

CITY OF BELLEVUE
BELLEVUE PLANNING COMMISSION

RETREAT MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 24, 2012
4:30 p.m.

Mercer Slough Educational Center

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Carlson, Commissioners Ferris, Hamlin, Laing, Sheffels, Tebelius, Turner

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Salomone, Dan Stroh, Paul Inghram, Department of Planning and Community Development; Carol Helland, Department of Development Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Rhonda Hilyer, Agreement Dynamics, Inc.

RECORDING SECRETARY: Paul Inghram

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Chairman Carlson welcomed the Commission and other attendees at 4:30 p.m.

2. COUNCIL REMARKS

Mayor Lee thanked commissioners for their hard work and then how important their work is to the City Council. Deputy Mayor Robertson echoed Mayor Lee's comments and noted the number of upcoming planning projects the City is or will be taking on over the next year or two. She stated how the Council values the Commission's work. PCD Director Chris Salomone added that the Planning Commission's plate will be full and that staff appreciate the commissioners' commitment to planning for the City.

3. COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

Ms. Hilyer presented information about communicating in a manner that is effective and led a workshop entitled, "Signals of Success." The workshop focused on one's communication style and how it contributes to working effectively. Deputy Mayor Robertson noted how Rhonda Hilyer and a similar workshop discussion had been a valuable part of the City Council's retreat.

The Commission also discussed material presented at the previous Planning Commission meeting regarding the Open Public Meetings Act, the Public Records Act, Roberts Rules of Order, and meeting protocols.

4. PROVIDE FEEDBACK FROM INTERVIEWS

Ms. Hilyer provided a summary of feedback from interviews she did of the commissioners, the Deputy Mayor and select staff members. She noted that she heard that the retreat is an opportunity to work better together and in optimizing the Commission's performance. In response to the interview comments, the Commission discussed how to move the Commission forward toward being more productive, including how to better understand each other and to best manage times when commissioners might disagree.

5. PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Ms. Hilyer led a discussion about process improvement and asked the Commission what steps they would like to identify to improve performance. Chairman Carlson stated that they were moving from 'norming' to 'performing' and noted three areas of consideration: the relationship of the Planning Commission itself; the relationship of the Commission with staff; and the relationship between the Commission and the public.

Some commissioners expressed concern that legal requirements and protocols, such as those discussed at the previous meeting, restrict the Commission's relationship with the public. There is a balance between the city's legal obligations and the desire to hear from the public. It was noted that the Commission could modify or suspend its rules when needed and that the chairperson has sufficient discretion to appropriately manage public testimony at meetings.

Commissioners agreed that, at times, they should be succinct with their comments and, at other times, they should be careful to explain their position.

It was also noted how all of the commissioners want to do what is best for the community. In order to make the best decisions, commissioners seek sufficient information to provide a legal or factual grounding on which to base direction. It is important to understand the limits that frame an issue.

In discussing how to improve the working with staff, the Commission noted that the relationship with staff has improved as work on the Shoreline Master Program update has become more consistent with the direction of the current Commission. It was also noted that face-to-face discussions with stakeholders have proved to be more effective at working through issues than the formal and more constrained format of the regular Planning Commission meetings.

6. WRAP UP DISCUSSION

Chairman Carlson concluded the meeting noting that the retreat was productive and that the Commission would need to schedule additional time to follow up.

7. ADJOURN

Chairman Carlson adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.



Paul Inghram
Staff to the Planning Commission

3-13-13
Date



John Carlson
Chairman of the Planning Commission

3-12-13
Date

* Approved February 13, 2013

