

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Monday, November 22, 2010
5:45 p.m.

Conference Room C-104 - Shoreline City Hall
17500 Midvale Avenue North

PRESENT: Mayor Keith McGlashan, Deputy Mayor Will Hall, and Councilmembers Chris Eggen, Doris McConnell, Chris Roberts, Terry Scott, and Shari Winstead

ABSENT: none

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager; Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Program Manager; Scott Passey, City Clerk

GUESTS: none

At 5:55 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Mayor McGlashan, who presided.

Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Program Manager, began a discussion of the City's draft legislative priorities. He provided a handout outlining the draft priorities and asked for feedback from the Council. He noted that the top two priorities he plans on focusing on this year are 1) Point Wells; and 2) The surplus property adjacent to the Fircrest Campus. He explained the need to address the growth management issues at Point Wells through a legislative remedy requiring developers to enter into interlocal agreements. He also discussed the economic development potential of the surplus property at the Fircrest campus. From a broader perspective he emphasized the need to pursue legislative solutions to fund stormwater requirements.

Councilmember Eggen pointed out that Senator-elect Chase supports economic development but not necessarily the goals of the medical or pharmaceutical industries. He said although she is an advocate for development of "green" housing, current economic conditions make it difficult.

Councilmember Scott emphasized the need for community support, noting that without support of the Fircrest community the greater community would probably not support it.

Mr. Olander noted that the Fircrest supporters tend to favor economic development goals so it would be beneficial to frame the issues in such terms.

Mr. MacColl noted that a possible obstacle to achieving this goal is the legislature deciding to remove all capital funds from the project, which will essentially make the master plan impossible.

Deputy Mayor Hall pointed out that rezoning the property is one possible alternative because the property is a significant land use opportunity within the City, adding that the State could always surplus the property. Mr. Olander agreed that it may be a way for the State to recapture its revenues.

Councilmember Eggen said that people tell him they would like to see more commercial development with some housing at the Fircrest site.

Councilmember Scott stressed the fact that this is an economic development issue and there is no telling what kinds of development should or will occur. He said the Fircrest site has the greatest potential for economic development in the City, and the City needs to leverage it to reduce the disproportionate burden on property tax payers.

Councilmember Eggen suggested that staff be aware of the Public Health expansion issue when discussing Fircrest with Senator-elect Chase.

Regarding the acquisition of Seattle Public Utilities, Mr. Olander explained that the City is still in negotiations but hinted at a possible legislative solution to avoid the prospect of an expensive bond election. Councilmember Eggen suggested that citizens might want to vote on it if the assumption is that there will be increased utility rates.

Councilmember Scott pointed out that Draft Legislative Goal #6 is drafted to oppose changes to the water/sewer district assumption statutes.

Regarding Goal #3 (Stormwater Funding – secure a permanent funding source to help address federal stormwater requirements), Mr. MacColl noted that it will be difficult to meet the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements without additional funding, like the oil barrel fee increase proposed last year.

Deputy Mayor Hall opposed the idea of relaxing environmental regulations simply because the City faces a fiscal crisis. He noted that major developments such as Shorewood High School will not include stormwater detention regulations if the City doesn't take its environmental goals seriously. He commented that the vote on Proposition 1 was the result of voters understanding the issues and City transparency.

The discussion then turned to the topic of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). Mr. Olander emphasized the fact that there has been no discussion about assuming the Shoreline Water District (SWD) within the context of the SPU acquisition proposal. He noted that the City must demonstrate to the community that acquiring SPU is financially sensible within a manageable rate structure. It was noted that SWD may feel threatened by the SPU acquisition proposal; however, Mr. Olander reminded the Council that the City's Comprehensive Plan includes utility acquisition as a stated goal.

Mr. Olander noted that there is no statutory authority for cities to acquire the department of a neighboring city, such as Seattle Public Utilities; however, cities can acquire special purpose districts.

Mr. MacColl then reviewed the draft goal related to support for regulatory reforms that reduce costs for cities, including SEPA regulations and having judicial rezones conducted by a hearing examiner.

Councilmember Scott wondered if changing the SEPA threshold regulations would be perceived as a reduction in the City's environmental standards. Councilmember Eggen noted that the SEPA process allows for a more open public input phase in a setting in which developers are already favored over citizens.

Mr. Olander responded to Council questions. He stated that several laws have been passed since SEPA was adopted, and in many cases, SEPA regulations are redundant. He said although people believe their SEPA issue will be heard and considered, many of their concerns are addressed by other regulations. He stated that it has become a matter of expectations. Responding to Council questions, Mr. MacColl stated that the American Planning Association, proponents of the proposed legislative change, has confirmed that the number of hearings would be the same. However, they would not be advertised as SEPA hearings.

Deputy Mayor Hall alluded to the land use tool "Planned Actions" to illustrate that Shoreline is a community that wants to be involved in Council decisions. He then suggested a modification to Draft Goal #5 (Transportation Funding Package) to ensure the Council supports funding that makes the entire transportation system more efficient. He mentioned that an amendment to the State Constitution could be one way of addressing the problem. Councilmember Roberts felt that a Constitutional amendment would not be a very realistic solution, and broadening the issue doesn't seem to be an effective use of resources. Mr. MacColl clarified that the main purpose of Goal #5 is to secure the funding to complete the remainder of the Aurora Corridor Project. After further discussion, there was general support that the Goal should "support funding for transportation and transit-related projects."

Mr. MacColl noted that the broad scope of the Legislative Principles allow him the flexibility to react to bills as they are proposed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Scott Passey, City Clerk

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