

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH**  
**Planning Policy Commission**

6:30 PM  
 September 23, 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:*

Ron Faul, Chair  
 Jason Voiss, Vice Chair  
 Joy Lewis  
 Matt Monahan  
 Nina Milligan  
 Sara Bader  
 Richard Zaragoza, Alternate

*Administration/Staff Present:*

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner  
 Megan Curtis-Murphy, Sr. Sustain. Coord.  
 Minnie Dhaliwal, CP&D Director  
 Valerie Porter, Assistant Planner

**CALL TO ORDER**

FAUL, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. He provided some guidelines for participation in tonight's meeting and outlined the topics on today's agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of Aug. 12, 2021. FAUL asked for changes or corrections, and there were none. Minutes are approved.
- b) Minutes of Aug. 26, 2021. FAUL asked for changes or corrections, and there were none. Minutes are approved.
- c) Minutes of September 9, 2021. FAUL asked for changes or corrections, and there were none. Minutes are approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ann Fletcher, resident and People for Climate Action member, expressed appreciation for progress made on the environmental policies in the Land Use Element on climate change and the Issaquah Climate Action Plan (ICAP). She noted some improvements in the policies (more clear and useful, more up to date, new additions) and areas that could possibly use more work (building standards to prevent energy loss, expanding local PSE energy generation and storage, and the City's emergency systems for 50 percent of the populace). She also spoke to the usefulness of looking at the ICAP goals and targets in their entirety.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a) **2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendments: Land Use Element - Climate Change Policies, (D)**

*Presented by:*

*Megan Curtis-Murphy, Senior Sustainability Coordinator*

Curtis-Murphy made staff's presentation, beginning with the goals for tonight's meeting. She explained the ICAP engagement timeline to date; how the consultant team has engaged with the public; general feedback received from each engagement effort; changes to the ICAP as a result of the feedback; specific feedback on emissions reduction and adaptive capacity priorities; goal and policy updates since PPC's last meeting; and the focus areas with changes shown

(Attachment A). She continued tonight we are asking PPC whether the goals and policies align with the Land Use Element in guiding Issaquah's future development. She concluded with the next steps in the development and review process (page 31).

VOISS referred to "decrease energy use" in B-1 ("*Decrease energy use in new and existing buildings by 25% by 2030*"). Does that include electricity, he asked. Curtis-Murphy said yes, and made a note to make it more clear. VOISS asked in C-3, what does "helping facilitate" mean ("*Reduce automobile emissions by expanding EV infrastructure and helping facilitate the transition to electric vehicles*"). Curtis-Murphy explained several pathways that the City can use to try to get more people into electric vehicles, both financial and non-financial.

LEWIS expressed appreciation for the way the ICAP has been improved and was presented for tonight's meeting, particularly the integration of feedback. She said she would like for the public and community to have another opportunity to provide concrete feedback on this latest, updated version before PPC's public hearing on October 14.

She continued with specific suggestions for areas in Attachment A, including: additions in language on page 35; ensuring the document clearly supports other pieces being referenced, such as tree canopy; adding language about building standards; directly addressing tree canopy, health and wellness, and a ban on chemical use; in Part E, adding a mention of species that can adapt to a warmer and drier climate, and use of managed landscape standards, and other suggested language in Part E; having additional discussions on Part F about emergency systems; and having more discussions on providing exact policy direction for future code revisions.

Curtis-Murphy explained the ICAP review process between now and October 14, and noted that another opportunity for public input is at the Council Study Session on September 28. She noted another Convening is scheduled for late October. LEWIS spoke in favor of notifying all interested parties and stakeholders so that PPC can receive their input before the October 14 public hearing. Curtis-Murphy said staff can attempt to get notification out to stakeholders of the opportunity to comment at the Council's Study Session. Dhaliwal suggested splitting out the goals and policies language, on which PPC is being asked to make a recommendation, from the actions in the ICAP for the October 14 public hearing. VOISS, MILLIGAN, ZARAGOZA, MONAHAN, BADER and FAUL all gave comments in support of moving forward with the goals and policies portion for the public hearing on October 14.

Leeson noted the actions will be embedded in the plan itself, and the recommendation on the ICAP as a whole is made by the Environmental Board.

MONAHAN asked for additional explanation about why 55 percent was chosen as the right goal for the tree canopy. Curtis-Murphy explained stakeholders consistently asked for an increase in the tree canopy percentage, specifically mentioning the need to focus on trees in riparian areas, selecting the right tree for the right location, types of trees, replacing trees with equivalent-size trees, and so, as well as keeping the healthy trees the City already has. Given that the canopy changes over time, we thought that 55 percent by 2035, an increase from the current 50 percent, was an appropriate goal. She continued there is some development going on in the City now, and about 10,000 trees were planted last year. The thought was to work toward an increase while also maintaining what we have.

MONAHAN asked in F-1 ("*Establish emergency systems that can serve 50% of Issaquah's population*"), are the services being referred to solely related to climate-change activities or are they all-encompassing. Curtis-Murphy noted the City recently hired a new Emergency Services

Manager, who will be leading the effort on incorporating parts of the ICAP into the City's emergency planning. The target is generally for all emergencies, not just climate-change related services, such as cooling centers for heat waves, she continued, but the actual target could get refined as new emergency services planning moves forward.

MILLIGAN complimented staff for its good work and also the public for its valuable comments. She asked what is being measured in the "50 percent" referred to in F-1. Curtis-Murphy explained the 50 percent means that, in an emergency, the City's target would be to have capacity for 50 percent of residents, assuming that not everyone would need services. The ICAP is a living document, she continued, and as planning is completed for the City's emergency services, the ICAP will be updated accordingly.

MILLIGAN asked whether self-certifying buildings as sustainable and meeting certain environmental goals is a possibility. She said her interest is in increasing the sustainable qualities of buildings without overburdening them with the costs of LEED certification, particularly in thinking about affordable housing. Curtis-Murphy replied that is a conversation we are just starting to have. She continued we want to ensure that buildings are increasingly green and sustainable, but not necessarily select only one way to accomplish that. There are lots of options, and certification may not be the most appropriate avenue for all buildings, she stated. Affordability is an important consideration as well.

BADER said an overarching comment she would like to make is that some policies are written very clearly, including what success would look like, whereas others are more vague, and the targets are less clear. Curtis-Murphy replied the objective was to state one or two measurable targets for each policy, normally the first and/or second ones in each focus area, and the following policies be guiding policies. Staff can take another look to see if more numerical targets could be added. LEWIS said she understands that the ICAP is a living document, but she would like to see more measurements added for what we hope to achieve.

FAUL asked how do we benchmark where the City stands today. With that information, he continued, we can then measure whether we are on, behind, or ahead of the target. He spoke in favor of identifying where these metrics are in the policies. Curtis-Murphy replied the draft ICAP currently has a gap for implementation; implementation is not part of the goals and policies. Generally speaking, she continued, each focus area has a policy with a measurable target, and the rest of the policies "roll up" into that measurable target. The City compiles Performance Measurements every year. In the case of the ICAP, she continued, the Environmental Board will be the reporting mechanism by which those metrics are presented to the Council

FAUL asked whether Puget Sound Energy produces metrics for residential, commercial, and industrial use. Curtis-Murphy replied yes, PSE reports on total communitywide energy use, separated out into residential, commercial, and industrial.

VOISS said it is his understanding that the goals and policies are a kind of road map, and the implementation plan is still coming. When does PPC see the implementation plan, he asked, or are you just asking PPC to weigh in on the goals and policies. Leeson replied in the past, PPC would have looked at all aspects of a plan such as the ICAP, but in the last few years the Council has created the Environmental Board and Transportation Advisory Board and tasked them with new responsibilities. In the case of the ICAP, the Environmental Board will make the final recommendation to Council. Curtis-Murphy gave more details about the Environmental Board's meeting two night ago and said the Board will be addressing the actions that will be in the implementation part of the plan. She continued Attachment A in the agenda packet is a redlined version of the goals and policies that reflect feedback from stakeholders, including PPC.

Public Comment

Ann Fletcher encouraged PPC members to look at the ICAP as a whole, and not just at the actions or the goals and strategies. She referred to a link sent with the agenda materials that leads to the full plan, including the goals as well as the strategies, actions, targets, and how success will be measured. So the material is available, she said, and not just abstract concepts.

**REPORTS**a) **Council Update**

*Presented by:*

*Christen Leeson, Senior Planner*

Leeson described the Council's recent Study Session on Title 18. She said Council directed staff to schedule meetings such that the update process is concluded by the end of 2022. A readjusted schedule will be available in the next PPC agenda packet. She noted that the October 14 PPC meeting will be a public hearing on Title 18 goals and policies as well as a presentation on the goals and policies for the Stormwater Management Plan. The PPC meeting on October 28 will be a joint meeting with the Development Commission on zoning and land use.

Dhaliwal added at the Study Session, Council directed staff to prioritize topics for seeking policy guidance from PPC. For the effort to streamline and modernize the code, staff will not be seeking input from PPC before preparing the first drafts for PPC's review. She continued Council also agreed to split the six topic areas in the update into two PPC meetings each during the initial review phase, but when the draft goes out for a public hearing, PPC will have one hearing on each of the six topic areas. She said staff's intention is to have the drafts available for review at least one month before the public hearings and plans to host some Q&A sessions and meet with PPC members one-on-one as needed so that members feel prepared by the public hearings. Council also directed staff to go ahead with drafting code for the topic areas where PPC has already weighed in.

Dhaliwal continued Council adopted the revised sign code at its September 20 meeting. For any PPC members who missed the in-person tour of representative development projects, another opportunity to take a tour is next Wednesday, September 29, with the Development Commission. She noted that staff will be giving an update on Title 18 at the Economic Vitality Commission's meeting next week, and that the Park Board and Environmental Board have both expressed interest in the tree topic. .

b) **Title 18 Code Update: Public Comments Received**

*Presented by:*

*Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, Community Planning & Development*

Provided in agenda packet.

**OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next PPC meeting/public hearing is scheduled for 6:30 PM on October 14, 2021.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no additional business to conduct, FAUL adjourned the meeting at 7:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe  
Recording Secretary