

MINUTES

Eugene City Council
McNutt Room—Eugene City Hall
777 Pearl Street—Eugene, Oregon

October 13, 2010
Noon

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Mike Clark, Betty Taylor, George Poling, Chris Pryor, Alan Zelenka, George Brown, members.

COUNCILORS ABSENT: Jennifer Solomon, Andrea Ortiz.

Her Honor Mayor Kitty Piercy called the October 13, 2010, work session of the Eugene City Council to order.

A. WORK SESSION: Envision Eugene

The council was joined by Planning Director Lisa Gardner, Metropolitan and Community Planning Manager Carolyn Weiss, and City Attorney Emily Jerome, who were present to provide an update on the Envision Eugene process. Ms. Gardner reminded the council that it heard an update on the process in June, and at that time the council had approved the concept of the Community Resource Group (CRG).

City Attorney Jerome spoke to concerns that had been expressed by some residents about the potential the State Legislature would intervene in Eugene's examination of its urban growth boundary (UGB). She explained each Oregon municipality must periodically demonstrate to the State that it had enough land inside its UGB to accommodate need for the next 20 years. Cities must accommodate growth within their UGBs before looking beyond current boundaries. City Attorney Jerome said the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) had authority to adopt rules that governed the process. The DLCD had indicated that once cities adopted a UGB, the DLCD or Land Conservation and Development Commission could approve or remand the products of that effort.

Continuing, City Attorney Jerome reported that in Eugene's case, the State Legislature had mandated through House Bill 3337 that Eugene and Springfield have separate UGBs and separate land supplies and complete the initial studies for that process by a date certain. The initial studies had been accomplished by the established deadline. That had been accomplished. The State did not mandate a deadline for the actual adoption of a final UGB for either Eugene or Springfield.

City Attorney Jerome said that the City was acting in complete accord with State law. She thought it unlikely that the upcoming legislative session would take action to preempt what Eugene was doing as long as it continued to move diligently toward the adoption of a Eugene-only UGB. She invited questions.

Ms. Gardner and Ms. Weiss shared a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the project goals, the State framework and local principles guiding the process, public involvement activities, the work of the CRG to date, and project timing.

Mayor Piercy complimented staff on its commitment to the Envision Eugene process. She appreciated staff's outreach to the Board of County Commissioners, and asked that staff's outreach effort included the Housing Policy Board and Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Pryor was impressed with the breadth and diversity of those on the CRG. He acknowledged the subject of community growth was scary to some people. He appreciated the inclusive, accessible, non-technical approach taken by staff, which brought in many people who had not participated in the past. That informed his belief that it was better to do the process right than do it fast. Mr. Pryor believed that a holistic discussion was necessary and was the only way to reach a solution that connected all the different pieces of the solution.

Mr. Clark thanked staff for its work. He continued to be concerned about the process time line and the potential of legislative action related to that. He was happy to hear staff was checking in with the County and hoped that included new commissioners. Given Springfield's experience trying to work with the board, Mr. Clark was concerned that the Board of County Commissioners would delay the process. He hoped staff did more to engage the County board so it understood that it did not get to re-write the rules or the basis by which Eugene made its decisions. He called for further review of the rules governing the co-adoption process.

Mr. Poling also thanked staff, the members of the CRG, and the residents who were participating. He believed the plan constituted very important work.

Mr. Poling expressed concern that the depictions related to the work of the West Eugene Collaborative (WEC) could be misinterpreted and recommended that staff reinforce the hypothetical nature of the examples.

Mr. Poling also appreciated that staff was checking in with the Board of County Commissioners and asked that staff report back to the council about the type of issues the board was raising and the staff response to them.

Mr. Poling was not concerned that the State would intervene in the City's process but he did not want to go beyond the council-imposed deadline to demonstrate to the community the council could act in a timely way to reach a reasonable conclusion.

Mr. Zelenka acknowledged staff's hard work. He believed the City was on the right track. He agreed with Mr. Pryor that it was more important to get the work done right rather than fast but he also shared Mr. Poling's belief the council needed to stick to the timeline.

Mr. Zelenka expressed disappointment in the last CRB panel discussion, terming it one-dimensional, traditional, "rear-view mirror thinking." The discussion had not been forward-thinking enough for him, particularly as it regarded the "new green economy" and where the community wanted to position itself. He did not think Eugene could plan for tomorrow with yesterday's knowledge. He said traditional incentives often did not realize what they were intended and sometimes had a negative net impact. He wanted to think more broadly.

Speaking to Mr. Poling's concerns about the visual depictions created for the WEC, Mayor Piercy noted the time community members put into developing those depictions and said the WEC members represented a sizeable commitment from a cross-section of the community that actually believed their vision could be realized. She believed the depictions helped spur discussion and allowed residents to find

common ground that could be built upon. WEC members had expressed consistent support for transportation corridors with mixed-use development. She believed the community owed the WEC “a lot” and reported that WEC members had begun to meet again on issues related to food localization and the protection of farmland.

Speaking to Mr. Zelenka’s remarks about the CRG panel, Mayor Piercy believed there was considerable push-back by CRG members from both sides of the political spectrum to the traditional economic model discussed by the consultant and she recalled the outcome of the discussion was agreement the traditional model was not what was best for the community.

Mr. Clark endorsed Mr. Poling’s remarks about the timeline. He also agreed with a suggestion from resident Paul Conte that the City seek legislation that endorsed the outcome of the Envision Eugene process. He asked how that goal could be realized. City Attorney Jerome said she had not seen the legislature take such action, but it could do so. She anticipated that before the council approached the legislature it would want to discuss the political, policy, and public involvement aspects of the subject.

Mr. Clark anticipated that following the completion of the Envision Eugene process, staff would return to the council by the deadline with a decision package that provided the organization with direction about the necessary implementing amendments, but the large-scale decisions would have been made. He wanted legislative endorsement of those large-scale decisions. If the answer was, we cannot do that until the details are actually done,” he believed the City would not have finished by the deadline. City Manager Ruiz indicated staff would do more research into the issue and return with that information.

Mr. Zelenka endorsed Mr. Clark’s proposal and suggested that City Councilors update the Lane County legislation delegation as a group or as individuals about the progress of the process on a regular basis. He believed the City was on a path that demonstrated it was willing to move forward. He wanted the process to be done right so the City could avoid the years of appeals that had delayed the actions of other Oregon communities.

Mr. Zelenka noted that over 25 years, manufacturing employment in Lane County fell from 22 percent to 9 percent while the service sector grew from 17 percent to 41 percent. He suggested the council needed to be cognizant of future sector job growth projections and focus its thinking on best strategies to foster growth in those sectors. He emphasized the importance of redevelopment and suggested a slow economy gave the City the opportunity to get tools to foster redevelopment in place.

Mr. Pryor suggested that if the legislature was going to take action because it did not think Eugene was doing due diligence in accomplishing the goals set out in House Bill 3337 it would be because someone lobbied for that action. However, he agreed that the City Council needed to meet the deadlines it had set.

Speaking to Mr. Poling’s comments about the depictions prepared for the WEC, Mr. Pryor agreed that the City needed to be clear those depictions were hypothetical.

Speaking to Mr. Zelenka’s remarks about past economic development incentive approaches, Mr. Pryor pointed out that Hynix had not left the community because it no longer received a tax exemption. The company left because the bottom fell out of the chip market. While the company was in the community, it had more than 1,000 employees in family-wage jobs with benefits, and was the largest single property tax payer in Lane County. The company had been an enormous economic engine for Eugene, and he regretted its loss. He said if such an opportunity came along again, he wanted to take advantage of it and thought

the council needed to recognize the traded sector was a very good way to keep the community's economic engine running.

Ms. Taylor wanted to know which of the CRG members had dropped out. It appeared to her most CRB members were part of the development community. Ms. Gardner was unaware of anyone who had dropped out. Not all members were able to participate at every meeting. She pointed out that those involved in the group were considered opinion leaders who had busy, dynamic lives. She reviewed some of the groups represented on the CRG, which included 1,000 Friends of Oregon, Friends of Eugene, and neighborhood associations. People were still being added, and she invited Ms. Taylor to contact her with suggestions for other participants.

Ms. Taylor asked if there was a possibility that Eugene would retain the UGB in its current location. Ms. Gardner pointed out that State law first required Eugene to examine opportunities for increasing densities within the existing UGB. However, Eugene must also ensure that it was not assigning densities and capacities that would not work in the economic market or in the market of public opinion. She said staff would return with more information on the topic soon.

Ms. Taylor agreed with Mr. Zelenka that the community should not plan for tomorrow based on what happened yesterday. Things could change. She anticipated that Eugene could end up being a community dominated by multi-family housing and that people would change the way that they lived.

Ms. Taylor hoped that any decisions made by the CRG or the council would still be put out to the public for feedback. She did not think that many residents were aware of the process.

Mr. Clark wanted to see approaches that supported existing businesses and allowed for more economic independence. He was concerned that the City was not adequately planning for manufacturing based jobs, which he continued to believe would be important to the area, particularly as they related to agricultural products, secondary production of agricultural products, and green technology. He thought that would both help to employ residents and increase property tax revenues by creating more taxpayers. Ms. Gardner said that small-group discussions at the last CRG meeting had touched on that topic. There was agreement among participants that the community needed to be equally prepared for smaller industrial and to ensure there were opportunities to nourish existing businesses.

Mr. Zelenka agreed that the community needed to pursue manufacturing in a strategic and realistic way. He believed it was acceptable to pursue larger companies, but thought it needed to be proportional to the probability of securing one, and that Eugene wanted to avoid "giving away the store." He wanted a diverse strategy, or what he termed a "pie that had a lot of slices in it." He agreed with Mr. Clark that the City needed to support existing businesses to ensure they stayed here.

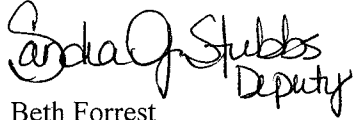
Mr. Zelenka believed the pace of the process was too slow and said many CRG members shared that sentiment. He asked what the council would see in February and what decisions it would be asked to make at that time. City Manager Ruiz indicated he intended to present the council with a decision package that included what he termed "the deal points of a deal." What the council approved in February would move forward as the final product. He said that there would also be a formal adoption process, and that included public hearings that might prompt the council to make changes. City Manager Ruiz anticipated that in the future, the City would periodically revisit the plan to ensure that the assumptions behind it played out, and that effort would become a part of the regular work plan. Mr. Zelenka endorsed that approach.

Mr. Zelenka asked how the infill compatibility standards would be incorporated into the process. Ms. Gardner anticipated that the standards would be included in the implementation strategies and could require additional code language.

Responding to a question from Mr. Brown, Ms. Gardner confirmed that the plan would include a map.

Mayor Piercy adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

The image shows a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra J. Stubbs". To the right of the signature, the word "Deputy" is written in a smaller, less stylized font.

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)