



## MINUTES

Eugene Sustainability Commission  
Atrium, Saul Room  
Eugene, Oregon

November 18, 2015  
5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Alexis Biddle, Shawn Boles, Jerry Diethelm, Dawn Lesley, Thomas Pettus-Czar, Thomas Price, Brittany Quick-Warner, Howard Saxion, Sue Wolling and Alan Zelenka, commissioners. Babe O’Sullivan and Matt McRae, City Manager’s Office. Kurt Yeiter, Transportation Planning; Bree Nicoletto, Planning Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Kevin O’Brien, Carolyn Stein, commissioners.

Mr. Saxion called the November 18, 2015 meeting of the Sustainability Commission to order.

### 1. Opening – agenda review, approval of minutes

Mr. Saxion called for corrections or clarifications to the October 21, 2015 minutes.

Mr. Biddle, seconded by Ms. Quick-Warner, moved to approve the October 21, 2015 minutes. The motion passed 7:0 with Commissioner Boles abstaining.

### 2. Public comment

Joyce Eaton shared her concerns about the proposed S. Willamette Special Area Zone (SWSAZ) and the allowable heights of adjacent buildings in the proposed code change. She felt it would allow large maximum-sized dwellings compared to the existing building stock in a way that doesn’t fit with the neighborhood. She shared diagrams of building heights to distribute to the commission.

Jeannine Parisi, representing EWEB, addressed concerns in recent media coverage of EWEB proposed rate changes. She provided city staff with a EWEB staff report to distribute to the commission. She also reported on the ongoing struggle to manage the utility in a new environment – the growth model from the past is no longer a long-term model. The EWEB board didn’t have enough community engagement about proposed rate changes. At its Dec. 1 meeting, the board is looking at 4 options, all have a pass-through of BPA rates increases. She suggested that the commission come talk with EWEB and use here as a resource now that Steve Newcomb is no longer on the commission.

Mark Robinowitz spoke of his concerns about traffic and SWSAZ, mentioning that an ODOT report shows peak traffic has passed. He feels highway widening should be opposed. He also pointed to the need to avoid contentious land use decisions that alienate residents.

Howie Bonnett spoke of his concerns that EWEB needs help in its rate making decisions and suggested the commission a) testify at the 12/1 hearing and b) serve on a rate payer committee if one is created.

He also had concerns about the rate proposals, feeling they are regressive and serve as a disincentive for energy efficiency. He also stated that EWEB policy decisions discourage renewable energy systems, concluding that EWEB is an impediment to implementation of the Climate Recovery Ordinance (CRO).

### **3. Commission updates**

Mr. Saxion reminded the commission of David Tam's recent resignation from his position on the commission. Ms. O'Sullivan provided an update on the process to fill the commission vacancy. Council will vote on a new appointment on Nov. 23.

### **4. TSP**

Kurt Yeiter with the City's Transportation Planning program provided a presentation on the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Some highlights from the presentation:

- The TSP will be the transportation chapter of the Eugene Comprehensive Plan.
- Essentially it provides a list of goals and policies and a list of potential actions and a long list of projects that should be constructed. Staff is working on producing cost estimates of those projects. Estimated revenues are looking good.
- This is the first time the plan will be for just Eugene. Because of unincorporated lands, it will also require Lane County to adopt.
- Today Council adopted a policy about Vision Zero.
- The TSP has a stronger emphasis on choices.
- This plan looks at providing good options for families on bike, for example.
- Accounting for health benefits, economic goals, and equity.
- Work with technical resource group on how to best monitor progress and changes over time.
- Incorporates the CRO fossil fuel reduction goal (aspirational, but stated).
- Incorporated Ped/Bike Master Plan.
- Includes new complete streets policy.
- Emphasizes key transit corridors and walkable 20 minute neighborhoods.
- Allows/accepts higher level of traffic congestion than in the past.
- Promotes maintenance and improvements of existing streets over increased capacity for automobiles. Recognizing we can't build our way out.
- Promotes alternate stable funding sources for transit.
- Support ODOT's efforts to improve Randy Pape Beltline Highway. Incorporates the Beltline Facility Plan to allow NEPA work to proceed.

Several concerns were raised by commissioners about the Plan's relationship to the Climate Recovery Ordinance (CRO) including:

- Treating City's fossil fuel goal as aspirational suggests it will not be reached
- Mode split for bike and transit is insufficient
- Transportation Demand Management needs to be used proactively
- Infrastructure in the plan needs to reflect 2030 fossil fuel reduction goal. Difficult to know what infrastructure is needed to reach this goal.
- Plans needs to contain an estimate of impact on GHG emissions

Mr. Yeiter's response:

The Plan includes a menu of actions/projects that includes a work program to develop more options to address CRO. The Plan is consistent but does not meet the fossil fuel reduction goal. Many of the things needed are not covered by the Plan (e.g. parking, charging stations). Staff is working to identify additional actions needed. Does that all need to be in this plan? Maybe some should be contained in the Capital Improvement Plan or the CRO work plan. Also, the length and complexity of the planning process means it isn't keeping up with technology changes (e.g. autonomous vehicles).

There was also some discussion of the process for getting county approval. Mr. Yeiter stated that county approval is a formal process but they usually give the City a pass. In practice, the implications are less impactful for the County. The funding and all of that tends to be left up to the City. The policies could cause difficulty. When the TransPlan was a regional plan there was a dispute resolution process. That may not work for the Eugene-only plan. The worst case might be that the County adopts different standards than the City's.

Mr. Saxion recommended that the Land Use and Transportation committee develop feedback and recommendations for the commission to consider. Mr. Yeiter mentioned that there is no hard date for submitting comments and that the TSP process may be decoupled from the Envision Eugene timeline. A formal process in March is planned with public hearings.

#### **5. Committee item: Land use and transportation**

Bree Nicoletto from the Planning Commission (filling in for Kristen Taylor) joined commissioners for this discussion.

Chair Saxion reviewed actions taken to provide testimony at the October public forum about the council motion on the S. Willamette Special Area Zone (SWSAZ). Last week, council suspended most of the motion except staff re-engagement with the public. Criticism in the editorial pages of the Register Guard has prompted some commissioners to call for publishing a response.

Some discussion highlights:

- A process with 3<sup>rd</sup> party facilitation will be used for re-engaging the public in order to come up with a plan. Need to pause and think through unintended consequences. Plan for re-engagement is not in place yet. Other solutions are possible for the plan.
- Several commissioners voiced concerns about the planning process for the code changes, with fundamental flaws around providing notice and public outreach and failing to translate complicated information from the plan. Ms. Nicoletto felt that the City needs a "smart" planning process and should make planning documents more readable and accessible. The documents and presentations need to distill concepts to point that they are digestible. She also felt that the process needs to codify definitions of livability, giving people choices, not just focus on existing neighbors. She pointed to design review and the optional design review in the plan for considering some projects that are outside the standards.
- Suggestions for the facilitated process: include both neighbors and others invested in Envision Eugene outcomes. Concern that neighbors won't represent larger community goals. Need to demonstrate the best public process possible and identify what should be done in area planning as many more areas still need to be addressed.
- The River Road/Santa Clara area has been very engaged in developing community needs and wants in anticipation of city planning process coming.

- S. University example seemed to work better, though not pretty. Number of public meetings (60 over 5 years for SWSAZ) wasn't a solution.
- After some conversation, there was general agreement that the commission shouldn't insert itself in the facilitated process but instead provide feedback on results.

Follow-up items:

- Think about a commission liaison to the Planning Commission.
- Staff should share Mr. Diethelm's analysis with the Planning Commission.

## **6. BREAK**

## **7. Committee reports**

### Sustainable Economic Development (SED)

The committee reported that they are still sorting through documents and policies to refine their work plan activities. There's interest in the Council work sessions on target industries, with the committee looking to conduct research into what industries can do to make Eugene more sustainable. Avago (new Hynix tenant) was mentioned as an example, and specifically their efforts in Ft. Collins to collaborate with other businesses.

There was also some discussion about EWEB following up on the guest speakers from earlier in the commission meeting. Mr. Saxion mentioned barriers to businesses putting up large photovoltaic (PV) systems while Ms. Wolling felt the commission did not have enough bandwidth to engage in the Dec. 1 hearing.

### Climate change

Mr. Diethelm testified to City Council at a public forum on October 26. He was planning to follow-up again in anticipation of another council work session on the Climate Recovery Ordinance (CRO) scheduled for November 9 but that work session was canceled. He reiterated that the committee wants to support staff in bringing a 350 ppm target forward. The COP21 meeting in Paris may provide an opportunity for local engagement. The committee may want to prepare a factsheet on Paris outcomes for council.

### Land Use and Transportation

Ms. Wolling reported that the committee needed guidance on how to prioritize its work, particularly around the Transportation System Plan (TSP) and the S. Willamette Special Area Zone (SWSAZ). Commissioner Boles suggested the committee focus on the TSP and address concerns about its relationship to the CRO and the portrayal of the fossil fuel reduction goal as aspirational. He also felt proactive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) should be prioritized. The commission also discussed the need for considering greenhouse gas emissions in the TSP. Commissioner Saxion will follow up with Councilor Zelenka or city staff to obtain a staff memo that addressed these topics.

### Envision Eugene

The committee did not meet in November.

## **8. Councilor check-in**

The commission discussed plans to present its memo regarding the Oakleigh Meadows proposal to council through testimony at an upcoming public forum. Mr. Saxion will query commissioners by email to follow-up.

**9. Items from Commissioners and staff**

Commissioners Quick-Warner and Wolling have been appointed to the Quiet Zone advisory group.

**10. Closing**

Mr. Saxion adjourned the meeting at 8:27 PM.

*Recorded by Babe O'Sullivan*