

# MINUTES

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Held Virtually

Port Angeles, Washington 98362

May 11, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

Chair Stanley opened the regular meeting at 6:02 p.m.

### ROLL CALL

**Commissioners Present:** Ben Stanley (Chair), Steve Luxton, Richie Ahuja, Andrew Schwab, Marolee Smith, and Tammy Dziadek

**Commissioners Absent:** Colin Young – Excused

**City Staff Present:** Emma Bolin (*Interim Director of CED*)  
Ben Braudrick (*Associate Planner*)  
Nathan Docherty (*Assistant Planner*)  
Holden Fleming (*Housing Coordinator*)

### Public Present:

Adrian Hoban, Brian Mattuch, Sean Halberg, Bob Vreeland, Brian Grad, Ian Miller, Jesse Waknitz, Sean Halberg, Susan Schlicher, Tony Billera, Ed Chadd

### PUBLIC COMMENT:

**Chair Stanley** opened the general public comment period:

#### **Brian Grad**

Spoke to the importance of local orientation to the climate resiliency effort. Asked what we are willing to relinquish due to the effects of climate change.

#### **Ed Chadd**

Spoke on the difficulty of using Webex and would like there to be an easier way to access meetings.

**Chair Stanley** closed public comment at 6:13 pm.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

## **ACTION ITEM**

### **1. Climate Resiliency Plan Public Hearing**

**Planner Braudrick** presented the staff report for the Draft Climate Resiliency Plan

Chair Stanley outlined the process for the public hearing and opened the hearing to public comment.

#### **Bob Vreeland**

Saw that the plan addresses sea level rise but wondered about forest fire vulnerability. Voiced concern about developments that are near forested areas at the edge of the city. He also voiced concern over the language to disincentivize development not including forest fire vulnerability. Wondered if there would be an appendix of actions that were not used but were considered. Asked to consider a carbon tax.

#### **Brian Grad**

Defined psychological resilience. Resilience means there is something to bounce back from. Felt that it wasn't five minutes to midnight, but instead five minutes after midnight due to methane releases from the arctic permafrost regions. Concerned about the lack of power available from local sources. How are we going to have capable capacity for local resources and basic law and order. Things are changing rapidly.

#### **Brian M**

Pointed out that the document was listed in the metadata as Vancouver. Pointed out that people from Vancouver and the consultants will not have to live with the consequences of this plan. Referenced the terminologies "managed retreat", "disincentivize development", and "add filing to property record". Voiced concern about the implication of this language and the Planning Commission approving a document they hadn't read fully.

#### **Ed Chadd**

Made it clear that the document wasn't from Vancouver, that it was just a template. Reiterated staff's presentation regarding the timeline for the process, the opportunity for public input, and the amount of input that is represented in the plan. Agreed with prior comments about the hard times for the community ahead and the importance of having a strong climate action plan. Every tenth of a degree of increased average temperature has a great deal of impact on the severity of storms, wildfires, drought, ocean acidification, and the death of our salmon population. We have to do our part, no matter how small, to decrease suffering. Acting now will save money later. State grants might soon require this plan be adopted.

#### **Ian Miller**

Had three comments on the plan: Wanted to know why some items were earmarked to be included in the Comprehensive Plan and others weren't; to be able to see the multicriteria analysis results and how the actions were ranked; and to know why the description for the action to retrofit buildings for vulnerability was much broader than the title. He also found the action suggesting shoreline protection at bluff crests confusing.

**Tony Billera**

Even with the pledges we see today there is still a projected 4.3 degrees of increased temperatures in this century. The current policies get us to 3.1 degrees if the policies are effective. Another four to five degrees in 70 years leaves us with an unsustainable planet. It would be a terrible outcome for human civilization. There is a lot we can do for our small community. A focus on adaption is critical for success.

**Bob Vreeland**

Thanks staff and Planning Commission for the work that has been done. What has been presented is a pretty good start to outline what needs to be done. Felt that resiliency is defined on page six of the plan. Developers might not like words like “disincentivize”, but the city needs to protect itself. There are legal consequences that the city could face from climate-related weather and disaster events that destroy property.

**Adrian Hogan**

Agreed that getting on the meeting was difficult.

**Chair Stanley** ended the public comment period. He opened a period of deliberation for Commissions and a potential motion.

**Commissioner Smith** asked how the plan could be implemented if all City Departments are not working together. **Chair Stanley** agreed that lack of communication was one of the main issues that derails any type of sustainability plan. **Planner Braudrick** explained that the City Council will be adopting this plan, and that the Plan will guide Council action. The Council can direct City Staff, including directors to implement the plan. How that happens is up to them. We built this plan to be a guide. This is why getting the initial actions related to climate action in the Comprehensive Plan was so important and led to the inclusion of climate action in the Council’s strategic planning efforts. The next step is implementation.

**Vice Chair Schwab** opined that he would like to see the motion to continue the public hearing to May 25<sup>th</sup> in order to allow for more public comment due to the difficulties with the Webex platform that have been expressed by the public.

**Chair Stanley** expressed his general disappointment that the public process was entirely virtual due to the Covid pandemic. He would have liked to extend the process to include in-person meetings and increase the attendance and input.

**Commissioners Dziadek** mentioned her fresh perspective to Plan being new to the Commission. She was impressed with the time and energy that has gone into it. The issues we are facing are very complex and difficult to solve.

**Chair Stanley** referenced both the written and verbal comments made about insurance, financing, and other things involving properties on the shoreline. He had some concerns about the language as well. He doesn’t want the plan to discourage development on the waterfront. Its been documented that Port Angeles may not see as much impact from sea level rise as other communities on the Peninsula.

**Commissioner Smith** commented on the realities of insurance rates being affected by events on a national scale.

**Chair Stanley** recommended that the language be changed on the actions related to insurance. He also wanted clarification on language brought up by Ian Miller about shoreline armoring and bluff armoring. **Planner Braudrick** read the actions 46 and 47 that Chair Stanley was referring to.

**Chair Stanley** recognized that a lot of the plan that was presented was crafted with our community in mind, but that Cascadia has worked with many communities and the plan did start with some boilerplate language that apply to municipalities across Western Washington. He felt that the plan could address issues less broadly and be more specific about different regions within the City. He asked for a motion.

**Commissioner Smith** agreed that the public comment period should be continued, if not just for the Webex issues. **Commissioners Dziadek** and **Ahuja** agreed.

**Commissioner Ahuja** felt that implementation was missing from the plan and that five or six actions should be provided for immediate implementation. **Chair Stanley** agreed.

**Commissioner Smith** made a motion to continue the Climate Resiliency plan until the May 25<sup>th</sup> meeting **Commissioner Schwab** seconded the motion, and all were in approval.

## **2. Staff Presentation on Commissioner Luxton's Draft Letter and Continued Discussion.**

**Interim Director Bolin** presented staff's feasibility analysis for the three individual requests presented in a letter **Commissioner Luxton** drafted on behalf of the Planning Commission. Planning Commission and staff discussion followed.

**Commissioner Luxton** made a motion to formally forward the letter as written to the City Council for inclusion into their packet as a discussion item. **Commissioner Ahuja** seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

**Commissioner Ahuja** offered a friendly amendment to the motion.

The motion states: **Noting urgency of situation of homelessness in PA and recognizing that low cost housing is the urgent need of the hour, the Planning Commission offers the attached letter from Commissioner Luxton for consideration. We urge the Council to identify a pathway that would immediately address including homelessness in the City and to develop a better long-term plan to support housing. The Commission stands ready to work with the Council as required to work on this. We recognize the staff has shared their perspective and process required to address this issue. We find incumbent on us to recognize the urgency to take immediate action and act upon this.**

The motion passed 5-1, with **Commissioner Schwab** dissenting due to his disagreement

that building permits should not be waived for duplex and multifamily residential projects. He also noted the length of the motion.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

**Interim Director Bolin** introduced **Holden Fleming** the City's new **Housing Coordinator** and detailed his job responsibilities. Coordinator Fleming thanked the Planning Commission for their time.

**Planner Braudrick** thanked everyone of the conversations that were held on the Climate Resiliency Plan and reminded that it was "Bike Everywhere Month".

## **REPORTS OF COMMISSION MEMBERS**

**Vice Chair Schwab and Commissioners Ahuja, Smith, and Luxton** provided the Planning Commission with reports.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Smith** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Commissioner Ahuja** seconded the motion, all were in approval.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

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Ben Braudrick, Secretary

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Ben Stanley, Chair