

City of Redmond Planning Commission

April 16, 2012 Meeting Summary
Redmond Planning Commission Annual Retreat
Matt's Rotisserie & Oyster Lounge
Redmond Town Center
16551 NE 74th Street
Redmond, Washington

1. Meeting Attendance:

Planning Commissioners in Attendance:

Tom Hinman, Chair; Franz Wiechers-Gregory, Vice Chair; Phil Miller, Eric Murray, Vibhas Chandorkar and Robert O'Hara

Planning Commissioners Excused:

Scott Biethan

Staff in Attendance:

Rob Odle, Planning Director; Lori Peckol, Policy Planning Manager; Sarah Stiteler, Planning Commission staff liaison; Pete Sullivan, Senior Planner

2. Call to Order:

Tom Hinman called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

3. Approval of the Agenda:

The agenda was approved without changes.

4. Approval of Meeting Summary:

Meeting summary for 3/28/12 was approved.

5. Items from the audience:

None

6. Presentation: One Redmond

Rob Odle, Planning Director, presented information about the newly forming One Redmond organization. He gave an overview about how the idea of the organization has evolved and its goals and mission which include ensuring a connected community in which government, businesses, education and residents are engaged in the work to sustain a livable city. The vision of One Redmond is to be a community driven and highly visible public-private partnership recognized for its leadership related to community events and economic development.

Timing: the creation of One Redmond involves the effective combination of the Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce, the Redmond Economic Development Alliance, and Realize

Redmond, working together with the City of Redmond, in order to work cooperatively to achieve community goals. The first board meeting for the newly created One Redmond is anticipated in July, 2012, with a Chief Executive Officer hired and in place by September, 2012.

7. Work Program/Goals for Upcoming Year:

Lori Peckol, Policy Planning Manager, reviewed items on the handout given to Commissioners entitled, Major Topics for Planning Commission in 2012. Upcoming items for the second quarter of 2012 include the review of proposed amendments to the Redmond Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan, (e.g. the “docket”), an amendment regarding utility undergrounding and the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Other items for subsequent quarters as well as potential briefing topics were also discussed, such as briefings on various transportation topics (Sound Transit, SR 520, Metro’s B-line), and STARS (Sustainable Transportation Analysis and Rating System). Chair Hinman asked if there were opportunities for joint meeting topics to discuss with the City Council. Ms. Peckol responded that the TMP could be a possibility for a joint meeting topic; Mr. Odle mentioned that additional possible topics could include sustainability and urban design issues.

8. Discussion:

Including reflections on last year, operations and future opportunities

Reflections:

Several Commissioners indicated that they appreciate the efficient, well-prepared presentations by staff, and that staff does a good job providing the information necessary for the Planning Commission to begin their analysis of topics. Suggestions for staff/process improvements included the following:

- For more complex projects, Planning Commission should provide input on topics earlier in the overall project review schedule, for the Commission to have more meaningful input.
- Periodic reporting (more than staff updates at the end of Commission meetings) on the outcomes of the Commission’s recommendations to “close the loop” on how the Council acted on a particular recommendation. This could be done with a brief memo to the Commission on a quarterly basis. Further, it may provide insights into how the Planning Commission’s input may have affected a Council decision.
- Provide context as broadly as possible for Commission to get a deeper understanding of both sides of an issue while acknowledging the need to keep a balance regarding an appropriate level of detail for Commission review and that staff’s role is to provide a recommendation and rationale.
- The Planning Commission report to City Council should not contain a staff recommendation. The Technical Committee Report serves as the appropriate place to discuss alternatives and support a preferred recommendation. If staff decides to provide a different recommendation to City Council, that needs to be provided separate from the Planning Commission report.
- Chair Hinman recognized and expressed his appreciation for Commissioners’ taking lead roles on various sections of the Comprehensive Plan update, for example.
- Emphasize instances of cross-departmental collaboration

Operations:

Ms. Peckol described two staff roles in working with the Planning Commission:

- 1) Planning Commission liaisons – scheduling topics; forwarding materials; responding to Commissioners’ operational questions (currently staffed by Pete Sullivan and Sarah Stiteler)
- 2) Project staff – providing analysis and rationale for staff recommendations and responding to Commissioners’ questions on proposed amendments.

She noted that sometimes the two overlap, when either Pete or Sarah are taking a project through the Commission. However, the liaison’s primary role is to foster and work with project staff to develop materials and presentations according to what kind of information will be the most helpful to the Planning Commission.

Chair Hinman questioned if there may be other city decisions/processes that should be reported to the Planning Commission, e.g. Hearing Examiner recommendations on larger projects. Possible methods to enhance communication could include Planning Commission attendance at meetings where projects are discussed, such as the City Council Planning and Public Works Committee.

Commissioners discussed their role and that of City government as being one that encourages partnerships and advocacy for greater community involvement. Ideally, the public should be brought into the process and included in the conversation as early as possible and as much as possible.

Future Opportunities:

The Planning Commission would like to stay informed of the progress on issues relating to Overlake Village and Downtown as well as parks and transportation in general. They agreed that status updates would be helpful, even if nothing was happening at the moment. Other topics of interest include:

- Redmond Central Connector – the Commission would like to see more of how it reflects what is intrinsically Redmond, with more interdepartmental coordination of capital projects.
- Opportunities for more transit oriented developments and station area planning.
- Sustainability – especially with regard to non-motorized transportation – needs to be reflected not only for the Downtown and Overlake Urban Centers but for other neighborhoods as well.
- Urban living – providing opportunities for current and future residents to learn more about what living in Downtown and Overlake will be like.
- Do we need to look at neighborhoods and how they function in new and different ways? What is the neighborhood of the future and how do we build a sense of community?

- How do we look at decisions regarding their impacts to the City as a whole and not just specific neighborhoods?
- Make sure that we are planning for all people in Redmond; must be intentional in planning for all population groups including youth, seniors, other persons with special needs, for example.
- We need to consider how we locate housing and services relative to light rail corridors to avoid unintended outcomes, e.g., a preponderance of lower cost housing within a specific area.

9. Election of Chair and Vice Chair:

Franz Wiechers-Gregory was nominated to the Chair position. The vote was unanimous in favor of the nomination with a vote of 6-0.

Robert O'Hara was nominated for the Vice-Chair position but was unable to accept the nomination. Vibhas Chandorkar accepted the nomination for the Vice-Chair position. The vote was unanimous on the nomination with a vote of 6-0.

Chair Hinman stated that he would like to serve as Chair for one more meeting, scheduled for April 25, 2012. Franz Wiechers-Gregory will begin as Chair at the following Planning Commission meeting which is scheduled for May 23, 2012.

10. Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Summary prepared by:

Sarah Stiteler, Senior Planner / Planning Commission Staff Liaison