



**CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2015
280 MADISON AVE N, BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON**

CALL TO ORDER - Call to Order, Agenda Review, Conflict Disclosure
PUBLIC COMMENT - Accept public comment on off-agenda items
REVIEW AND APPROVE MEETING MINUTES - December 18, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting
DICKERMAN OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION TRANSFER APPLICATION - Public Hearing, Review
and Recommendation
2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – UPDATE TO PLAN VISION STATEMENT - Review and
Recommendation
NEW/OLD BUSINESS
ADJOURN

CALL TO ORDER – Call to Order, Agenda Review, Conflict Disclosure

Commissioner Pearl called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Commissioners Julie Kriegh, Maradel Gale, John Thomas, Michael Lewars and Jon Quitslund were present.

City Staff in attendance were Planning Director Kathy Cook and Special Project Planner Jennifer Sutton.

Administrative Specialist Jane Rasely monitored recording and prepared the meeting minutes.

There were not any conflicts of interest.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Accept public comment on off-agenda items.

None.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MEETING MINUTES - December 18, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting

Motion: I move that we approve the minutes of December 18, 2014

Quitslund/Lewars: The motion carried 6-0

**DICKERMAN OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION TRANSFER APPLICATION - Public Hearing,
Review and Recommendation**

Planner Jennifer Sutton gave an overview of the application which requested the Dickerman farm be transferred to a traditional farmland classification. The Commissioners were reminded they need to make a recommendation on behalf of the City, and that the final decision will be made at a joint meeting of Kitsap County Commissioners and Bainbridge Island Council Members.

Commissioner Quitslund had questions about the general area of the farm speaking about the Kalgren family who had a large farm in the same area. He mentioned that City staff is in agreement with the County Assessor in recommending the transfer of the farm's classification. Jennifer stated she did not know that the County Assessor stated that but that they *recommended* Mrs. Dickerman apply for this classification change. Commissioner Pearl asked what exactly it would mean to the property to be changed to this classification (lower taxes). Discussion ensued about liability if the classification is changed in the future and it was

confirmed that if the use of the property changed or became the subject of a subdivision in the future, the owner would be responsible for the difference in taxes – past and present. One acre will remain taxed at the regular rate as long as there is a residence on the land. The rest of the property will have a lower rate.

Mrs. Dickerman spoke about acquiring the property 40 years ago. Her husband's dream was to have a farm, so when he retired from teaching they began an egg farm. When he passed 3 years ago, she struggled to keep the farm going. She would like to maintain the property as a farm and currently donates her land to volunteer farmers for community groups to raise money for charities. It was important to her to maintain a farm status to pass on to her daughter. Commissioner Quitslund inquired as to whether or not she was open to loaning out land to surrounding neighbors to have gardens. Mrs. Dickerman said that was a possibility in the future.

The public hearing was opened for public comment at 7:19 PM.

Patti Dusbabek commented that young farmers were looking for land and there were those that would be eager to use the land for farming purposes as well as raising animals and it would be a shame to lose the land when such people are searching for land to work.

Public comment closed at 7:20 PM.

Commissioner Lewars thought it was admirable to keep the farm status for future generations and offered up the motion below.

Motion: I move that we agree with the recommendation prepared by staff to approve the change in classification and forward that decision to the deciding government bodies.

Lewars/Quitslund: The motion carried 6-0

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – UPDATE TO PLAN VISION STATEMENT - Review and Recommendation

At 7:21 PM Commissioner Pearl gave a brief overview of what the vision statement is supposed to be: a vision, not the specifics of the plan.

Commissioner Thomas brought up that there are no “should” statements in the previous proposed statement and wondered what people disliked about it. Discussion continued between he and Commissioner Pearl that people seemed to feel the opening paragraph was too bureaucratic and they did not like the tone of the overall statement. Commissioner Lewars said he heard two things from citizens at the workshop: 1. The 2004 Vision was way too wordy and 2) the Vision Statement needs to be an aspirational document.

Commissioner Gale stated she did not hear that length was not an issue, but that it was out of date. She felt the current proposed vision statement was too terse and could represent any area such as Ames, Iowa, for instance. She felt it did not have the juiciness and beauty that is their island. Commissioner Pearl mentioned there were several sets of edits to work with, some proposed by citizens, and that it was a little hard to decide what to do at this point sparking discussion about whether the vision might change once the revisions to the comprehensive plan have been developed. Commissioner Gale did not think so, but Commissioner Thomas wondered if the vision might not need to be tweaked a little once the entire plan is completed and that they need to be open to that possibility. Commissioner Lewars agreed and brought to the table the idea of using two of Commissioner Kriegh's paragraphs and the last four of Commissioner Quitslund's. Commissioner Kriegh spoke about choosing words that would provide inspiration to future generations as well as the island's unique situation and responsibility to address environmental concerns, specifically global warming and climate change.

Commissioner Pearl invited Ron Peltier to speak about his group's version of the vision statement to begin public comment 7:32 PM.

Ron Peltier - What we wanted to do was a group process that we embarked on and some of the people here have seen it and participated in it. What we want to do is include a narrative and that is one of the things I like about our existing vision is it has somewhat of a narrative so that it's about Bainbridge Island. A lot of things in our vision are common to other places, things about sustainability and diverse community, those are things that any community would probably like to have, but we wanted this to obviously be about Bainbridge Island and it was important to retain the parts of the existing vision statement about limited resources and the limited care capacity of the island and also work in some history that included Asian immigrants, Europeans and Native Americans who were here for thousands of years before we came. So that's what you see in our vision. It's been evolving and we're open to people in the community contributing to it and commenting on it. We didn't feel like brevity in itself was a virtue. It's one page long. Who can't read a page? It's going to take up a page in the comp plan regardless if it's two paragraphs or a full page. I would like to think that people can hold a thought long enough to read a page of something that is as important as the vision. I think the vision is important and I think we all agree on that and that the vision will set the tone for how we go about our comp plan update. I don't understand where this thing about shortening it comes from. I know people would like to be concise and to the point with some of the stuff about the service centers and other things that maybe didn't need to be in there.

Commissioner Quitslund asked Mr. Peltier whether he felt it would be the right move for the Planning Commission to adopt his language, set what they have so far been working with aside, adopt your language and then modify because there are things about it they may not like. Should they make a fresh start of it, send it to the Council and see what they make of this move away from what was offered to the Planning Commission to work with. The idea of forging a new definition of development, that's crucial to our whole enterprise here but does that language and some of the language proposed point in that direction? He (Commissioner Quitslund) has embraced the differently conceived briefer vision without the argumentative language presented by the Steering Committee. Mr. Peltier said he has been trying to get other people interested in being a part of this and contributing ideas. He felt the current comp plan vision from 1994 is somewhat dated but fairly eloquent and visionary. How did they come up with that? There were a lot of people involved with that and to replace it with something that doesn't have that much eloquence and vision to it would be rather disappointing. Commissioner Quitslund embraced the purpose that drives their work and questioned whether the ideas in their vision would not serve better in placement within the comp plan itself as opposed to the vision. Mr. Peltier felt the vision needed to have some meat to it, not vague ideas that do not say what the island is about. Commissioner Quitslund stated they hoped they were working toward trying to create something that more people can embrace.

Commissioner Krieger liked the depth in Mr. Peltier's statement and commended him on their version stating she would like to spend more time with it because this was the first time she had seen it. She felt it captured all the things they had been talking about, expounded on them and reorganized them in a way that does give a lot of depth to the vision statement. She felt the statement has to be representative of this place and what we want for our future and there are a lot of pieces in this statement that do just that. Mr. Peltier stated he would like to see more versions of the vision statement because when people see different versions, they say, "Aha! I like that." and that it sets the tone for more people to contribute to it and sets the tone for how to go about the overall comp plan update. If people could see all the different versions, that would be good. We want something that inspires us, that we're proud of and that says, yeah, that's Bainbridge Island.

Commissioner Pearl stated that the proposed vision statement was the attempt to be aspirational and that the meat or depth would be more in the guidelines and goals. What troubled him was that each one of the visions has a lot of merit are quite interesting, but if we do this with every paragraph in the plan, how are we ever going to get anywhere?

Commissioner Gale said what struck her in everything they were working with is that there is no story there. Kathleen Alcala's vision statement brought a story unique to Bainbridge Island and that no place else could say the same thing. She felt some version of a story as opposed to five sentences is important for community. It has huge merit in bringing a community identity to the fore and to bringing community to supporting that identity. It's the story aspect that was important to her.

Commissioner Thomas agreed that story was important but didn't see a reason not to have both. He felt the short version could be the preface and long version the introduction just like in a book. The a good vision is supposed to engage people who will use that as a guiding light to inform their decisions and actions.

Kathleen Alcala's vision statement was placed on the screen. Commissioner Gale read the statement out loud and commented that Commissioner Kriegh felt it should add a specific sentence recognizing the need to deal with global warming. Commissioner Gale felt it told a story and it would be hard to believe there was anything in it that people would say they don't like. It gave a vision of what is unique about our island. **Commissioner Quitslund** felt it lifted his spirits. Mr. Peltier mentioned he really liked the mention of the indigenous people who lived here before. He liked it and would like to have more people see all these versions to jog some creativity.

Vanessa Cass - Spoke about her vision statement and that she was working with the original shorter version presented to the Planning Commission and was trying to address sustainability without being too precise.

Mary Clair Kirsten - Spoke about the letter she sent to the Planning Commission earlier today. She spoke to the "juiciness" or story of the island and what makes the vision statement vibrant. She felt the vision statement should be a strong statement of the community because they love this community and it should only reflect Bainbridge Island and that it should be a strong story that sets a tone and sends a message to developers like Visconsi who want to come and leave the island with another atrocity like on the corner of High School Road and Hwy 305. The most important thing is that when someone comes and reads the comprehensive plan that they have a very good understanding of who the citizens are and what their values are. She did not have any problem with how the shorter statements were written, but they were ho-hum. She thought Kathleen Alcala's read beautifully. She would also like to look closely at the Environmental Bainbridge statement that also contained beautiful sentences. The most important thing is that when someone comes and reads the comprehensive plan they have a very clear idea of how special this place is and how we're going to maintain this place is and they can take it from there and understand that.

Jacqueline Young - Thanked the Planning Commission for all the hard work. She likes the two longer vision statements and would like to combine the Alcala and Peltier statements with Commissioner Kriegh's remark about acknowledging our role in the Puget Sound as a part of the future and a model for the rest of the area.

Charles Schmid - Felt it was good to go through this process and spoke about the holes in the short statement and said it was important to have all the elements of the plan in it. He felt it was missing a lot of large important issues. This statement is going to be the base of the comprehensive plan and it is such an important part at the top and needs to have all the elements contained in the plan. He felt what was seen tonight was a good representation and might have a few elements combined to create the vision because the short one was just missing elements. He felt they were on the right path now.

MC Halvorson - Stated she could not find the other statements, but she did like both of the statements read tonight.

Rod Stevens - Said he has struggled with what the vision statement is for? What has come out tonight is having a general description of this place before we get into the planning side. He mentioned E.B. White's writing is a wonderful evocation of place stating that good writing is detailed, specific and colorful. He does not think vagueness is a virtue here and is worried about vagueness leading to another Visconsi. He thinks group writing and strategy are hard work and that it takes place at the front end of the process. Preserving sense of place is important. Bainbridge is about fields and forest and shorelines and a lot of protection he wants to see that sense of place cooked right into the beginning of this process. He felt we have to talk about what makes this place unique and what we really care about. The most important word in all of this is priorities: what are we seeking to protect and preserve. We need to put that at the top of the process and make sure it has a waterfall effect all the way down and we need to be very intentional. This is the point of hard work. There is technical work to be done later in the process by Planners or experts, but there are two points here: 1) Being articulate as a community and 2) Writing it in such a way that people are excited and have high expectations of the rest of the plan. If we can say what defines the sense of place on Bainbridge and put it in particular and unique and colorful words, I think the rest of the process will be much easier and you'll have a lot of community support behind you.

Patti Dusbabek – Felt the statement should be kept simple and should voice concern about sustainability.

Jonathan Davis - Had a question about process. He thought it was essential to have a vision to guide them through the process and liked what Commissioner Quitslund was saying about having lengthier piece or executive summary that holds the essential items. There is a lot of work that will go on that can be guided by the vision, but there may be interesting ideas that come up as the plan is developed that may require re-visiting the vision statement. As that all comes together we can come back and tweak this vision that really ties it to what comes after it.

Debbie Vann – Said one of the things that struck her about the process thus far and all the materials in the Planning packet and Dr. Hansen's (EcoAdapt) recommendations and she did not see where people asked over and over for the statement to be shorter. She felt it was important to take a look at where the community is asking you to go. They didn't ask you to take 5-15 minutes to pen a vision statement and part of the problem is that people are already beginning to lose confidence in the process and they feel like why should they be part of the process if all of it is tossed out for someone else to take 5-10 minutes writing a brief statement. It is critical for the elected officials to take note of what the majority of your citizens are asking you to do. She supports several of the statements that night, but hopes that citizens will not lose confidence that what they are saying and telling you is not going to be taken at value. **Commissioner Quitslund** spoke about the process that has produced group based statements and how she felt about a statement written by one person (Kathleen Alcala) and whether her voice is better than the other groups that presented statements. Ms. Vann was not sure if what was going on was more of a reaction to having the vision statement cut down to nothing or whether it is because people have not seen these statements. She felt there were some very thoughtful writings and that the Planning Commission's job is to keep in mind and hold with value the ideas and input from the citizens. Ms. Vann stated she does not want to go from one extreme to another. It is important to listen to the community.

Commissioner Pearl asked for general consensus from the commissioners at 8:14 PM. He stated he liked the Kathleen Alcala statement. Commissioner Kriegh felt it would take a little more reflection to pull forward a cohesive piece. We should consider the statements presented tonight because a lot of thought had gone into them.

Commissioner Thomas felt there were lots of great ideas but that it needed some more work. The question was asked as to scheduling and if there was a deadline for the vision statement. The question was asked about making a decision and whether or not the vision statement can be decided upon in parallel. It was discussed that the vision statement can be presented as a draft which can be "tweaked" later during the

process. It was suggested that Commissioners Gale and Quitslund work on revising the statement. Kathy Cook reminded the Commission to send any revisions to City staff, not each other.

Commissioner Lewars wanted to see a cross reference between Kathleen Alcala's, Commissioner Kriegh's and Commissioner Quitslund's to make sure final product covers all the bases or points.

It was agreed that all lengthier versions would be sent to all the commissioners. The question was raised about commissioner response being made available to citizens who would like to try writing/editing the vision statement. Jennifer Sutton spoke about the deadline for citizen input is a week before the next Planning Commission. Commissioner Kriegh was also added to the work group tasked with compiling/editing the vision statement.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Pearl adjourned the meeting at 8:28PM.

Minutes accepted by:


J. Mack Pearl, Chair


Jane Rasely, Recording Secretary