.

LEWIS asked why the TIP does not address an additional park-and-ride facility, and noted that the City's existing park-and-ride facility is at capacity now. Lynne replied the City is having discussions with Sound Transit now as part of its ST3 plan. Leeson noted the City is also in discussions with Metro for a two-year pilot project that would address park-and-ride issues.

WALSH noted both Sound Transit and Metro Transit have recently given excellent presentations to City Council about their future planning for transit facilities. STOB asked for clarification about why potential park-and-ride facilities are not included on the TIP. Lynne explained that both King County and Sound Transit prepare their own TIPs and submit them to the state. We coordinate our efforts to make sure we are all planning appropriately, he added. STOB asked is the Puget Sound Regional Council also part of that coordination. Lynne replied yes; one of the PSRC's primary responsibilities is to oversee the allocation of funding from federal sources. Leeson added the TIP does not account for costs for providing services, operations, personnel, and so on, so the City tracks Metro's and Sound Transit's planning closely so we can do our own planning.

FAUL noted the TIP does not mention parking garages, and suggested it be included on the TIP. Lynne agreed, and made a note of it.

At the request of the Chair, Heinonen summarized the suggestions, additions, and comments made by PPC on the proposed 2017-2022 TIP at tonight's meeting, as follows:

- Include more financial details in the project descriptions, including future costs, overall costs, and funding options;
- Optimize and/or simplify the TIP to increase public understanding, including a legend or other way to describe REET, and how much each project is projected to cost ordinary taxpayers;
- Increase transparency in the document and include a "strategic funding plan" column;

Planning Policy Commission
5-12-16

- Include an introduction to the document that explains what the TIP and CFP are, and how they are alike and different;
- Add parking garages to the TIP;
- Include easier access to the TIP, CFP, and multi-modal maps from the Go Issaquah website

MOVED BY WALSH, SECONDED BY FAUL that the proposed 2017-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on page 14 of 62 of the May 12, 2016 PPC agenda packet, including the suggestions, additions, and comments noted above, be forwarded to Council for approval; and that the PPC Chair be authorized to sign a letter transmitting that recommendation to Council.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMISSIONER TRAINING

Heinonen and Leeson conducted some training for new PPC members that included the following topics:

- Purpose of the Planning Policy Commission;
- Purpose of the Development Commission;
- State Growth Management Act;
- Annexations;
- Partners and Agencies;
- Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code;
- Central Issaquah Plan Overview;
- Central Issaquah Standards;
- Olde Town Plan Overview;
- Olde Town Design Standards;
- Typical Year (Annual Schedule);
- Typical Meeting (Before and During); and
- Where to Find Information on the City's Website.

Heinonen asked for other topics that PPC members would like covered in future training sessions. STOB asked about public disclosure, communication outside meetings, and so on. Heinonen said appearance of fairness is not as critical with PPC as it is with the Development Commission and some of the other commissions because PPC is an advisory-only body to the Council. She gave more details about the advisory nature of PPC, as opposed to a decision-making body like the Development Commission. SWEDBERG and Heinonen gave examples of past PPC recommendations and how they influenced the Council's eventual decision.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADJOURN

Heinonen said the next PPC meeting on the Central Standards amendments is scheduled for June 30, and she will be e-mailing members soon about availability for that meeting.

With no further business to conduct, SWEDBERG adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary