



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, January 25, 2024

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Bader, Commissioners Esemuede, Kennedy, Krass, and Patterson (Alternate)

Absent: Commissioners Altimore and Milligan (Excused)

Staff Present: Amy Dukes, Arts Commission Liaison
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager
Valerie Porter, Associate Planner

2. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak.

3. Public Hearing (00:02)

a) Recommendation on 2024 Docket of Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan (A)

Presented by:

Valerie Porter, Associate Planner

Porter presented the topic.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if there will be time to address all of the docket items in 2024. Porter replied yes, that most Comprehensive Plan Elements have already been presented, and that the only item remaining is Rezone, in the schedule to process.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if a docket item is not addressed for any reason, if it would be moved to the following year. Leeson replied yes, that the only items that must be completed are those that are state mandated.

Public Comment (00:08)

There were no requests to speak in person or online.

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CHAIR VOISS closed the Public Hearing. (00:09)

MOTION by VICE-CHAIR BADER to approve the 2024 Docket of proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. MOTION seconded by COMMISSIONER KENNEDY.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated that the Docket reflects what has been worked on for the Comprehensive Plan and no changes are needed.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the Docket is straightforward and that the Planning Policy Commission is no longer the arbiter for rezones.

CHAIR VOISS took a vote by raised hands to approve the MOTION. The MOTION passed unanimously.

4. Regular Business

- a) **Comprehensive Plan: Draft Arts and Culture Element (D)** (00:12)
Presented by:
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner

Leeson presented the topic.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked how public art is supported and maintained. Dukes replied not within the Arts and Culture Element but within the budget, a set maintenance line item that has been sufficient. New works should result in an increased maintenance line-item amount, however, a good conversation to hold during the Master Planning process. The art collection has grown in the last ten years. COMMISSIONER KRASS suggested adding the term *Building and Support*.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if there is anything within the policies that is not implementable, as the Commission has not been asked Question One for the other Elements. Dukes replied that the question is an issue that the Arts Commission had been concerned about. Rachel Wright, Arts Commission Co-Chair and Commissioner Chris Craven were present in the audience. Because the Element is not required but Issaquah hopes to see art integrated into the built environment and into the community, how to pursue the term *Incentivize*, in example, is uncertain.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that the word *promote* is similar in considering how to enforce. Dukes replied that there is signage on I-90 directing travelers to the Creative District, and there are tangible options that can be done to promote the district. Dukes stated that there is interest in incentivizing businesses within the Creative District to either include public art within facilities or include creative uses. Building owners sometimes do not allow small businesses to include creative spaces.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if events are what are referenced in A5. Dukes replied yes and that there is a newly established Cultural Calendar. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY

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suggested that language after *Public Art* be changed to *and events*. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY stated that *artistic* and *artisan* are redundant, and asked for clarification of *placemaking*, A6. Dukes replied that placemaking encompasses landscape and architecture, but that the definition can be simplified for clarity, and that the focus is to utilize local talent.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if there is a timeline for the Creative District program. Dukes replied the timeline is a five-year initial designation, followed by a process to continue in the program. The program was designated at the end of the first quarter of 2020, so there will be a redesignation process beginning shortly. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if funds for promotions and Capital Improvements are annual or applied for. Dukes replied that the funds are applied for, in the biennium state budget, and that every other year there is an opportunity to apply for a multi-year grant. There is currently a \$150,000 request to the state and a reply should be received in the coming weeks. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if there is an opportunity to maintain a neighborhood characteristic where art is installed. Leeson replied yes. Dukes replied that the item could be part of a Master Planning process discussion.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if there is a functional plan for the arts. Leeson replied that there is a directive, and a Master Plan will be worked on that will be the functional plan. VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that the Element feels implementable.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if a large local corporation such as Costco could help underwrite to take some burden from the state. Dukes replied that the city has adopted a new donation plan for corporate sponsorship, and while not in the budget, there are additional funding sources such as admission tax on movie tickets.

CHAIR VOISS stated that Issaquah is usually ahead of the curve. A concern, however, was that art be encouraged but not stipulated, and asked about visitor metrics. Dukes replied that while actual visitors are not being counted, in example Issaquah is a part of a geocaching initiative which provides information regarding how far people are coming to see the new troll. A report is expected soon, and comments are being forwarded. CHAIR VOISS stated that QR codes could provide information at art installations, and Dukes replied that there is a QR code at the troll installation that leads to the artist website. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if Transportation utilizes tracking volumes of people. Dukes replied that what is tracked by colleagues would be researched.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification regarding summer events, and Dukes replied that the Arts Commission has a granting program which funds events.

CHAIR VOISS asked if the old Shell station in Old Town is city-owned. Dukes replied that the Shell station is owned by the city and currently occupied by the Downtown Issaquah Association. The Arts Commission has partnered with the occupant. The Train Depot, Community Center and lawns, in example, are also used frequently. More opportunities and partnerships are hoped for.

VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that the policies encourage creation and enjoyment opportunities, but how to bring people into Issaquah through art is not reflected and asked if the intent is for the community only. Dukes replied that staff can insert that the intent is also visitation. The Arts

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Commission is working with the Economic Vitality Commission and Economic Development department as the Strategic Action Plan is developed.

Rachel Wright, Co-Chair of the Art Commission, explained gaps such as lack of space and a potential Art Permit that the Commission is working on.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked what zones art facilities would be permitted in. Leeson replied that permitting is being discussed. Dukes replied that anecdotal feedback from artists who have attempted to rent retail space is that artists are routinely turned away.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that there should be opportunities and not barriers to display art. Wright replied that the Brown Bear Car Wash wall is a challenge in that Brown Bear is not a creative business but can participate in the Creative District, but in example bears could not be depicted in a mural, potentially advertising, because of sign code.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked specifically what space barriers are. Wright replied that one is the need for necessary amenities that people require to create such as sinks, and damage to a building such as to carpeting is of concern. Appropriate space for more community and art is lacking, in example, the Issaquah Philharmonic Orchestra do not perform in Issaquah because there is no venue available.

5. Reports

a) Council Update (00:57)

Leeson stated that there was no report.

6. Other Business/Announcements

a) Upcoming Schedule

Leeson stated that there was no report.

7. Adjournment

CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary