

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

Monday, September 22, 2008
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Ryu, Deputy Mayor Terry Scott, and Councilmembers Keith McGlashan, Chris Eggen, Janet Way, Doris McConnell, and Ron Hansen

ABSENT: none

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Joe Tovar, Planning & Development Services Director; Steve Cohn, Long-Range Planner; Scott Passey, City Clerk

GUESTS: Shoreline Planning Commission
Commissioner Sid Kuboi, Chair
Commissioner Will Hall, Vice Chair
Commissioner John Behrens
Commissioner Michael Broili
Commissioner Janne Kaje
Commissioner Ben Perkowski
Commissioner Rocky Piro
Commissioner David Pyle
Commissioner Michelle Wagner

Mayor Ryu called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. There were introductions around the table.

Bob Olander, City Manager, introduced Joe Tovar, Planning & Development Services Director, who outlined the proposed Community Conversations Visioning Process that would commence in October. He described the public outreach process for obtaining input from the community, including use of the City website, Currents newsletter, and e-mail subscription lists. He provided the group with copies of a draft agenda and questions that would be available at the Community Conversations sessions, as well as examples of vision statements of other cities, including Redmond and Kirkland. He pointed out that a vision statement serves as a preamble to the Comprehensive Plan. He said while people may express their values and vision for the City of Shoreline in specific terms, a vision statement is meant to be general, not specific. He urged the group to review the statements of the other cities to familiarize themselves with the concept of a vision statement. He explained the job of the facilitators who will be staffing these sessions and noted that the Center for Human Services will be providing some Korean

and Spanish translators. He clarified that all the sessions are scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m., and citizens are welcome to attend any session they choose. The sessions will begin with a presentation of the Community Conversations DVD, which will explain the process and the questions that participants will be expected to address. He added that feedback will mostly come in the form of citizen comment forms and other written comments at the meetings. He said all the raw data would be provided to the City Council at a meeting held sometime in December.

Mayor Ryu commented on the town hall meeting scheduled for October 30. She wondered if this should be an integrated meeting with the Planning Commission.

Mr. Olander felt that the values and vision statements people express will fall into some natural groupings. The Council and the Planning Commission can help organize them, perhaps in the November/December timeframe.

Chair Kuboi assumed there would be feedback ("loopback") from the public after the City Council and Planning Commission puts out the draft vision statement. He also emphasized the need for "metrics" – or defining what would constitute a successful process.

Deputy Mayor Scott asked about other venues for people to provide input and commented on the importance of measuring success.

Vice Chair Hall called attention to the stated goal of attracting at least 500 people to the visioning process. He said although this is a worthwhile goal, perhaps the City should also be concerned with getting a variety of viewpoints. He suggested that the process include weekends to get input from people who might not be available on weeknights.

Mayor Ryu spoke in favor of the proposed process and how it will be a great opportunity to get the public's vision. She suggested using the public's comments as part of the overall Community Conversations process.

Deputy Mayor Scott liked the idea of neighborhoods gathering together to watch the DVD and discuss their vision for Shoreline. He wondered how the City would capture their feedback.

Mr. Tovar noted that all the information regarding the process would be disseminated to the community through the City's various resources.

Councilmember Way wondered if the process should include daytime meetings for the people who are not available during the evening. Mr. Tovar noted that the Parent Teacher Student Associations at the high school level are aware of and involved in the program.

Mayor Ryu wondered if a subcommittee of the City Council or Planning Commission is needed to staff any daytime or weekend meetings. Mr. Tovar suggested that some help on the weekends might be needed.

Deputy Mayor Scott spoke in favor of a “train the trainer” approach, or teaching others how to facilitate these meetings.

Commissioner Behrens complimented the City on involving the schools. He pointed out that this exercise would fit in well with social studies or civics class curriculum, and that students could be used to facilitate the conversations. He also suggested getting the local churches involved to do outreach.

Mr. Olander noted that word-of-mouth advertising is very effective in getting the message out to the public. He said one of the best ways to get people involved is to encourage them to participate in the existing meetings.

Mr. Tovar clarified that the host organizations are simply *hosting*, or providing venues for the meetings to take place. The City is the *sponsoring* organization of these meetings.

Chair Kuboi commented that the feedback the City will receive will be “all over the map” and there will be a fair amount of subjectivity in the “data crunching.” He said the Council and the Commission need to feel comfortable with the way the results are organized.

Mr. Olander pointed out that the challenge for the facilitators will be to accurately interpret the underlying values of the comments that are generated. He noted that some comments will be very specific, and some will be general visioning statements. The goal will be to identify the values behind the specific examples provided by the public. He clarified that although a general visioning statement will be the ultimate outcome, the specific comments and information will be preserved. He noted that we don’t want to lose or ignore the specific comments.

Councilmember Eggen commented on the value of capturing both specific and general comments. He advised against squelching discussion of specific issues or ideas because they will help the Council make decisions later. He expressed concern that a process focusing only on a general vision will address long-term plans at the expense of short-term issues.

Mayor Ryu said that hopefully the City can sift through the comments and identify the specific issues among the more general values that are expressed.

Mr. Olander pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan update will be a long, complex process with hundreds of policies to review and rewrite. He felt the Community Conversations process will be a good resource to find out what people want. He noted that the City can contact the participants later when the policy statements are revised. He emphasized the need to build the framework first, and then decide if the specific issues fit within that framework. He assured the Council and the Commission that many of the values and statements will coalesce together.

Commissioner Wagner suggested that a large, visual representation of the process might help the visually-oriented people understand the expectations. She said that a large poster with the vision statement and framework goals will let people know how the more detailed values statements will end up in the final draft.

Commissioner Broili concurred. He suggested that the City produce a large representation of the visioning statement. He also suggested the use of sticky notes to help people frame and categorize the comments and values.

Councilmember Way suggested that a chart explaining how the Growth Management Act relates to the Comprehensive Plan would be helpful for some people.

Mr. Tovar concurred with the idea of create graphic representations. He added that the new City website will assist in gathering and disseminating information.

Deputy Mayor Scott felt that asking the core questions, such as “What are the things about my community I like?” is a good place to start the conversation. He emphasized the need to ensure that facilitators are consistent, no matter who they are or what meeting they attend.

Mayor Ryu wondered if the end result of the process will be “buy-in;” in other words, whether the process is designed so that community consensus is the outcome.

Councilmember Way commented on the “loopback” issue referred to earlier by Chair Kuboi. She wondered if the hosting organizations should be involved in summarizing and arranging the raw data.

Commissioner Kaje emphasized the importance of relating the new visioning statement to the existing statement. He said it is likely that some of the old goals and values will be retained, and some may be abandoned.

Commissioner Pyle emphasized that the process is designed so the City can learn from people; it is not designed so we can tell them what we’re going to do. He felt that the less we bring to the meetings, the better. He added that you learn from people by listening to them.

Commissioner Perkowski agreed with the idea of organizing the random comments and ideas that are expressed. He said as people answer the basic questions about what they value in Shoreline, they can be labeled as values statements, as goals statements, or as discrete statements. He felt there will be a logical way to arrange the various comments.

Councilmember Way commented that the City might get many random comments if the process is too open-ended. She felt that providing the public with some type of framework will help them focus their comments.

Commissioner Broili reiterated that an approach utilizing graphics is a good way to help people focus. He said people are smart and will figure out the patterns as their comments are recorded and categorized.

Mr. Olander noted that part of the facilitator's job will be to gently guide people back if the conversation gets off track.

Councilmember Eggen pointed out that people express their vision and values in a variety of ways; some use high-level language while others express themselves in specific, concrete terms. He felt it could be a little risky to categorize or label the various comments that come in.

Mr. Tovar assured Councilmembers that they would review every "scrap of paper" that is produced from the meetings so that no concept or sentiment is lost.

Mayor Ryu declared the meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Scott Passey, CMC
City Clerk

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