CITY OF ISSAQUAH
PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING—MINUTES

Wednesday, February 28, 2018

City Hall South
Council Chambers

135 Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA 98027

PPC MEMBERS PRESENT	**STAFF PRESENT**
Joan Probala, Chair	Keith Niven, Econ Dev & Planning Director
Ron Faul, Vice Chair (arrived at 8:00)	Trish Heinonen, Long Range Planning Mgr.
Joy Lewis	Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
AJ McGauley, Alt.	
Lindsey Walsh	**OTHERS/TASK FORCE PRESENT**
	Mary Lynch
PPC MEMBERS ABSENT (EXCUSED)	Connie Marsh
Troy Rahmig	Mel Morgan, Jr.
Carl Swedberg	Kristi Tripple
Jon Stob	

CALL TO ORDER
PROBALA called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
MOVED BY McGAULEY, SECONDED BY WALSH that minutes of the PPC meeting on February 8, 2018 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED BY LEWIS, SECONDED BY WALSH that minutes of the PPC meeting on February 15, 2018 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION: CENTRAL ISSAQUAH DISTRICT VISIONS (I)
Staff distributed an up-to-date version of the draft Central Issaquah neighborhood visions, with all edits and suggestions made to date incorporated. Niven presented the document for review, beginning with page 1 of 27.

Page 1. McGAULEY asked is the double-underlined sentence the "teeth" behind this document, and has the City Attorney reviewed it ("and shall comply with the 'developer obligations' identified in the Neighborhood Visions"). Niven replied yes, that sentence is in the Central Standards, and explained the appeals process available to a developer who chose to challenge their obligations.

LEWIS asked how often would this document be reviewed. Niven said the Central Standards could be reviewed and changed as needed at any time. The vision also would be reviewed as part of the regular annual Comprehensive Plan update process. LEWIS noted the document will need to change as the neighborhood(s) does. Heinonen agreed, and said this is just a small part of the Central Plan, and the need to accommodate change is addressed in the larger plan. Niven gave examples of changes that might warrant taking a look at the document in the future.

Page 2. McGAULEY offered some typographical and grammatical suggestions. Marsh said the phrase "supposed of the City…" is ambiguous and suggested eliminating "supposed." Others agreed it reads awkwardly. A suggestion to change it to "City implementing actions" was accepted.

Page 3. Heinonen said item 5 should include a correction to stating that "most" of the Service district was removed. The suggestion to change it to "5. Removing Old Route 10 and most of Service…" was accepted.

The Commission discussed whether the name "green necklace" should be retained, and noted that the Commission has discussed changing it to "green network" in previous discussions. McGAULEY spoke in favor of using "necklace" because it also allows using descriptive words and images such as "jewels" and so on. WALSH asked who is responsible for making that decision. Niven said probably the Park Board, and suggested waiting to see what their thoughts are at the joint PPC-Park Board meeting on March 8.

Page 4. Commissioners made grammatical suggestions and also reworked the first sentence to read, "Central Issaquah is an environmentally rich, vibrant, and prosperous community of neighborhoods where people live, work, play, and learn." Other changes to improve readability and eliminate duplicative words and phrases in the following paragraph were offered and accepted.

Marsh said protecting the environment is not stressed enough. Others disagreed and referred to the phrase "environmentally rich" in the first sentence and references to the environment throughout the document. WALSH suggested adding "strong" to the phrase "and a strong relationship with the environment." Staff made a note of it.

Page 5. Participants offered minor punctuation and grammatical changes. Marsh said "should be monitored by the City" should be "will be monitored by the City." Niven suggested leaving the wording of those City mandates as a choice best left up to the Council. PROBALA asked staff to bring up the "should versus will" question when this is taken to Land and Shore Committee.

Page 6, Livable. McGAULEY questioned "harmonize (scale and architecture)," and asked does referring to harmonious possibly need a qualifier. He continued as new development comes in, it won't necessarily be harmonious with existing development. So is this a goal for when we are finished, not as we transition, he asked. WALSH said it's a good point, but these are the objectives, and said she thinks people will read this as an end goal. Others offered minor grammatical changes. Marsh asked why is sustainable listed in the Livable column. McGAULEY spoke in favor of retaining it because they complement each other. Others agreed. Commissioners offered other minor wording changes. Staff made a note of them.

Page 7, Distinctive. LEWIS asked that a reference to wildlife corridors be added, such as wording about prioritizing our wildlife corridors and their functionality under "Environment." Others agreed.

Heinonen questioned what was meant by "businesses that are special to the City." Niven said that language can be reworked.

Page 8, Connected. LEWIS questioned the use of the word "comfortable" in referring to travel routes. Niven explained why it is included, and no change was made. LEWIS asked whether "efficiency" should be addressed in the same item. Marsh said efficiency is kind of a separate issue. Niven suggested including it in the bullet just above it about neighborhood connectivity.

Participants discussed whether energy items should be put into the Sustainable column. Niven gave some background on power outages in the community and the impact on businesses and economic vitality. McGAULEY suggested moving it to "livable--economic vitality," although power issues are citywide and not specific to central Issaquah. Participants discussed the vital importance of power, and generally agreed it should go in the Sustainable column. FAUL suggested adding a

specific item that addresses “increased bike routes.” Staff made a note of it. Other minor changes to the text and photos were discussed.

Page 9, Sustainable. The Commission discussed adding a reference to power to the second bullet on economic vitality on this page. LEWIS suggested not including it here may be a major oversight, and suggested adding something about our resources keeping up with growth. Lynch said a good reason to put power in this document, as well as fire and other services, is because code will be written from this. She also referred to the need for codes and standards around livability for existing residents while growth is taking place. Tripple said the valley floor is where people come to get resources in a brown-out, and needs to be able to support the entire City. LEWIS suggested putting a separate section on infrastructure with its own bullet points, or at least a bullet point under economic vitality. Marsh made additional suggestions for changes to the urban community section.

WALSH said a larger conversation is probably required, but for now, she supports adding a bullet point under economic vitality, and suggested something like “Infrastructure investments and utilities, including power, fire, water, wastewater, stormwater, schools, and waste collection should be developed in advance or, or concurrent with, new development.” Niven explained why some of those services are not appropriately listed out, and suggested just listing those that the City can control. FAUL suggested adding “public safety.” The participants discussed adding a new bullet that just lists “infrastructure, e.g., power, and public amenities, e.g., schools.” Staff made a note of it. Marsh suggested using the language that is in the Central Issaquah EIS. Tripple noted that the EIS uses the phrase “public services and utilities.”

Lynch suggested adding “affordable” to “housing options.” McGAULEY suggested adding “Promote affordable housing…” as a second bullet. Staff made a note of it.

Page 10-12. West Newport. WALSH said she isn’t convinced that a reader will find that the bullet-point format creates a clear vision for them, and spoke to how a narrative would better promote a vision and an image. LEWIS said she doesn’t like the way the bullet points are repeated for each neighborhood, and gave examples. She noted she also doesn’t like using the past tense in these bullets, and said they are not distinctive from neighborhood to neighborhood. Niven replied what makes a neighborhood livable, for example, may be the same in every neighborhood, and gave examples. He gave more perspective on the commonalities in these neighborhoods and the difficulty in being specific in a vision that is intended to look out 30 years.

WALSH suggested that the repeated bullet points be put into the overall Central Issaquah vision as a whole. Marsh said the neighborhood descriptions are tools that the City can use with developers, and we don’t want to pull too much of the content out. Even though it may seem repetitive to us, she continued, having the full descriptions will be valuable for the Development Commission in reviewing projects. The participants discussed pulling out the statements that apply to all neighborhoods versus repeating them, and decided to leave the statements in all sections.

WALSH spoke in favor of having a statement in the document that explains why the tense that is reflected in the document is being used, and used an example from Redmond. Niven asked her to e-mail it to him. She said she doesn’t feel the language being used really paints the picture we are trying to create for readers.

PROBALA spoke in favor of repeated bullet points. WALSH said she agrees the bullet points should be repeated in the matrix, but not in the vision section for each neighborhood. It needs to be specific and unique, she continued. Participants discussed how specific the bullet points in the

matrixes should be. Niven explained staff's thinking about including references to schools. LEWIS spoke in favor of more specific "measures of success" for schools. Participants discussed options for changing the existing language. Niven said there are a lot of variables, such as schools, that need longer policy discussions, and agreed that a placeholder is needed. Once the City makes some progress with the School District, he continued, we can add specific language during an update.

Marsh suggested adding "safe and comfortable" to references to mobility and school transport. She said this is an isolated neighborhood; how to get across SR 900 safely isn't addressed. McGAULEY suggested changing an existing bullet to "Work with King County to expand trailhead and transform into a gathering place."

PROBALA asked Commissioners to offer several key words that would help add some "fluff" to the "Future" section. McGAULEY said he didn't think that more words were needed, and said the photos will help convey the meaning. WALSH gave her perception of how this vision will be used. Niven asked do you want four paragraphs per neighborhood, but not in bullet points. WALSH replied yes. McGAULEY spoke in favor of the bullet points. Marsh said she likes the paragraph style.

WALSH read her suggestion for a paragraph-style "Today" and "Future" section for West Newport. PROBALA spoke in favor of language that provides a better picture in the "Future" section while also keeping the bullet points. The Commissioners and participants discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a bullet-point format versus a narrative-paragraph format. After more discussion, the general consensus was to keep the repeated bullets for each neighborhood; rework the opening paragraphs for each neighborhood to add language that creates a clearer picture of what makes each neighborhood distinctive; and retain the bullet structure that follows the "Today" and "Future" descriptions for each neighborhood.

Page 14, Regional Growth Center. McGAULEY explained the text he suggested be added to this section. FAUL offered several minor wording changes. Marsh suggested that "a new crossing of I-90" be changed to refer to multiple crossings. WALSH made some renumbering suggestions.

Page 14-18, Pickering. Staff explained some of the edits that have been made since the last itineration of the matrix for Pickering. McGAULEY said the Land and Shore Committee will probably have questions about the item, "Redevelopment will not reduce the amount of job opportunities or non-residential square footage." Tripple said thinking about the items, "Incorporate noise reducing measures… into I-90" and "Noise… attenuation improvements running the length of the neighborhood" from an economic vitality standpoint, there will be some areas where you might want to have more visibility than a long sound wall would provide. Having those gaps is an important consideration in thinking about a contiguous sound wall, she stated. Niven gave some perspective on livability for residents in increasingly urban neighborhoods in the City and some possible sound attenuation measures for noise from I-90. Participants discussed noise attenuation as a general issue facing the City, and what this language specifically would provide in terms of community protection.

Participants offered other minor wording changes to bullets 2.6., 3.4, and 4.3 in the matrix. Morgan suggested adding "Development has resulted in a gain of employment" as a measure of success in the Sustainable column. LEWIS asked for clarification on 1.7, "Convenient access to Lake Sammamish State Park will be a priority." McGAULEY referred to PPC's earlier conversation on that item, specifically how buildings should be sited on East Lake Sammamish Parkway and adjacent streets to allow easy access to the park. Morgan suggested that 3.2, "Provide for transit,

pedestrian, and bicycle circulation from Pickering to Gilman" sounds more like a City obligation than a developer obligation, and suggested "Offer access to all adjacent properties." Marsh asked what "Where possible, complete a human-scale street grid" means in 3.3. Niven provided clarification. WALSH said "Work with Sound Transit to locate ST station within the I-90 right-of-way…" should probably not assume any specific location for the future station. Marsh noted that a Sound Transit maintenance yard will likely also need to be sited. Commissioners decided to leave that item "as is" for now.

Page 18-21, Gilman. The Commissioners addressed adding "Construct mobility improvements with or before new projects" and "Public Services and Utilities" to "City implementing actions" in the Sustainable column of the matrix. "And transit stops" was added to "Provide weather protection for primary pedestrian walkways." Participants offered other relatively minor language changes and corrections, and discussed whether references to plans in addition to the Mall Street Promenade Plan and Gilman Boulevard Plan should be included.

Page 22-24, East Lake. McGAULEY suggested eliminating the bullet under Connectivity, "Transform East Lake Sammamish Parkway into a more …." and adding a separate bullet under Distinctive, "Develop a plan for East Lake Sammamish Parkway." Morgan suggested keeping "Transform East Lake Sammamish Parkway into a more neighborhood-friendly street." WALSH referred to "Horizontal and vertical mixed use provides housing and employment" in the measures of success and suggested adding "similar to Newport." Morgan referred to 1.5, "Redevelopment will not reduce the amount of nonresidential square footage or job opportunities," and asked for clarification of what that would mean for East Lake. He gave examples, and questioned whether this provision should be extended to this neighborhood. Tripple agreed, and said the Economic Vitality Commission discussed this last week and felt a lot of unintended consequences could result from this provision. McGAULEY said the Commission feels pretty strongly about keeping that language in the document that goes to the Land and Shore Committee. The other Commissioners agreed. LEWIS asked whether a reference to reducing noise from I-90 was inadvertently omitted from the matrix. Staff said yes, and made a note of it.

Page 25-27, Confluence. Niven noted Gilman Village is now addressed in the Confluence neighborhood, not East Lake. LEWIS asked whether there should be an actionable item about schools in this neighborhood description. Niven explained why staff did not include a more specific item about schools for Confluence. Participants offered other minor language changes and corrections. Tripple said she would like to suggest that the "Today" section on Confluence should include a reference to "celebrate Confluence Park" as it represents a large investment by many interested parties.

PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENTS: New Hotels/Lodging and New Self-Storage Developments

Niven gave some background on two proposed code amendments, specifically (1) to limit new hotels and lodging to the Pickering neighborhood only, and (2) to limit new self-storage developments to parcels fronting East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE or 221st Place SE only.

The Commissioners discussed the proposal to limit new self-storage developments in central Issaquah. It was the general consensus that the Commissioners did not favor allowing a code change that would allow any new self-storage developments in central Issaquah, including on East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE or 221st Place SE.

The Commissioners were generally not in favor of limiting new hotels to the Pickering neighborhood only. After some discussion, the Commissioners favored allowing the market to

determine where a hotel that served primarily Costco, or any other targeted audience, would best be sited. Niven gave examples of scenarios where a hotel could be located if the market determined where a hotel was permitted. McGAULEY said he thinks allowing hotels should be uniform across the urban core (Regional Growth Center). Others agreed.

The Commissioners discussed whether hotels should be allowed in East Lake. There was some concern about allowing hotel development on the hillside in that neighborhood. Niven gave some options for addressing that concern while still allowing a hotel in East Lake, such as “on an arterial street only,” “only with direct access to East Lake Sammamish Parkway,” and so on.

Niven noted this item requires a public hearing, which will be held March 22, at which time PPC will take public comment, discuss the item again, and make a recommendation to Council.

PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY CHANGES
PPC members looked at large-scale maps of the proposed neighborhoods and discussed whether any of the proposed boundaries should be altered. Staff noted that the boundaries of Olde Town will come to PPC for additional discussion later this year as part of the Olde Town Subarea Plan update.

The Commissioners discussed minor changes in neighborhood boundaries that would create a closer alignment with the Regional Growth boundary, and whether making the two sets of boundaries very similar would make any significant difference. Participants debated but decided not to recommend a change that would result in including a potential middle school site in the central Urban Core zone. Participants focused on the eastern boundary of the East Lake neighborhood and made recommendations, parcel by parcel, on where to create the East Lake boundary. Staff explained the small parcels that were previously in the Service District and that are now included in the East Lake neighborhood. The proposed boundary between East Lake and Gilman was also discussed. Staff made a note of all Commissioner recommendations for changes.

COMMISSION DECISION
MOVED BY McGAULEY, SECONDED BY FAUL that PPC recommend approval of the updated draft visions as amended this evening, with the proposed boundary adjustments as discussed and incorporation of a map and description of the Green Necklace as agreed to on March 8, 2018 during the joint PPC meeting with the Park Board. MOTION CARRIED BY THE UNANIMOUS VOTE OF ALL PPC MEMBERS PRESENT.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS
None.

OTHER/ADJOURNMENT
With no additional business to conduct, PROBALA adjourned the meeting at 10:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary

(Note: The Alternate Member was functioning as a Regular member until 8:00PM when the 4th Regular member arrived at the meeting, creating a quorum of Regular Members present.)