

Council Meeting Date: January 19, 2010

Agenda Item: 7(b)

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON


AGENDA TITLE: Planning Commission Structure and Vacancies
DEPARTMENT: Planning and Development Services
PRESENTED BY: Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, Director

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

Shoreline's Planning Commission has historically been comprised of 9 members. With five positions to be filled this April (at least four of them new members), it is an appropriate time to consider whether it would be more effective to move to a 7-member Commission.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney _____

BACKGROUND

The appointment cycle for the Shoreline Planning Commission has been to appoint people to four years terms in March of even-numbered years. This will occur again in March of 2010 when five of the nine positions are up for appointment or re-appointment.

Because Commissioner Hall has been elected to the City Council, and Commissioners Piro and Kuboi will have completed their two four year terms, there will be at least three vacancies beginning in April of 2010. At the Commission's last meeting in December, Commissioner Pyle indicated that due to other upcoming commitments he would not seek re-appointment to a second term. Commissioner Wagner is eligible for a second four-year term, but even if she applies and is appointed to a second term, there would be at least four new members seated in April of 2010.

In my experience, seven members has been the normal size for a planning commission, nine is definitely the anomaly. In fact, a brief survey of cities in the Central Puget Sound Region (Attachment A) shows that Shoreline is one of only four (out of eighty-two) cities with a nine member planning commission. The only city comparable to Shoreline with a nine member commission is Renton. Renton actually had a seven member commission until 2007 when they added two members as a means to provide immediate representation to a large annexation of 20,000 people. Back in the late 1980's, the City of Kirkland did the same thing when it annexed Rose Hill and part of the Juanita area. They added two commissioners from the newly annexed areas, then ramped back down to the 7 member commission they have today.

The trend region-wide has been to move from nine-member Commissions to seven member Commissions. Kent, Federal Way, and Eatonville have all done so. So did the City of Vancouver, Washington. In each case, the cities made this change to improve the ability of their planning commissions to function as effective and efficient deliberative bodies.

In view of the ambitious planning work program before you, and the sobering prospect of a nine-member Planning Commission with at least 44% (and possibly 55%) new members in April, I think now is the time to consider re-structuring to a seven member body.

Attachment B summarizes the terms and appointment schedule for the current nine-member configuration. Positions A through E are up for appointment, while positions F through I are not up until 2012. The second page of Attachment B shows what a term and appointment schedule could look like for a seven member configuration. This alternative would enable the Council to appoint two new people to the Planning Commission to join five veteran Commissioners. This would provide ample opportunity for new people to become members of the Commission while still keeping a strong core of seasoned members.

This proposal was discussed with the Planning Commission at its January 7 meeting. The Commission supported the proposal to request that the Council re-structure the Planning Commission to a seven member body effective April of 2010.

RECOMMENDATION

This is a discussion item. No action is required.

ATTACHMENTS



- A. Survey of the size of Planning Commissions in the Central Puget Sound Region
- B. Diagrams showing term appointments for 9-member and 7-member Commissions

| Size of Planning Commissions in Central Puget Sound (King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap) cities that responded to the survey distributed on 11/18/09 | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | 5 members (7 cities) | 7 members (44 cities) | 9 members (4 cities) |
| 1. | Beaux Arts | Arlington | Lake Forest Park (pop 12,800) |
| 2. | Duvall | Auburn | Renton ¹ (pop 83,650) |
| 3. | Fircrest | Bainbridge Island | Shoreline (pop 54,300) |
| 4. | Index | Bellevue | Snoqualmie (pop 9,730) |
| 5. | Monroe | Black Diamond | |
| 6. | SeaTac | Bonney Lake | |
| 7. | Sultan | Bothell | |
| 8. | | Bremerton | |
| 9. | | Brier | |
| 10. | | Buckley | |
| 11. | | Burien | |
| 12. | | Covington | |
| 13. | | Eatonville ² | |
| 14. | | Edgewood | |
| 15. | | Edmonds | |
| 16. | | Everett | |
| 17. | | Federal Way | |
| 18. | | Fife | |
| 19. | | Gig Harbor | |
| 20. | | Gold Bar | |
| 21. | | Hunts Point | |
| 22. | | Issaquah | |
| 23. | | Kenmore | |
| 24. | | Kent | |
| 25. | | Kirkland | |
| 26. | | Lakewood | |
| 27. | | Lynnwood | |
| 28. | | Maple Valley | |
| 29. | | Marysville | |
| 30. | | Mercer Island | |
| 31. | | MountlakeTerrace | |
| 32. | | Mukilteo | |
| 33. | | Newcastle | |
| 34. | | North Bend | |
| 35. | | Poulsbo | |
| 36. | | Puyallup | |
| 37. | | Redmond | |
| 38. | | Sammamish | |
| 39. | | Snohomish | |
| 40. | | Stanwood | |
| 41. | | Sumner | |
| 42. | | University Place | |
| 43. | | Woodinville | |
| 44. | | Woodway | |

¹ The Renton City Council expanded the Planning Commission from 7 members to 9 in 2008 in order to create some immediate representation for an annexation of 20,000 in the Benson Hill Area. Prior to that, Renton had a 7 member Commission for a population of 63,650.

² Eatonville is one of three cities in our region that went from the 9 member commission to a 7 member commission. The other two are Federal Way and Kent (both in 1995). Vancouver, WA, also did so in 2005.

Terms and appointments schedule for 9 member Planning Commission

 Five Commission slots up for appointment in March, 2010
 Four Commission slots up for appointment in March, 2012

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|------|--|------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| A | Re-appoint Wagner or appoint NEW member | | | | NEW member | | | | |
| B | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or NEW member | | | | |
| C | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or appoint NEW member | | | | |
| D | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or appoint NEW member | | | | |
| E | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or appoint NEW member | | | | |
| F | BROILI | | NEW member | | | | | | |
| G | BEHRENS | | Re-appoint Behrens or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |
| H | KAJE | | Re-appoint Kaje or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |
| I | PERKOWSKI | | Re-appoint Perkowski or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |

Terms and appointments schedule for 7 member Planning Commission

Three Commission slots up for appointment in March, 2010

Four Commission slots up for appointment in March, 2012

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|------|--|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| A | Re-appoint Wagner or appoint NEW member | | | | NEW member | | | | |
| B | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or NEW member | | | | |
| C | NEW member | | | | Re-appoint or NEW member | | | | |
| D | BROILI | | NEW member | | | | | | |
| E | BEHRENS | | Re-appoint Behrens or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |
| F | KAJE | | Re-appoint Kaje or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |
| G | PERKOWSKI | | Re-appoint Perkowski or appoint NEW member | | | | | | |