CITY OF ISSAQUAH
JOINT MEETING:
PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION and PARK BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING—MINUTES

February 8, 2018

Eagle Room
City Hall

130 Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA 98027

PPC MEMBERS PRESENT	**PARK BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**
Joan Probala, Chair	Brad Book
Ron Faul, Vice Chair	Linda Whitworth
A.J. McGauley, Alt.	Jeremy Nobel
Troy Rahmig	Danielle Githens
Jon Stob	Jonathan Richardson
Lindsey Walsh	Al Erickson
	Ruben Nieto
	STAFF PRESENT
	Trish Heinonen, Long-Range Pl. Manager
	Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
	Jeff Watling, Parks & Rec. Director
	Jennifer Fink, Park Planner
	TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT
	Mel Morgan, Jr.
	Mary Lynch

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

DISCUSSION: CENTRAL ISSAQUAH DISTRICT VISIONS AND GREEN NECKLACE (I)
Watling, Parks and Recreation Director, made introductory remarks. He said his observation since joining the City of Issaquah about a year ago is that many different definitions and versions exist of the green necklace. He continued as work moves forward on the Parks Strategic Plan, the need to create a unified vision for the green necklace is increasingly important, as well as for its use in the central Issaquah vision planning effort.

He said the goals for tonight's discussion are (1) to begin to create a framework for a more specific understanding of what the green necklace is; and (2) to have that discussion inform the work of our consultants, Berger Partnership, and hopefully help us to create a product for the green necklace that can be used in the Central Issaquah vision work as well as the Parks Strategic Plan. He noted the consultant will be following up on tonight's discussion at another joint PPC-Park Board meeting on February 22, 2018.

Greg Brower, Berger Partnership, made a presentation. He said our goal tonight is not to change anything, but rather to walk you through the work done so far, get some reactions, then follow up with additional efforts as we move forward. He presented more details on exhibits that were included in the agenda packet. He said tonight we will focus on the location of parks, trails, and open spaces in a mapping exercise to help everyone better understand the green necklace. The exhibits included an aerial view of "what we have today (2018);" trails and open space elements; a map from the Central Issaquah Task Force's 2010 work; proposed street designations; a map and

an overlay of elements from the 2012 Central Issaquah Plan; more current thinking about the green necklace in the 2015 Central Issaquah Plan; and a mapping of street routes as well as potential locations for parks and plazas.

Stephanie Woirol, Berger Partnership, continued the presentation, focusing on the consultant's work with the City on the Parks Strategic Plan. She noted there are three main corridors in the City's parks system; the Mountains to Sound Corridor, Rainier Trail, and Issaquah Creek Corridor, and gave details about each. In response to a question from WALSH, she noted these are all parcels that the City has to work with in creating a strategic plan. She continued with details about other projects and parks that surround the City and that could influence its plan, including where the City has indicated that parks are needed and have been suggested in previous planning efforts.

Brower continued with a list of topics to start the conversation about character in addition to mapping. He posed several questions to be the focus of tonight's discussion, including "What would success for the green necklace look like," "Why the green necklace," "How would you describe the green necklace in a succinct way to someone," and so on. He suggested the participants take a few minutes to work in groups on an exercise, specifically to write down their thoughts about what "success" would look like for the green necklace.

WALSH asked for clarification of what success would look like for the exercise. Brower said the goal is for each group to provide an indication of some connecting routes, trails, interconnections, and so on that can be reported out to the group at large. He added another important component is to think about identifying some spaces where people could potentially gather. WALSH said she was thinking of information that would be more specific to the work that PPC is doing. Heinonen said the mapping exercise will help PPC in its vision work as well as the Parks Strategic Plan. Watling said the focus tonight is not to start from scratch, but to take work already done and define where parts of the green necklace exist and where they need to be added.

Connie Marsh asked whether participants should feel free to redraw how the Mountains to Sound Greenway is displayed on the exhibits. Watling said yes. She also asked whether parks that are privately owned, or are publicly-privately owned, should be considered in the exercise. Watling said he agrees that the final mapping will likely include a layer of parcels that are privately maintained and/or owned, but we are not going to make that distinction in the exercise tonight.

FAUL asked clarifying questions about the Mountains to Sound Greenway, specifically about its funding. Watling said those questions, while important, are not part of this mapping exercise tonight. FAUL asked are we considering a new name for the green necklace. Watling said his understanding is that PPC has suggested green network.

PROBALA said her understanding is that the green network is intended to pull together all parts of the City, in addition to its presence in the central area. Watling agreed.

Participants broke into small groups and wrote responses to the question, "What would success for the green network look like." A spokesperson from each group then presented the group's response to the participants as a whole.

In response to the presentations, Brower said he was interested in the idea put forth by several groups that Sound Transit's light rail could become a kind of bridge over I-90 connecting the two parts of the City. He said the consultants will take the work done tonight and meld the responses, then bring the result back to the group for more discussion at the February 22 meeting. Watling

said his perception from hearing the responses is that connectivity is very important, and that this network needs to support connectivity within the City as well as the central area.

Githens said her group agreed that residents may know how to find the individual parts of the network, but it is important that anyone, whether a new resident or a visitor, be able to identify where they are and access them.

WALSH added her group also recognized the need for both high-speed bicycle commuting corridors and corridors that are more oriented for walking, scenic spaces, and so on. Watling agreed that the experience of using a trail is an important consideration.

Lynch said when light rail comes, more visitors will also come, and having all these connections will help reduce the need for parking lots.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS
Steve Pereira asked who will be responsible for maintaining the parcels in the green necklace, outside of the specific parks that are City owned. He continued he would like to be sure the idea of maintaining the natural beauty we already have is part of this discussion.

OTHER/ADJOURNMENT
Watling explained the work that the consultant and staff intend to present at the February 22 meeting. With no additional business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary