

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23
Attested by S. Weaver

Springfield Planning Commission

Minutes for Tuesday, December 6th, 2022

CCI Meeting & Regular Session

Meeting held in Jesse Maine Conference Room and via Zoom

Planning Commissioners Present: Chair Matt Salazar, Vice Chair Grace Bergen, Michael Koivula, Andrew Buck, Kuri Gill, Seth Thompson, and Steven Schmunk

Absent: None

Staff: Sandy Belson, Comprehensive Planning Manager; Mark Rust, Current Planning Manager, Chelsea Hartman, Senior Planner; Sarah Weaver, Community Development Administrative Assistant; Kristina Kraaz, Assistant City Attorney

Chair Salazar called the CCI Meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

1) Annual Review of Citizen Engagement Activities

Staff: Sandy Belson, Comprehensive Planning Manager
50 Minutes

Staff / Sandy Belson gave a presentation on the annual review of the Citizen Engagement Activities undertaken during the past year (see presentation).

Below a synopsis of the some of the suggestions and comments made by the Commissioners concerning the Annual Review of CCI initiatives:

- Due to the growing population of the Hispanic Community, more efforts should be made to involve them in CCI outreach activities.
- As the community becomes more diverse, Staff should be incorporating as many groups as possible in their outreach strategies. Since it isn't possible to approach people on the street, reaching out to the places where they congregate could be an effective alternative to make contact. As an example, Arc of Lane County serves a very diverse group of individuals in an interesting part of the city. Staff could also approach various type of religious gathering places not just to solicit input but also help convey the significance of City projects and encourage them to participate. A good example of this is when Staff reached out directly to environmental groups about the Floodplan Map and the Comprehensive Map Update Projects and informed them about how they could personally contribute to the conversations and successful outcomes.
- It was suggested to Staff that they focus on the Alaskan and Native American community in their outreach strategies. Staff originally tried to reach out to the Tribes and Native American population during the Natural Resource Study. Initially they received no response. They were able to eventually use resources provided by the DLCD to hire a consultant with Willamalane to create a dialogue to engage the Alaska Native and Native American communities. Another strategy employed was going to recreation areas such as parks and trailheads where brochures

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23

Attested by S. Weaver

and flyers were strategically placed. Staff has continued to cultivate the contacts won through these outreach methods and carry them over to other City projects.

- Staff did an exceptional job reaching out during the Main Street Safety Project as well as the Comprehensive Map Clarification and Floodplain Projects in that they went directly to the affected areas and engaged the community at their own doorstep. They used fact sheets to counteract misinformation from being spread in the community. Such efforts should continue.
- The role of the Commission is to balance out the various voices in the community conversation, so the squeaky wheel doesn't dominate. Opportunities to engage the community present themselves during events where peripheral issues related to a project might entice the community to engage in other events and participate.
- Outreach starting with the properties that are most directly impacted by certain projects would be most effective. Using transportation as an example, they could move on from properties to affected businesses and industries. Focusing on the most affected first and expanding from there would be the good point of reference to target outreach. These priorities could be supplemented by a general information campaign targeted toward the whole community.
- Using formats such as newsletters and community updates on the City website would support the ongoing community outreach strategies by also including the persons, groups, businesses, and organizations that the City has begun a conversation with. It would be beneficial to set priorities based on direct- and indirectly impacted community members and groups as well as continuing ongoing outreach efforts.
- It was suggested that the Commission meet periodically – quarterly – in person in Council Chambers and inform the community that an informal dialogue with the Commission is possible – a form of open house.
- Building on the idea of educating the public about the process: Public comment is especially useful to Staff when it's substantive. One way to support this type of comment is to educate the community. The question that should be explored is how best to provide the community with the knowledge to make substantive comment.

Commissioner Koivula: If there is a change in the composition of the City Council could that alter the commitments to City programs? Could they effectively change course and cancel existing projects?

Staff / Kristina Kraaz: It is possible for the newly elected Council to change the scope, priority, or even terminate projects, if that what the majority decides. It is uncommon for the City of Springfield to change direction after projects have been authorized. Historically, the City of Springfield governing bodies have generally maintained a consensus extending past individual Councils. This is not normally the case for other local governments and jurisdictions where the margins are slimmer, and a change of an elected body can impact the direction of programs and priorities.

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23
Attested by S. Weaver

Commissioner Koivula: Has the Council in the past reached out to the CCI Committee for guidance on outreach strategies? The Commission could do more to actively support the Council in drafting ideas for outreach. Have any of the activities lead to an expansion of involvement from citizen groups and have some of the suggestions made by the Commission been followed up on?

Staff / Sandy Belson: did not recollect the Council soliciting outreach strategies from the Planning Commission. There is always an internal dialogue at the staff level with regard to ongoing and upcoming projects. There is more connection with the less traditional land-use planning staff – housing for example. More outreach strategies will be included in the upcoming Housing Needs Analysis. Staff included housing outreach strategies in the housing report for this year.

Commissioner Gill: stated that there is a real opportunity to use the Commission as a resource to gather information and provide the content to the City Council. For the Commission, one of the challenges to public engagement is when it receives comment that is peripheral to the topic being considered, which cannot be acted on. This could be misconstrued as disinterest and lack of support in community participation. It could be productive to pass along all public comment even if it is off topic. This would give Council input as to what the community is concerned with. There should be a place where this type of public comment could be collected and registered with Staff and the Council.

Staff / Mark Rust: There are examples of the Staff providing Council with public comment not directly related to a project's focus. A supplemental recommendation was submitted to the Council on the Development Code Update, which captured comments and suggestions from the public that wasn't directly tied to the topics included in the Update.

Staff / Sandy Belson: pointed out that the online open houses with embedded questionnaires from not just this year but also employed in other projects is a relatively new strategy. An example of this is the Development Code Update project that used a story map embedded with questionnaires. This type of online open house is available to all at their convenience and allows for more direct participation in the conversation.

Commissioner Gill: agreed that the virtual open house is a great format that allows people to view and digest information at their own pace. Even going to live meetings allows the individual to gather more data to process later and become more informed before potentially adding to the conversation. The short video that was used during the Natural Resources project is another resource that was very successful. It doesn't necessarily have to be a high-tech video. Even static PowerPoint presentations can be very effective educational tools, which can be translated into different languages to reach even broader audiences.

Staff / Sandy Belson: agreed that supplemental recommendations circulate internally to support work that Staff is doing and is incorporated in other documents, when appropriate, but

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23
Attested by S. Weaver

there is a fear that the City asks for public comment and appear to not follow-up with action. This could discourage community members from becoming more involved. With regard to educating the public about substantive comment, Springfield Oregon Speaks includes the approval criteria within the site and the public is able to directly see how the Commission reached a decision.

Vice Chair Bergen: pointed out that during the beginning of Covid, Staff added brief synopses of meetings to social media to get the word out on the Commission's activities. She believes that it is the role of the Commission to actively pursue input from the community even if we are unable to follow-up with concrete action.

Chair Salazar: mentioned that the more public comment we seek the more staff time is needed to respond to it. There needs to be a balance between what time is available and prioritize the usage of resources.

Koivula: reminded the Commission that Oregon Land Use Goal #1 is Citizen Involvement. It is the role of the Commission to listen to the community – whether it's germane or not.

ADJOURNMENT – 6:57 P.M.

7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Regular Session City Council Chambers and via Zoom

Chair Salazar called the Regular Session of the Planning Commission to order at 7:14 pm.

Planning Commissioners Present: Chair Matt Salazar, Kuri Gill, Michael Koivula, Andrew Buck, Seth Thompson, and Steven Schmunk

Excused Absence: Grace Bergen

Pledge of Allegiance – Led by Chair Salazar

Approval of the Minutes – Approved

- November 1st, 2022
- November 15th, 2022

Business from the Audience – None

Report of Council Action

Chair Salazar: reported on the City Council meeting from November 21st. City Council filled four out of six BPAC vacancies. All four applicants were selected to become voting members. There

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23
Attested by S. Weaver

are still two open positions. He called on the Commissioners attending to encourage people to apply for the open positions. They also approved two new members of Springfield Police Advisory Committee (SPAC). City Council then received the same presentation from Willamalane on their Comprehensive Plan Update Project that was given to the Commission in November.

Andrew Buck: reported on the City Council meeting of November 14th. During the Work and Regular Sessions, the Council held interviews for vacancies on the Library Board and the Historic Commission. There were three applicants for each. The Council approved all three candidates for the Library Board and two out of the three applicants for the Historic Commission. They then focused on budgetary matters. Council was asked by Staff to address concerns about the 2024 fiscal year budget in preparation of drafting it, which will be voted on Spring 2023.

Kuri Gill: reported on the City Council meeting of November 28th. They had a conversation about the camping ordinances and heard presentations on the Comprehensive Plan Map Clarification Project and the Climate Friendly & Equitable Communities Rulemaking Parking Requirements. They presented the Upbeat and Small Business Saturday. They also reviewed a Justice grant proposal to create a more secure internet connection in the Justice Center as well as replacing 20 gas masks that are no longer functional. They accepted the completed High Banks and Thurston Overlay capitol project. There was a SEDA meeting after the Regular session, during which they approved a resolution on allowing the City Manager to sign contracts during the holiday recess.

Andrew Koivula: reported on the December 5th City Council meeting where they decided during their deliberations on the CFEC Parking Requirements to accept Option 1. This will repeal all parking mandates. They also discussed the non-emergency medical transport contract submissions. This was originally contracted out to Mid-Valley Ambulance and with the contract expiring soon, they decided not to renew. The Fire Department reached out to other non-emergency transport companies and were unable to find an interested party. Consequently, they have proposed that Eugene Ambulance Transport would take over all non-emergency transport within the City of Springfield. This service would be pay for play and not a taxpayer-based service. To cover the City of Springfield's needs, they would be adding five ambulances to their fleet and the requisite personnel. Many questions remain about funding the buy-in. This option would be expensive on the front end even though they expect it to pay for itself long term. There was a teacher recognition during the Regular Session and the LDS community thanked the City for the legal and planning assistance on building their new temple. Two decisions were reached during the Regular Session: 1) To allow recreational vehicles as temporary housing on private property with registration, but no permit fee and; 2) To waive System Development Charges (SDCs) fees on city sewer, storm drain transportation for affordable housing. This does not affect the SDC fees for MWMC or other City charges.

Business from the Planning Commission – None

Planning Commission Minutes

Approved 1.18.23
Attested by S. Weaver

Business from the Development and Public Works Department

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be taking place on January 18th, which is a Wednesday. The City Council is meeting on Tuesday, January 17th since Monday is Martin Luther King Day is a holiday. There is not a heavy agenda for that meeting. We will be recognizing our appreciation for Commissioners Gill and Koivula's service since their terms are expiring and this will be their last meeting. During this meeting the Commission will be electing the Chair and Vice Chair as well as making your committee appointments for the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) and Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). It is still unclear when the vacancies for the two Commissioner positions will be filled. There is a joint meeting with Lane County, Eugene, and Springfield that will be scheduled for either the 14th or 21st of March.

Staff / Kristina Kraaz: reported that the City of Springfield along with 12 other cities and one county filed a judicial review of the Climate Friendly & Equitable Communities Rulemaking. The petition for review will take time to be evaluated. We have also requested a stay to receive immediate relief from complying from the rules until the rule has been reviewed.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:20 P.M.