

**REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

July 27, 2011

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Hinman, Vice Chair Franz Wiechers-Gregory,
Commissioners Biethan, Chandorkar, Miller, and Flynn

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Commissioners Julinsey and O'Hara

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Stiteler, Kelsey Johnson, Pete Sullivan, Thara Johnson,
Redmond Planning Department; Carolyn Hope, B. Sanders,
Redmond Parks & Recreation Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Lady of Letters, Inc.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Hinman in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

No changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION from Commissioner Gregory to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of June 22, 2011. Seconded by Commissioner Biethan. Motion approved unanimously (6-0).

MOTION from Commissioner Miller to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of June 29, 2011. Seconded by Commissioner Biethan. Motion approved unanimously (6-0).

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

No one from the public came forward to speak to the Commission at this time.

REPORT APPROVAL, Green Building/Infrastructure Incentive Program,

presented by Thara Johnson, Associate Planner, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Ms. Johnson thanked the Commission members for their review and noted one more item to be added to her presentation. As a final run through with the Zoning Code amendment in the Commissioners' packets, she noted that staff went through the existing Code and found references to Green Infrastructure. Under residential regulations, in the Bear Creek and the Wedge Neighborhood, there were references to Green Infrastructure with specific requirements for the three-star Built Green techniques and other LID techniques in the Green Infrastructure Code. Staff has proposed to include the changes to the Wedge and Bear Creek plans as reconciliation items, which will come back to the Commission later. There may be other changes to the Zoning Code presented to the Commission as well that have happened during the rewrite process over the last year.

Chairman Hinman confirmed that staff is dealing with both the Neighborhood Elements with Bear Creek and the Wedge as well as implementation components within the Zoning Code. Ms. Johnson said this proposal will give property owners in those neighborhoods notification of the changes considered. No one has come forward from either of those neighborhoods, and staff wants to make sure there is some staff outreach to talk to people in those areas. Commissioner Chandorkar asked about the

proposed changes, and Ms. Johnson noted there is a section in the Code that says low impact development in the Wedge and Bear Creek Neighborhoods are required to use these green building techniques:

1. Site assessment
2. Green building certification at the Built-Green three-star or LEED certification minimum level
3. Drought-tolerant landscaping
4. Native vegetation retention
5. Native soil preservation
6. Native soil restoration
7. Impervious surface area reduction
8. Minimal excavation foundation
9. Bio-retention or infiltration where feasible

Ms. Johnson said staff is concerned about the second technique, which requires complying with Built-Green three-star or LEED certification. In the Code amendment, staff is recommending a change to Built-Green or LEED for homes silver four-star certification as part of the incentive program, because most buildings are already being built at the three-star level in compliance with state energy code requirements. Staff is concerned that property owners in the Wedge and Bear Creek might not be aware of this change, so additional outreach is necessary. The Planning Commission report will not be modified at this time. Instead, this would be brought to Council by staff and come back through the system in the reconciliation package.

Chairman Hinman asked Ms. Johnson to speak about additional feedback from the building and development community staff has received. She noted that there was a sustainability roundtable at City Hall a few weeks ago organized by King County and attended by several jurisdictions. City staff talked about next steps in the incentive program, including a developers' forum set for early next year to get feedback about incentives from local builders. At the roundtable, the other jurisdictions expressed interest in being involved in that forum. Also, staff is working with King County's Green Tools organization to survey developers in Redmond and beyond for feedback. Chairman Hinman thanked Ms. Johnson for working on getting a comprehensive amount of information on this subject.

MOTION by Commissioner Chandorkar to approve the Green Building/Infrastructure Incentive Program report to the City Council. Seconded by Commissioner Flynn. Motion approved unanimously (6-0). Chairman Hinman thanked Ms. Johnson for her work.

REPORT APPROVAL, Natural Environment Element, Limited Shoreline Master Program Amendment & Critical Areas Ordinance Amendment - FEMA Floodplain Management, presented by Kelsey Johnson, Assistant Planner, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Ms. Johnson had no changes to the report submitted to the Commission. Chairman Hinman asked about the actual title of this report, which Ms. Johnson says will be *The Limited Shoreline Master Program Amendment (Natural Environment Element and Comprehensive Plan/FEMA Update)*. Chairman Hinman thanked Ms. Johnson for the title change, which he said gives a better breadth to the work the Commission has done.

MOTION by Commissioner Miller to approve the Limited Shoreline Master Program Amendment (Natural Environment Element and Comprehensive Plan/FEMA Update) report to City Council. Motion

seconded and approved unanimously (6-0). Chairman Hinman thanked Ms. Johnson for her work on this topic.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, Parks, Arts, Recreation, Culture & Conservation (PARCC) Element, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update, presented by Carolyn Hope, Senior Parks Planner, and B. Sanders, Senior Parks Planner.

Chairman Hinman opened the public hearing on this Element. He noted that while the Commission was not meeting on August 3rd, he would like all public written comments in by then to keep on schedule.

Ms. Hope spoke about the proposed changes to the PARCC Element. She said there is an updated vision and new policies to support those changes, which include the following:

1. Enhancing opportunities for walking in Redmond to highlight the high-quality park system the City wants to have
2. Offering diverse opportunities for users of the Parks and Recreation system
3. Enhancing public art
4. Enhancing public events that are integral to the City
5. Finding ways to have more successful partnerships with various organizations in the City

Staff has also combined 29 policies that seem to be repetitive. Eight new policies have been added, and three have been deleted. In summary, these are the policy issues:

1. The improvement of the health of residents and Parks and Recreation system users
2. Sustainability
3. Focusing more on arts and culture in the City
4. Integrating art and landscape design in City park designs
5. Ensuring that there are signature parks in urban centers
6. Ensuring that there is enough park and trail land, and recreational facilities, to accommodate the growth of Redmond
7. Enhancing the partnerships the City can have with public and private organizations
8. Focusing on enhancing and preserving the City's historic resources and using them as tools for education

Chairman Hinman invited Mary Bourguignon to speak to the Commission as part of the public hearing. She lives at 15821 NE 90th Way in Redmond. She is speaking to the Commission as Chair of the City's Parks and Trails Commission. She and her fellow commissioners are excited about the development and refining of the PARCC Plan. She says this plan will make a big contribution to the Comprehensive Plan Update. Ms. Bourguignon says the proposed changes will make the PARCC Plan into a living, breathing document to guide the City forward. She has been working with staff to refine the vision statement and work on policies for the future. She focused her comments to the Commission on issues of health and sustainability. She said she wants to encourage people to walk and move, and the PARCC Plan reflects that. Regarding sustainability, she said that the commission worked on incorporating policies that have been included in the recommended element regarding park structures.

Tina Sarin, Vice Chair of the Parks and Trails Commission, spoke to the Planning Commission next. She echoed Ms. Bourguignon's statements, saying that her Commission is very pleased to have the PARCC Plan, which has been a guiding force as to how the City is providing levels of service to the public. Ms. Sarin highlighted the issues about integrated arts, which she said is important to everyone in the community. She wanted to make sure art was involved in places the public can see, which is a natural

connection to the parks system. Ms. Sarin added that the Redmond Historical Society is excited about this plan, as well. She thanked the Planning Commission for their work on this topic.

Commissioner Chandorkar noted that citywide Wi-Fi was not mentioned in this Element, a service which could entice people to work outside in City parks more often. Ms. Sarin noted that her Commission members had not talked about that issue in their meetings, though it has come up before in talking about different parks around the Puget Sound area. She said the PARCC Plan could possibly include that item. Commissioner Flynn asked if any other documents guide the Parks and Trails Commission. Ms. Sarin said this was the main roadmap and guide for her Commission. Some issues outside the PARCC Plan do come to her Commission, as well. Chairman Hinman agreed that the PARCC Plan is a functional document, and a model to follow for others. With no other members of the public coming forward, Chairman Hinman closed the oral portion of the public hearing. The written portion of the hearing will remain open. He noted that no new issues have emerged from the public hearing, but he anticipated more after discussion with the Commission members.

With the lead Commissioner on this element, Commissioner O'Hara, excused this evening, Chairman Hinman took the lead. Issue 1 dealt with *iconic* art, and if that term should be used. Commissioner Flynn thought the phrase might fit better in the plan, not the policy, but he was okay with the existing policy wording. Chairman Hinman closed this issue.

Issue 2 had to do with clarifying additions to City park land. More text has been added by request of Commissioner O'Hara to talk about the percent of additional park acreage or trail mileage necessary to meet population growth. Chairman Hinman noted that Commissioner O'Hara was okay with the changes. Commissioner Miller asked about the acquisition of King County properties, and what is the City's strategy. Ms. Hope noted that in the staff analysis, staff did give the County parks some credit towards the City's level of service requirements, whether they were the property of Redmond or not. Staff noted some additional needs for field space in the future, which Ms. Hope says can be accomplished through partnerships with the County or a school district. Chairman Hinman closed the issue.

Issue 3 dealt with some language revisions relative to protecting wildlife habitat as a policy goal. Ms. Sanders noted a very simple phrase would be added, *to include wildlife habitat*, to the long list of items. Chairman Hinman presumed this would be okay with Commissioner O'Hara. With no other questions, he closed this issue.

Issue 4 was about the division between *values* and *vision*. With the language change proposed by staff, Chairman Hinman considered this issue closed. Issue 5, regarding policies relating to historic properties, will have some language to clarify PR 37. Ms. Sanders said that the changes deal with facilities and programs. Chairman Hinman closed Issue 5.

Issue 6 referred to King County properties. Ms. Sanders noted that Marymoor Park was a location where many different results could happen that would be satisfactory to the City. One option could be the acquisition of the park itself. The biggest goal is to better integrate the park into the City and not have it just a world to itself. More and better entrances could be added. Ms. Sanders has proposed working with King County to help provide better access to the park, and possibly add a community center. Chairman Hinman asked if these thoughts could be enumerated in a narrative before the policy. Ms. Hope said that could be a solution; she said an *or* clause could be added here to indicate acquisition *or a better partnership with the County* to develop capital facilities and programs.

Commissioner Miller said he sensed a few yellow flags in dealing with the Marymoor issue. He noted that this is a unique park. Commissioner Miller noted that there are facilities and functions within the park that are truly regional, such as the velodrome, for example. The maintenance dollars for the velodrome that are needed right now could wipe out the City's budget for Parks. That is why he is hesitant for the City to take over the Marymoor facility. He is concerned about Policy 72, and wants to replace *strategy* with *assessment of costs and constraints associated with transfer of ownership*. He pointed out that Marymoor is a park that is used by a number of people who do not live in the City, and he is concerned about the City bearing the cost incurred by those users. He asked what the implications were for the City to take over a 600 to 700 acre park.

Commissioner Biethan asked to respectfully change the conversation. He viewed the staff proposal regarding Marymoor as a way to establish a better relationship between the City and King County park programs. He saw this less as an acquisition and more of an integration of the two entities. He would anticipate seeing a new operating agreement not an ownership agreement. Commissioner Miller agreed with that idea, but noted the policy should reflect that. Right now, the policy uses the phrase *transfer of ownership*. Commissioner Chandorkar suggested changing the phrase to *transfer of ownership and/or partnership*, as a way to consider parks other than Marymoor that may be a benefit to the City in the future. Ms. Sanders thought Commissioner Chandorkar's suggestion was a good one, in that other parks might not be as burdensome as Marymoor. Commissioner Chandorkar said that change would allow the Parks Department to have the policy framework in place to make ownership or partnership decisions. Ms. Sanders said she would redraft that and come back to the Commission with details. This issue will remain open.

Chairman Hinman noted this was an important issue to discuss in terms of helping the City gain better access to County parks, especially Marymoor. He would like a collaborative approach to the issue. Commissioner Miller noted that he approved the idea of improving access to Marymoor across SR- 520 and other areas, but noted a broader, more passive policy might be better. He added that King County is making money off Marymoor through concerts and other activities, and would not be willing to divest it. Chairman Hinman would like an expanded narrative on this issue rather than placing the Marymoor situation in the policy language. Commissioner Gregory added that he would like more information on the City's attempts to acquire Marymoor, and any plans the City might have on maintaining the velodrome, as Commissioner Miller mentioned.

Ms. Hope noted that the City has been talking with King County about acquisitions and agreements since the start of the PARCC Plan. She said the City and County are close to creating an agenda to figure out how to move forward on these topics. Ms. Hope noted there is a need in the City and County for more recreation programs, fields, and community centers. Noise, transportation issues, and connectivity are all concerns associated with that. She noted that Commissioner Miller's concerns were on the money, and the City will work toward a collaborative effort with King County. Right now, this is just an exploration. Chairman Hinman would like more context related to that in the narrative. Commissioner Chandorkar recalled that a few months ago, the City was talking about widening West Lake Sammamish Parkway, west of Marymoor. Part of that project was to create a bike trail to Marymoor. He asked if the area north of Marymoor was part of the City, or part of the park. Ms. Hope noted that most of the wild wetland area Commissioner Chandorkar is speaking of, is part of Marymoor, and can be a building challenge as it is a mostly environmentally sensitive area. But there is a trail planned in this spot. Chairman Hinman reiterated that Issue 6 was still open.

Chairman Hinman said that Issue 7 was straightforward, in dealing with the PSE trail. He was satisfied with the staff proposal, and said if this could be added to the introductory paragraph of the element that would be great as a way to account for a community resource. Chairman Hinman closed this issue, pending the change he proposed. Ms. Hope agreed to that change.

Issue 8 dealt with the interpretive signage issue brought up by Commissioner Chandorkar. He noted that the policy reflects that interpretive signage would be only in appropriate places, but he believed the effort should be Citywide. Ms. Sanders noted that one interpretive signage system would not be developed for the whole City. Rather, where opportunities arise, the City would bring in these signs. The re-channelization of Evans Creek will provide an opportunity for interpretive signs in the near future, stated Ms. Sanders. She did not want to call out individual neighborhoods in the policy. Commissioner Chandorkar said he was fine with the revision. Chairman Hinman closed the issue.

Issue 9 was about maintenance practices in the parks, which was another issue of Commissioner Chandorkar's. He said he was fine with the staff revisions, which note the tradeoff between what is in an operations manual and what is City policy. Chairman Hinman closed the issue.

Issue 10, brought up by Commissioner Flynn, dealt with arts facilities. He said the staff revisions made sense. Commissioner Biethan asked about the policy of deciding if the City wants an art center. He asked if putting in the desire for an arts center in the policy was too specific, or if it should be included. He offered that including that desire in the policy might not be such a bad thing. Commissioner Flynn noted that what Commissioner Biethan was talking about was reflected in PRC-19, which speaks to facilities that support the cultural arts. Commissioner Biethan agreed to move on. Chairman Hinman closed the issue.

Chairman Hinman noted that the Commission had reached the end of the existing issue matrix. Several of them will have language coming back to the Commission. However, he believed the Commissioners did most of the work necessary to complete this element, aside from Issue 6. Commissioner Chandorkar asked about some language referring to the preservation of lands that have eroded due to flooding, flood plains, steep slopes, etc. He asked if this language should be placed elsewhere, because protecting these areas is important. Sensitive areas like this, Commissioner Chandorkar said, need to be protected from development, and he asked if this was covered by the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Ms. Hope did not disagree with the idea that this issue was important, but she said staff believes this is covered in the section of this element regarding important environmental resources. She noted a shorter *such as* phrase was used here, as a way to steer away from land that was not attractive for the Parks Department, but there was a distinction that the City would preserve those lands if that type of work would be required. Commissioner Chandorkar noted that the Commission has been talking about some areas on West Lake Sammamish that would be difficult to develop. Ms. Hope noted that PR-31 covers much of Commissioner Chandorkar's concerns, from protecting habitat to access to bodies of water. But Commissioner Chandorkar said this does not cover steep slopes or areas that are not developed. Ms. Hope said she would come back with more information. Commissioner Biethan noted that Commissioner Chandorkar was using that patch of land as a general, not specific example. Chairman Hinman noted that the Council has taken action on a particular piece of property there. He put down Commissioner Chandorkar's concern as Issue 11, dealing with steep slopes, as a new issue to add to the matrix.

Commissioner Biethan liked the Wi-Fi idea, and asked if there were a way to include this in the PARCC Element. Chairman Hinman asked if this were more of a utility issue. Ms. Sanders noted that Mr.

Sullivan, on the Planning staff, said that the Utilities Element does have policies related to cutting edge technology. Chairman Hinman asked to create Issue 12, dealing with Wi-Fi. Commissioner Chandorkar noted that the future is here already, and it is time the City took some action regarding this type of technology.

Commissioner Miller said that there were some language issues he wanted to address. With PR-21/54, he asked what the goal of the sentence would be. Staff agreed to look into that policy. With PR-22, Commissioner Miller asked about the language regarding providing unplanned recreation activities. A gymnasium was included as an activity, and Commissioner Miller asked that to be cleaned up. Commissioner Chandorkar noted a further edit on the issue, which staff agreed to fix. Commissioner Miller had a question about the labels the City puts on trails, specifically connector trails, which are different than regional trails. He noted that later in the element there is a regional trail that is called a connector trail, the Redmond Central Connector. He asked for better clarity of language, possibly using *community trails* rather than *connector*. Ms. Hope noted that staff has attempted to be clear in those names, and said the Mayor liked the name of the Central Connector as an ideal regarding connectivity in Redmond, without regard to trail nomenclature. Commissioner Miller next brought up a language edit about *bicycle lanes* noted as means of transportation, when in fact *bicycles* are that means.

In the rest of the paragraph, there was a discussion of widening sidewalks in the street right-of-way and the addition of cycle tracks. Commissioner Miller brought up the issue because the language might become dated rather soon. Parks and transportation definitions can sometimes clash, Commissioner Miller stated. Chairman Hinman confirmed that these are all comments from Commissioner Miller, not necessarily language changes. Commissioner Miller lastly brought up PR-44, and suggested deleting the word *recreational* before *pathways*, as there is a discussion of this later in the document as these being both recreation and transportation facilities.

Mr. Sullivan made a point of clarification at this point regarding Wi-Fi. He said if this was an issue specifically regarding Wi-Fi in the parks, it should stay in the PARCC Element, and the Parks Department should be in charge of providing City Wi-Fi. However, if the suggestion is that there should be City-wide access to Wi-Fi, this issue should be placed in the Utilities Element. The Utilities Element has some policy language that deals with Wi-Fi and other technologies. Chairman Hinman suggested talking about that issue during the discussion of the Utilities Element. With no other comments from the Commission, Chairman Hinman noted that there are some issues that still need to be resolved, as well as some edits. The oral portion of the public hearing has been closed; written comments will be accepted for another week.

Commissioner Chandorkar had one more issue about *private parks*, which involves private property. He asked if the City helped homeowner associations maintain properties of this nature. Ms. Sanders confirmed that Commissioner Chandorkar was talking about the Neighborhood Grant program. Commissioner Chandorkar noted that the City regards these private parks as contributions to the City's level-of-service credits. He would therefore like some clarifying language, perhaps a cross-reference to the Neighborhoods Element, to deal with this. Ms. Stiteler confirmed the City has given grants to small parks within private neighborhoods in the past when those parks are open to the public. Chairman Hinman noted that the City is not trying to deal with mini-parks or pocket parks. Ms. Hope agreed, saying that topic is more under the neighborhood park category. The idea with this language was to delineate between public and private parks. She did not believe that the City does any maintenance on private parks.

Commissioner Miller reintroduced the idea that the City uses the private park as a credit for the City's level of service. Ms. Hope noted that a private park does serve a part of the neighborhood. She further pointed out that if a developer were required by the City to build a park as part of the plat, then level of service credit should be allowed. Ms. Hope noted that there are a lot of areas in North Redmond without many public parks, due to heavy private residential development. That is why these private parks are so important. Ms. Hope noted there has been debate over this issue in the past, and agreed to talk about it more with the Commission at a future time. Commissioner Chandorkar agreed to work offline with staff to improve the language of this part of the element, and Chairman Hinman said he would consider this as a new issue, pending that language surrounding *private parks*. Chairman Hinman noted this element would be back on the agenda for the August 10th study session. He thanked the staff members and the public commenters for their input on this element.

STUDY SESSION, Capital Facilities Element, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update, presented by Pete Sullivan, Senior Planner, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Chairman Hinman noted that Commissioner Biethan was the lead on the Capital Facilities Element. Commissioner Biethan turned it over to Mr. Sullivan for some background. Mr. Sullivan noted by way of procedural introduction that at the public hearing last week on this issue there was one comment on Capital Facilities and several others on Utilities. He has been able to contact the people who made comments on the Utilities Element, and told them there would be additional revisions. That discussion led to some follow-up, from attorney Randall Olsen of Cairncross & Hempelmann. Mr. Olsen provided a response letter, which will be reviewed in the Utilities Element study session. Microsoft would like to comment further, but did not have time to do so, and Mr. Sullivan asked if the Commission could hold the written comment session open for Utilities and Capital Facilities until August 3rd. Mr. Wallace, who made comment on behalf of Williams Kastner, told Mr. Sullivan that he had reviewed the revisions made by the staff and had no further issues regarding stormwater retrofit. Finally, there was another letter submitted by Mr. Robert Gunther about Utilities, specifically undergrounding, which will be reviewed in the Utilities study session. Chairman Hinman asked if Microsoft had questions about Capital Facilities and Utilities. Mr. Sullivan said it was not clear with which element the company was most concerned.

The Commission supported extending the written public comment period for the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements until Wednesday, August 3rd at 4:30 p.m. Mr. Sullivan thanked the Commission, and promised to advise the interested parties about this change.

Issue 1 in Capital Facilities was a concern of Commissioner Flynn's about maintenance. Commissioner Flynn said the staff's change addressed his concern. He suggested a language change regarding planning in advance for maintenance costs, to wit, adding *ensuring facility maintenance costs can be effectively incorporated into the City's operating budget*. He says the language is not clear now with regard to that budget connection. He wanted to make sure the Capital Facilities plans had a reference to maintenance costs. Mr. Sullivan agreed to make that change. Commissioner Biethan closed the issue, pending the language change.

Issue 2 is closed already. Issue 3 deals with the police substation at Redmond Town Center. Chairman Hinman accepted the changes on Issue 3, which he was concerned about earlier. Commissioner Biethan closed that issue. Issue 4 and 5 are closed.

Issue 6 is open. It dealt with service standards. Mr. Sullivan reiterated that the rewrite of the service standards, though it responded to the updated standards, had some consistency problems, specifically in

dealing with transportation. The Transportation section discussed how the service standards are designed, but did not discuss thresholds. Therefore, additional language about the threshold has been added to that section. Mr. Sullivan pointed out that he included a diagram in the narrative of this element. Commissioner Chandorkar thought the narrative was fine. He noted that there was some specificity in the neighborhood parks section, but asked if more specificity could be added. He said that the level of service standards table has been moved, but said nothing has replaced it. Commissioner Chandorkar did not know how much specificity could be built in, as that could make for a bulkier document.

Mr. Sullivan said that was a concern, and added that the table he has included in this element shows the old ratings to calculate transportation service standards. Now, a system-wide balance of inputs versus outputs has turned this into a qualitative target. Commissioner Chandorkar said he was happy with the work the staff had done. Chairman Hinman noted that the graphic in the narrative presents more questions than answers. Commissioner Chandorkar said Chairman Hinman might be right. Commissioner Chandorkar said he would be okay with deleting the graphic. Commissioner Biethan confirmed with the Commission to delete this graphic; Mr. Sullivan said that would not be a problem. With the removal of the graphic, and with the language change, Commissioner Biethan said this issue was closed.

Issue 7 was the last open issue. Commissioner Biethan noted that if Commissioners can approve this item, and if no further comments come in, the issue can effectively be closed. The Commission closed the issue pending any further possible written public comment. Commissioner Miller said he saw some yellow flags on the public-private partnership issue, and wanted to make sure those types of projects did not leapfrog others on the City's priority list. He wanted to make sure the City was not left open to a perception that an applicant can purchase priorities. He was not sure how to reflect that in the language of the element, but wanted the Commission to keep this in mind. Commissioner Biethan asked if the staff revision adequately covered the topic of public-private partnerships. Mr. Sullivan thought that by including the phrase "as appropriate" Commissioner Miller's concerns had been addressed. Commissioner Miller agreed. Commissioner Flynn said the language captures the idea of public-private partnership well, and fits with similar language in the PARCC Element. Commissioner Miller agreed, and wanted to make sure the Commission considered that idea. Commissioner Biethan closed this issue, and closed the Capital Facilities Element study session. The written public comment period for Capital Facilities will stay open until August 3rd.

STUDY SESSION, Utilities Element, 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update, presented by Pete Sullivan, Senior Planner, City of Redmond Planning Department.

Chairman Hinman asked staff if any changes have arisen on this element. Mr. Sullivan noted that the preferred recommendation the Commission saw last week regarding undergrounding utility distribution lines has changed due to some new suggestions from the Technical Committee. Per Council direction, staff is asking the Commission to consider alternatives for the utility undergrounding requirement as provided in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. In the Utilities Element, UT-14 and UT-15 are the source of this policy. UT-14 requires the undergrounding of all new utility distribution lines. UT-15 promotes the undergrounding of existing lines through means such as conditioning development projects, street projects, and City street projects, and providing funding through the Capital Improvement Program or a Local Improvement District, should that occur. Also, the undergrounding individual service lines would be required when significant site improvements occur. There are a few tweaks to the language of this policy. Most of the concerns from the public about the high cost of undergrounding deal with the Zoning Code part of this situation.

The narrative at the start of this element identified three reasons for the undergrounding requirement:

1. Environmental quality
2. Aesthetics
3. Safety and security

Looking at the three alternatives, with Alternative 1, Mr. Sullivan pointed out that this was the approach staff initially preferred. This is the corridor approach, as opposed to an incremental approach. The corridor approach means anyone who triggers the requirement for undergrounding, whether through certain development types or exceeding the 100% valuation on single-family property improvements, would contribute to a fund to bolster the City's existing utility undergrounding program. The City would then work at a later time on an undergrounding project for the entire corridor. The benefits include predictability for those who trigger the requirement, with economies of scale for working on a large-scale project. The drawbacks include the fact that there are some isolated segments. This is no longer the preferred alternative for staff. Mr. Sullivan has consulted with the City Attorney to determine how much time the City would have to spend the funds under state law, if it were collected as a development fee. There was also a question of where such an undergrounding project could occur in relation to the project that triggered it, from being in the same block to being somewhere else in the City.

The second alternative is not preferred, but would be the incremental approach with an increase of the City's contribution, otherwise known as the capital programs/limited contribution approach. This would increase the funding in the utility undergrounding program, which is minimally funded in relation to other major capital programs. It would also cap the total amount a single family would be responsible for, with the City covering the remainder. It would protect property owners from high costs, but would lengthen the time of completing an undergrounding project.

The third alternative is the exemption-based approach, which would involve maintaining the City's current incremental approach with respect to distribution lines, but revise the exemptions for undergrounding distribution lines. Single-family homes, from alterations exceeding 100% to new homes to full demolitions, would only be required to bury the service line onsite to the utility pole. That is an important distinction, because at times, utility lines can run across the street. Therefore, that would involve trenching to the pole rather than erecting a new pole on the same side of the home. Requiring the service line to be buried represents 15% of the undergrounding cost, which is relatively small compared to the frontage requirement, Mr. Sullivan stated. This would take care of undergrounding service lines on the private side, and the City would be responsible for taking on over time the undergrounding of distribution lines on an opportunity basis, such as with major street improvements. The Technical Committee has revised its recommendation to this alternative based on feedback from the City Attorney.

The Planning Commission had asked some questions at its last meeting about various scenarios and arrangements that could be made with the alternatives. The Commission was supportive of the fund-based Alternative 1, recognizing that some significant changes might need to be made. There have been some changes based on a five-year time limit set by the state and the difficulty of aligning capital projects with the areas where funds have been collected. The complexity of determining the amount to be contributed is another factor. Overall, anticipated low utilization of a very complex program added to the complications as well. Not that many instances of contributions in real dollars to the undergrounding program would be made relative to the administration of it. Those are the reasons behind supporting Alternative 3.

Mr. Sullivan provided a rundown of land uses and how they would be affected by this alternative. Larger developments, including new plats or major alterations, would not require a change, and existing Code

language would apply. That would involve taking care of the service lines onsite and the distribution lines in front of the property. Short plats would automatically go before the Technical Committee and applicability would occur at the Technical Committee's discretion, based on the number of lots and the current utility configuration, on a case-by-case basis. The biggest change overall that would prevent high costs on relatively small projects of single-family construction, demolition, rebuilding, or alterations that exceed 100% of the property value, would be an exemption from frontage requirements and the burying of distribution lines. Those projects would be responsible for burying the service lines on site to the distribution pole. The circumstance of no utilities being present would be very rare, but could be possible.

To round out, there is an existing blanket provision in the Zoning Code that allows any applicant to petition the Technical Committee for relief. That process can result in an applicant only burying parts of a line, or possibly partnering with the City to do the undergrounding. Draft code language has not been provided at this time by staff, but Mr. Sullivan is looking for an endorsement of the concept he has presented such that the Council can review the Utilities Element and similarly indicate whether they support this direction.

Chairman Hinman noted that the presentation that Mr. Sullivan has brought forth supersedes the undergrounding language currently on the issue table. Mr. Sullivan said the next issue matrix would reflect those changes. Commissioner Biethan asked if the City had considered an 80-20 rule, like a levy or partnership, where the City would note the large undergrounding projects that had to be done and get 80% of those projects finished. The private sector would pay for the other 20%. That way, the City would decide what should be done rather than waiting for the development exception rule. Mr. Sullivan noted that the goal is to underground all the utilities at some point. It is an incremental approach at this time, and any additional dedication in the capital program to undergrounding comes at the cost of other projects. No part of the proposal has ever included a levy or increased taxes to take up this initiative of undergrounding wholesale.

Commissioner Biethan asked if undergrounding was a high capital priority for the City. Chairman Hinman noted that it was not, though it might be much higher for some neighborhood associations. Mr. Sullivan added that prioritization is opportunity-based. Where construction projects are happening, Public Works finds opportunities for undergrounding to utilize cost efficiencies. Single-family properties can get involved in those opportunities, as well. Commissioner Flynn asked about the short plats and if applicants have clear guidance as to what the Technical Committee's criteria would be. Mr. Sullivan did not intend for the table to represent draft zoning code language; he noted that staff has not drafted that code yet, which will be a very thorough process. Commissioner Flynn said that he would like Mr. Sullivan to add as much clarity as possible for applicants. Chairman Hinman said it would be good to have some transparency as to how the process works. Mr. Sullivan said he would ensure that feedback would be incorporated into future draft code language.

Commissioner Miller asked about the fiscal impact of the corridor approach compared to the current preferred alternative and how long it would take for the preferred alternative to happen. Mr. Sullivan said the implication for the single-family homeowner would be significant. The Public Works Department set up two scenarios with a homeowner making a minor addition to his or her house. Those costs on the low end were \$30,000; on the high end, \$65,000. The service line portion of that would be in the 10-15% range. If people worked on the service line only, the cost would be closer to \$5,000. Commissioner Miller reiterated he wanted to know the impact to the City on its long-term goal and policy of the undergrounding of all utilities. Mr. Sullivan noted that incremental undergrounding can take a long time, and is an opportunity-based system for Public Works. Commissioner Miller asked if the gaps in

undergrounding created by that approach create gaps in the overall policy. Mr. Sullivan responded that there is an aesthetic approach to this issue, when that opportunity is available. Commissioner Miller noted he was concerned about undergrounding and storm protection. Mr. Sullivan said undergrounding is more storm-resistant, but can be more difficult to maintain as it needs to be dug up to be accessed.

Commissioner Chandorkar asked about the public testimony last week from the Sammamish Rowing Association (SRA), which has issue with an undergrounding requirement. Commissioner Chandorkar asked where an organization like SRA would look in this element for information about its situation. Mr. Sullivan noted that SRA would fall under a commercial heading, despite its non-profit status. He added that the SRA would still have the ability to petition the Technical Committee for relief. Commissioner Chandorkar wants to make sure the language does not automatically direct people to the Technical Committee, which can be a time-consuming process. He would like to see some code language, when staff develops it, which clearly would lay out which land uses under which criteria would go to the Technical Committee. Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Sullivan if he needed confirmation from the Commission members that they understand the preferred alternative and support continued staff research. Mr. Sullivan said that was possible. He could reflect the issues matrix graphic he has used in his presentation in text form for its next distribution and add the comments from the Commission this evening, which he summarized:

1. Short plats need more guidance
2. Need transparency for applicants on how the process unfolds
3. Need clarity about which land uses would go to the Technical Committee
4. Need an analysis of the fiscal and policy impacts of undergrounding in the City

Mr. Sullivan said he would consider those issues with an eye on closure of this element next week. Chairman Hinman said more discussion would be valuable the next time the Commission sees this proposal. Mr. Sullivan agreed, and noted he would have more details on the written public input from Mr. Gunther received by staff. He summarized that input by noting Mr. Gunther has had a few development projects within the City that have triggered undergrounding. He asked the Commission to consider the rules not just as they pertain to residential development, but small in-fill development as well, such as short plats, where development in the immediate neighborhood is unlikely. Mr. Sullivan said his proposal captures that, but it could be clearer. Chairman Hinman asked to add this public comment to the issue item dealing with undergrounding.

Issue 9 deals with retrofitting existing development with stormwater controls. There has been some additional public comment on this as well. Mr. Sullivan noted that the three comments received express concern that the narrative and policies, especially the new policies that deal with stormwater retrofitting, imply that the City could, at a future date, mandate that retrofitting. Mr. Sullivan noted that was not the intent of the narrative or policies as written. The intent was to show how, over the decades, development in the City has resulted in a number of impervious surfaces before stormwater regulations were written. Mr. Sullivan said that treating stormwater only through new development is just one part of the puzzle; retrofitting has to be included as well to meet the City's environmental goals.

Mr. Sullivan said he has clarified this point in two ways. In the narrative, staff is proposing a Policy "New"4, in which the element would explain that retrofitting refers to City-initiated capital projects, such as the regional stormwater facility proposed Downtown. The policy also states that projects such as that facility can benefit private property owners, in that the facility handles the stormwater of the property. Property owners would then pay fees accordingly. Three people sent comments, and Mr. Sullivan is

expecting a comment from Microsoft sometime next week to see if his proposed changes satisfy their concerns.

Mr. Sullivan said the written comment from Mr. Wallace, the public commenter mentioned earlier, indicated that he wanted the Planning Commission to know that the revisions do reflect the intent. Mr. Olsen, the public commenter noted earlier, has written to say that the City's latest iteration of this element does satisfy his client's needs. He reminded the City that the rates for stormwater handling need to be set equitably. Mr. Olsen also brought up some language in the issue matrix about stormwater treatment and pollution control. Mr. Sullivan noted that Mr. Olsen's concern was consistent with City policy, and the Commission could therefore approve this issue or put it on hold, pending this language change. Chairman Hinman agreed to put this issue on hold with the hope of seeing a new issues matrix at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Flynn read the letter from Mr. Olsen to say that his concern was not about the language in the element itself, but rather about a comment staff made in the matrix. Commissioner Flynn noted the comment was the real concern, not the language in the element. Commissioner Biethan would like to see staff address this in the next version of this element. Mr. Sullivan noted that the matrix does provide context to the element, and he will work on clarifying this point. Commissioner Flynn read the letter to say the language of the matrix needed changing, in that one could construe from them some broad statements about the element. Commissioner Gregory said that was an important change to make, in that a legal challenge to the element could involve a scrutiny of the matrix. He added that Mr. Olsen was right in his assessment that the City was not in a position to enforce state pollution standards. He supported Mr. Olsen's statement that pollution violations based on state standards should be enforced by the state.

Commissioner Chandorkar tried to clarify Commissioner Gregory's comment, and looked specifically at the language that speaks to how a property owner would be notified. After re-reading that language, Commissioner Chandorkar noted that he would not suggest any changes to Mr. Sullivan's proposal. Mr. Sullivan said staff will respond to that public comment, but that does not necessarily mean a rescinding of language in the issue matrix. Following that discussion, Chairman Hinman decided to leave Issue 9 open based on that public comment, other comments, and staff responses. Mr. Sullivan said that Microsoft may provide more public comment, but he was not certain if or when that would happen. Commissioner Gregory, as a point of clarification, noted that the letter from Mr. Olsen dealt with owner notification about stormwater issues and what Mr. Olsen believes is a requirement for retrofitting. He asked staff to wrestle with that issue, to resolve whether a stormwater violation would trigger a requirement for a retrofit.

Issue 10 dealt with green infrastructure evaluation and implementation and was the result of a public comment. Mr. Sullivan has updated the language of the policy based on that feedback. Chairman Hinman approved of the change, and closed the issue pending any further public comment.

Issue 11 was about coordination with energy service providers, which again was the result of public comment. Some language has been added and modified, and Mr. Sullivan said that existing language speaks to this coordination, and that Policy 12 helps clarify it. Chairman Hinman closed this issue pending further public comment.

Issue 12, Chairman Hinman said, could garner a lot of public comment. Mr. Sullivan agreed, and Chairman Hinman kept the issue open.

Issue 13 was about energy audits, and new language has been provided. Commissioner Flynn said that language addressed his concerns to increase energy conservation awareness for commercial building owners. Chairman Hinman closed this issue.

Issue 14 dealt with editorial comments from Chairman Hinman about this element. He noted the one edit regarding distribution system components that staff did not support, and recommended the Commission approve that recommendation. Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Sullivan to update the draft of this element keeping in mind that change and the others discussed. Mr. Sullivan agreed to do so, and said he would review it with staff member Cathy Beam, as well. Chairman Hinman closed this issue, and noted the Commission will see more public comments with staff responses during the week of August 10th. Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Sullivan to capture those comments, if possible, in the issue matrix.

Commissioner Chandorkar asked about the Wi-Fi question brought up with the PARCC Plan, and if it should be a Citywide policy or a parks-only amenity. Commissioner Biethan asked if Citywide meant he could have Wi-Fi in his home. Mr. Sullivan noted that some cities do provide Internet and Wi-Fi service; others provide hotspots or corridors. He said there is no specific idea about where this policy would go for Redmond, which would involve a conversation with a lot of different City stakeholders. The current proposed policy language change involves this phrase: *maintain Redmond's competitiveness in support of businesses, residents, and visitors by promoting access to advanced and affordable communications technology citywide*. That would be in recognition that fiber and/or another technology could be developed. Mr. Sullivan said that in the future, this type of technology might be considered a basic necessity. He noted that proper communication technology is a good way to attract business and residents, and overall economic development.

Commissioner Gregory noted, however, that that City does not necessarily have to be the provider of Wi-Fi. Many people and businesses have their own Wi-Fi technology, he pointed out. He said that there are commercial providers that already provide that service, and asked about the origin of pushing the City to provide Wi-Fi technology in the parks. Commissioner Gregory added that parks are for recreation, not a place to work. He said this move for Wi-Fi appears to conflict with the goal of keeping people active in the parks. Commissioner Miller said that if the City could provide Wi-Fi, that might be a safety net for people who do not normally have access to it. He said that access to the Internet has a reasonable public purpose. Commissioner Biethan said he would like to keep the discussion open, despite conflicting comments from Commission members. He said that Wi-Fi would be a great way to attract business and young professional workers to Redmond. He saw Wi-Fi as a sign of a progressive city.

Commissioner Chandorkar agreed with Commissioner Gregory that people in parks should not simply be using the Internet. He said that Internet access will soon become another utility, and he wanted the City to think progressively. Commissioner Flynn said he was conflicted on the issue, in that he recently saw someone working on a laptop in a beautiful natural setting and thought it was both odd and intriguing. He agreed that Internet access is very important across the City, and he would generally support that. He liked the language in the proposal because it leaves the City open to new technologies, whatever they may be.

Chairman Hinman would like to see this issue in the Commission's report going forward. He noted that the City should not necessarily be in the business of providing Internet access as a utility, but could provide it as an amenity, as it does in the libraries, for example. He recommended exploring the Wi-Fi idea for the parks and wanted to talk with more Parks staff to get their input. He would like to make this an action for Parks rather than a Utilities issue. Commissioner Miller noted that Redmond already

provides electricity for electric cars, in the effort to lead by example. He supported providing Wi-Fi access, whether that would be in parks or other areas of the City. Mr. Sullivan said he would take the Commission's comments into account. He did not hear strong concerns about rejecting this issue, but he did not know if it would be an issue table item as yet. Chairman Hinman asked if the Commission should make this issue part of the report it sends to the Council. Commissioner Gregory said it did not rise to that level. Mr. Sullivan said he would include in the report that the Commission discussed this issue, and would provide bullet points of the statements made. Commissioner Biethan said, for himself, that he would like to see communication technology as something the Commission strongly encouraged. He wanted to emphasize that Redmond should be a leader on this topic.

Chairman Hinman said that this could be part of the reconciliation process in dealing with economic vitality. Commissioner Chandorkar echoed Commissioner Biethan, in that some action should be associated with this issue, not just talk. Chairman Hinman said this could turn into a part of the Capital Improvement Plan in the future, as a possible requirement for new building. Right now, it is in the PARCC Plan. Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Sullivan to request from Ms. Hope for some Parks perspective on providing Wi-Fi for the next Commission meeting. Mr. Sullivan agreed, and said he would note this discussion in his report to Council, as a way to alert Council members about the importance of the issue. He asked for offline comments from the Commissioners if they had any further concerns.

REPORTS/SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S):

Ms. Stiteler mentioned that on July 21st, the Transportation Master Plan public workshop was conducted. It was attended by more than 35 people, 25 of whom stayed for an extended time to talk in groups about transportation issues and their suggestions for the future. On July 26, Arthur Sullivan from ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) gave a presentation on the East-King County Housing Needs Assessment to the Council. Chairman Hinman noted that there would be a community meeting to seek perspectives regarding small animal husbandry at 6 P.M. on August 3rd.

ADJOURN

Chairman Hinman adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:33 p.m.

Minutes Approved On:

Planning Commission Chair