

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL

Wednesday, June 23, 2010

Puget Sound Regional Council Board Room

MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present: Councilmember Kimberly Allen, Councilmember Layne Barnes, Councilmember Sally Clark, Councilmember Richard Conlin, Executive Dow Constantine, Chair; Councilmember Mark Cross, Councilmember Dini Duclos, Councilmember Chris Eggen, Councilmember Lucy Krakowiak, Councilmember Jamie Perry, Councilmember Larry Phillips, Councilmember Jennifer Robertson, Councilmember Robert Sternoff

Acting Chair Sternoff convened the meeting at 4:10 PM.

I - A. Public Comment:

Pat Anderson, Snoqualmie City Attorney, submitted a letter dated June 21, 2010, regarding SHB 1825 and Countywide Planning Policy FW-1 Step 7(d). Mr. Anderson's letter is attached to this meeting summary.

I - B. The summary of the April 28, 2010 meeting was unanimously approved.

II. Overview of the anticipated issues related to the update of the Countywide Planning Policies

Rob Odle of Redmond began the staff presentation by reviewing the background and structure of the CPP's. Rob noted we have achieved much of the vision expressed in the original 1992 CPP document. He pointed out that the CPP's and the relatively fixed Urban Growth Area boundary have caused a change in the housing choices now available, and have caused an increase in residential density in many urban areas planned for growth, such as downtown Bellevue. Issues still remain, such as provision of needed infrastructure to support growth and regional finance issues. Finally, Rob pointed out that the CPP document is simply out of date and in need of an update to comply with Vision 2040.

Eric Shields of Kirkland explained that staff would be presenting several issues by subject matter and prioritized as "group A" issues, which are issues in need of updating that require direction from the GMPC. The first group of issues, which will be included

in the Environment chapter of the updated CPP document, include water quality monitoring and air quality monitoring.

Councilmember Conlin asked if staff anticipated a new policy or a set of new policies for these issues. Staff responded that the goal is to reduce the number of policies – sometimes less is better.

Councilmember Robertson cautioned about new policies that would force cities to spend money in difficult economic times.

Executive Constantine noted that the county is also struggling with lack of resources for water quality monitoring. He said we should integrate our efforts with Puget Sound Partnership's monitoring work so there would be no duplication of effort.

Councilmember Phillips stated that we should not leave issues out of the CPP's because they are already covered by State law. Two such issues are reduction of greenhouse gases and energy policy.

Executive Constantine expressed support for a coordinated approach when critical areas cross jurisdictional boundaries. He cited the work that was done on salmon recovery as an example of good coordination. In addition, he called for policy language about low impact development to be added to the CPP's.

Michael Hubner of the Suburban Cities Association introduces the next two "group A" policy issues, which will be addressed in the Development Patterns chapter of the updated CPP document. First he noted that new policy direction is needed to address changes to the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary. Michael explained that the current CPP's were focused on the initial designation of the UGA boundary, and a shift in emphasis is now needed to guide proposed changes to the UGA boundary. Michael's second policy issue was a recommendation to develop cleared policy direction for the use of transfer of development rights (TDR's).

Councilmember Robertson stated that Bellevue has adopted a TDR program and has entered into an interlocal agreement with King County to implement TDR's. She asked that changes in policy not adversely affect Bellevue's efforts.

Councilmember Allen also asked that local TDR programs not be adversely affected by countywide efforts.

Michael Hubner continued by pointing out that the existing CPP's already include affordable housing targets and related policies. He stated that the CPP update is an opportunity to review the technical basis for these targets. Staff will begin looking into new policy direction calling for consideration of both existing and new housing in relation to affordability, and further consideration of jobs-housing balance. Staff plans to develop options for these issues for GMPC consideration at a future meeting.

Councilmember Sternoff observed that affordable housing crosses jurisdictional boundaries and is essentially a funding issue.

Councilmember Clark called for a definition of affordable housing, and a determination of the true cost of housing that takes into consideration transportation costs.

Councilmember Krakowiak said that transit service must also be considered, and linked to both housing and jobs.

Michael Hubner then outlined policy issues related to the economy. The first issue is to build into the CPP's a recognition of the regional strategy for economic development, including the concept of industry clusters. The second issue is policy direction for economic activities within Rural and Resource areas.

Councilmember Krakowiak noted that there are rural cities in King County, and they should play an important role in the development of these policies.

Councilmember Phillips observed that a challenge is how to reignite the economy in the context of the Growth Management Act (GMA). Originally, the GMA was adopted in economic boom times.

Councilmember Sternoff stated that the connection between transportation and economic development must be recognized. This connection is emphasized in Vision 2040.

Executive Constantine added that there must be emphasis on the Prosperity Partnership and the workforce side of the equation.

Chandler Felt of King County addressed public services, noting that these policies link utility plans to the regional vision. A key policy area is the ongoing transition from King County to cities and the local service providers within Urban areas.

Tom Hauger of Seattle addressed transportation, pointing out the need for coordination of regional transit service to serve the regional growth strategy.

Karen Wolf of King County addressed issues that will appear in more than one chapter of the new CPP document. These issues include regional coordination and finance, climate change, and healthy communities – all of which staff believes are group A policy issues.

Councilmember Sternoff stated that the CPP's should address common goals and how they are funded.

Councilmember Phillips recalled the work program format of much of the original CPP document and said we should consider taking on the regional finance issue.

Staff responded that there could be a list of action items that could be prioritized as part of an implementation chapter

Executive Constantine called for community wide climate goals.

Councilmember Robertson expressed concerns about being out of step with State standards.

Councilmember Eggen said that it can not be disputed that we are experiencing climate change and we need to look at the impacts of climate change in the CPP's.

Councilmember Clark said that the issue of State standards versus higher local standards would be a good policy discussion.

Councilmember Conlin told the GMPC that the Board of Health has a subcommittee working on the issue of healthy communities. He suggested we may want to consider a separate chapter on that subject.

Councilmember Eggen said that he would like to see an acknowledgement of the importance of parks and urban open space in the updated CPP's.

Councilmember Sternoff pointed out the need to recognize connectivity between cities, particularly trails for biking and walking.

Executive Constantine recalled that walkability was a controversial issue in the 2004 update of the King County Comprehensive Plan. He called for supporting language in the CPP's for what it takes to plan for healthy communities. Perhaps some concrete steps for jurisdictions to take would be helpful, such as improving access to healthy food as one example.

Councilmember Krakowiak observed that residential density remains a controversial issue – one that GMPC should be careful with.

Rob Odle of Redmond stated that this ends the presentation on group A policy issues. He asked if GMPC members had any other issues.

Councilmember Krakowiak said that transportation should be added to the jobs / housing balance discussion.

Councilmember Conlin said that there is an opportunity with the CPP update to do more on brownfields redevelopment. Eco-industrial parks are an example of bringing together environmental and land use planning goals.

Councilmember Robertson reminded members that traffic concurrency remains a major issue.

Rob Odle suggested that staff bring draft policies to the September GMPC meeting for review and discussion.

Executive Constantine asked if members agree with the staff recommendations. GMPC members nodded in agreement.

III. The meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.