

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Planning Policy Commission**

6:30 PM
January 28, 2021

Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Alternate Meeting Format: On March 6, 2020 the Mayor declared a civil emergency due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 24, 2020 the Governor issued Proclamation 20-28 relating to the COVID-19 emergency and open public meetings. The proclamation has been extended. Due to these factors, the meeting was held using a remote meeting platform.

Commissioners Present:

Joan Probala, Chair
Ron Faul, Vice Chair
Janice Carle
Joy Lewis
Nina Milligan
Matt Monahan
Jason Voiss
Richard Zaragoza, Alternate

Administration/Staff Present:

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Andrea Snyder, Deputy City Administrator

CALL TO ORDER

PROBALA, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) PROBALA asked for any corrections or objections to approving minutes of the PPC meeting on January 14, 2021, and there were none. Minutes are approved.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

- a) **Proposed Docket of 2021 Issaquah Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendments, (A)**

Presented by:

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner

Leeson referred to the timeline on page 14 of 27 in the agenda packet and explained the annual Comp Plan Amendment review process. She gave background on the requirements in the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) for jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans, including the amendment process to be followed. She gave details about what is proposed for the City's 2021 docket for the Land Use Element; Communities Facilities Redesignations/Rezoning; Olde Town Subarea Plan; Capital Facilities Element; and Comprehensive Plan and Central Issaquah Plan, as outlined in the agenda packet. She also described a new request for a private property redesignation, which was received just yesterday and, going forward, it will be added to the 2021 docket as it appears in tonight's agenda.

She concluded the Administration's recommendation is to forward the docket as presented to Council with a recommendation for approval.

Public Comments

PROBALA opened the public hearing for public comment at 6:44 PM. Hearing no requests to speak, PROBALA closed the public hearing at 6:45 PM.

Commissioner Discussion

MILLIGAN asked for more details about the redesignation application just received yesterday, and how it fits into the Comprehensive Plan amendments review and approval process. Leeson described the opportunities going forward for the public to comment on the proposal, including at PPC's next public hearing on the amendments.

LEWIS asked what is allowed on parcels zoned CF-Open Space. Leeson explained the purpose of CF-Open Space zoning is to keep the parcel as natural as possible. Amenities are limited to trails, park benches, picnic tables, and so on. LEWIS asked are some maintenance-type sheds or structures allowed. Leeson replied her understanding is yes, but she will confirm.

FAUL asked is the property in (A) at Blackberry Park, proposed to be redesignated from Single Family-Small Lot to CF-Recreation, owned by the City or the homeowners association (HOA). FAUL continued his concern is whether the proposal to move it to CF-Recreation will remove a tax obligation for the HOA. Leeson replied her understanding is that it has been designated as City property, but she will confirm. FAUL also asked Leeson where the new request for rezoning is located. Leeson indicated its location on a diagram; it is west of SR 900, just south of Newport Way.

Commissioner Decision

MOVED BY CARLE, SECONDED BY FAUL that PPC recommend approval of the proposed 2021 Docket of Proposed Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendments, items 1-5 and as presented by staff at tonight's meeting, as the established list of proposed amendments for 2021. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

REGULAR BUSINESS

a) PPC Feedback Summary and Discussion, (D)

Presented by:

Andrea Snyder, Deputy City Administrator

Snyder provided feedback she received in conversations last fall with current and outgoing Commissioners about how the Commission conducts its business, how well meetings are run, and so on. She asked for any suggestions about what should be continued as well as improved going forward.

PROBALA noted that all members, and especially new members, need clear explanations of the City's planning process, such as the Comprehensive Plan. The more members understand, the more they can become involved in discussions, she added. FAUL agreed, and said getting documents such as the CIP, TIP, Olde Town Standards and so on out to members in advance of meetings where changes to the documents are proposed is helpful. He spoke in favor of being proactive in terms of getting new members familiar with the City's decision-making structure, documents, and processes. He also spoke in favor of virtual meetings and complimented staff. VOISS agreed, and said it is helpful to have staff provide some direction and guidance about what the Administration and Council want from PPC, as well as context and history when PPC is asked for its review. That also benefits audience members, he added. LEWIS also complimented staff for a smooth transition in making staffing changes and to virtual meetings in 2020. She spoke in favor of the City finding new, creative ways to communicate

with the public to encourage public discussion and involvement, and gave several suggestions. She said she agrees that targeting what the Administration is seeking from PPC can be helpful, but cautioned that discussions also need to be flexible enough that Commissioners can bring up issues and topics that may not fall into a narrowly targeted discussion.

Leeson asked whether Commissioners favor the idea of having small-group study sessions apart from PPC meetings, to dig into a topic in depth. The small groups would be limited to three or fewer Commissioners, and would primarily be for the benefit of new members. The Commissioners supported that idea; staff will follow up. PROBALA also said it would be beneficial for discussions about the background and purpose of single City issues, such as the Comprehensive Plan, to be scheduled at regular PPC meetings. Staff made a note of it.

MILLIGAN said she agrees with comments made by other Commissioners, and said meeting management training could also be beneficial for all members and the public as well. She gave examples of what is entailed in “meeting management,” such as stating at the outset of a meeting how the agenda will be followed, when public comment is given and how long speakers may speak, and so on. CARLE also agreed with many of the themes that Snyder provided in her presentation. She said having points of focus for PPC members would be helpful, especially for newer members, but she also agrees with LEWIS that PPC members should feel free to raise other issues.

The Commissioners generally agreed that the virtual meeting format is working well. CARLE noted virtual meetings do create a challenge to receiving public comment, as doing so can be confusing and awkward for some people. She noted that public comment has been low to nonexistent since PPC meetings stopped being held at the Council Chambers. She also noted that public education is needed so that people understand when and how to become involved in projects, specifically during planning phases and not when the project starts going into their neighborhood. She said it would also be great if the public understood the City’s role and limitations, such as the requirements of the GMA and King County in terms of meeting housing and jobs goals.

VOISS agreed with CARLE. The virtual meetings are going well and have been a great tool during the Covid difficulties, but it is difficult for the public to interact in virtual meetings, he said, and looks forward to getting back to meeting in the Council Chambers.

MONAHAN said as a new member, he looks forward to study sessions, and agrees that supplemental education would be a big benefit for new members. PROBALA said she also likes the idea of having two new members and one current member form a single study group. She continued she would love to participate in such a small group, and it would allow her to get to know the new members.

REPORTS

Leeson reported on the review of the Olde Town Architectural Standards that PPC recently discussed. The Standards are on Council’s February 1 consent agenda, she noted. Snyder added the electric vehicle code proposal was discussed by the Environmental Board last night (January 27). It will be discussed next at a City Council study session on February 9, and then come back to a future PPC meeting. Leeson will send links to the agenda for last night’s Environmental Board meeting and the agenda for the City Council’s February 9 meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Schedule. Leeson noted PPC's public hearing on electrical vehicles, scheduled for February 11, will be postponed to a future meeting. PPC's discussion of Title 18 scheduled for February 25 will also be rescheduled; the February 25 PPC meeting will be a joint meeting with the Economic Vitality Commission on the proposed sign code amendments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional business to conduct, PROBALA adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary