

**Minutes**  
**Stevenson Planning Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Planning Commission Members Present:** Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Auguste Zettler, Jeff Breckel

**Excused Absence:** Karen Ashley, Shawn Van Pelt

**Staff Present:** Ben Shumaker, Community Development Director

**Community Members Present:** Joe Birkenfeld Rick May, Mary Repar, Bernard Versari

**Call to order: 6:00 p.m.**

**Preliminary Matters**

1. Chair Selects Public Comment Option #2
2. Minutes: May 13, 2019

**MOTION: Breckel** moves to approve the May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Planning Commission minutes. **Zettler** seconds. All members vote in favor. Motion carries.

**3. Public Comment Period**

Repar comments on the City relationship with the areas and citizens of unincorporated Skamania County. City can do better to work with these areas to address problems. Drinking water is especially important. Water is life and many wells are going dry at homes in Skamania County (particularly on the west end of Skamania County) and the City's water could be a solution for some of these. However, the City's water supply has a carrying capacity too, and we should all be concerned with this issue and work together.

**New Business**

**4. City Email Addresses** (Agenda item occurs after item #6)

Shumaker reports that City-issued email addresses are now available. An instructional email will be sent shortly regarding how to access emails, change passwords, and tips for use.

**5. Training: Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act**

Shumaker provides a memo containing 2 Attorney General presentations related to the State's "Transparency" or "Sunshine" laws for the conduct of public bodies. He reads aloud the purpose of these laws: "The people to not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating their authority, do not give public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so they may retain control over the instruments they have created." As on such instrument, Shumaker first highlights the Open Public Meetings Act's effect on the Planning Commission. He focuses this part of the training on the definitions of "meeting" and "action" and advises to first *avoid* situations where unscheduled/unpublished "meetings" might occur and second *report* them if they do so they can be made part of the public record. The focus of the Public Records Act training is placed on the definitions of "writing" and "privacy" in the Planning Commission's work and communications. The commission is advised that there is no right to privacy in their Planning Commission-related communications. If their records are requested, they must be produced. The City-issued email addresses will allow staff to produce these records for the Commission. The Commission is advised to avoid creating other records and what to expect if records are requested.

Following up on these trainings, the Planning Commission is asked to monitor and evaluate the following aspects of their public involvement efforts: 1) meeting-specific selection of public participation options, 2) public comment period, and 3) project-specific selection of public involvement strategies.

- 1) **Zettler** compares the practices of the Stevenson Planning Commission to his former jurisdiction's adherence to Robert's Rules of Order. He appreciates the ability to select more- and less-formal participation methods at each meeting. No changes are requested.
- 2) Planning Commissioners express general agreement that the public comment period serves a good purpose. No changes are requested.
- 3) Details on project-specific public involvement strategies are not discussed in great detail. No changes are requested.

### **Old Business**

#### **6. Shoreline Management Program: State Public Comment Period**

Shumaker introduces the public comment received, the concept underlying a pending US EPA report on Cold Water Refuges (CWRs) in the Columbia River system, the relation of this concept to the City's Shoreline Management Program (SMP) documents, and potential amendments if the group wants to better incorporate this concept into the SMP. **Hoy-Rhodehamel** expresses concern about incorporating the concept when the report has not yet been issued. Reparaments the lack of fish use in Rock Creek since the Piper Road Landslide. **Breckel** explains his familiarity with the CWR project and the outsized importance of protecting the stream's headwaters (which are outside of City jurisdiction) in relation to controls at the mouth (which is inside city limits).

**CONSENSUS:** The Planning Commission/Shoreline Advisory Committee agrees that 1) the City should acknowledge the pending designation of Rock Creek as a CWR, 2) present draft Inventory & Characterization Report amendments to the Department of Ecology if they require us to acknowledge the Rock Creek CWR, and 3) not recommend regulatory amendments to the Shoreline Master Program.

### **Discussion**

#### **7. Staff and Commission Reports: Downtown Plan, First Street Grant, Downtown Utility Undergrounding**

Downtown Planning: Initial public involvement/stakeholder interviews are still underway and subconsultant background reports are being produced. Additional Commissioner involvement in the steering committee is be welcomed. August 12 will see the item on the agenda.

First Street Grant: The City has received a grant from federal fuel taxes for improvements to First Street between Columbia Avenue and the eastern couplet. The addition of crosswalks, sidewalks, decorative amenities should be constructed during the 2021 construction season.

Downtown Utility Undergrounding: Work on Railroad Street is complete and over the next few weeks, work will continue on Russell Street, and in Ash Alley to remove all overhead utilities.

#### **8. Thought of the Month: None**

**Adjournment: At 8:15 p.m. the meeting was declared adjourned.**

Approved \_\_\_\_\_; Approved with revisions \_\_\_\_\_

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Name

Date

Minutes submitted by Ben Shumaker