



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
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## Deconstruction Advisory Group

### Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2015

**Time:** 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

**Committee Members present:** Bryce Jacobson, Shane Endicott, Joe Connell, Preston Browning, Barbara Kerr, James Ray Arnold, Alando Simpson, Jordan Jordan for Brandon Spencer-Hartle, Jeff Fish, Maryhelen Kincaid, Ben Gates, Nancy Thorington, Kristin Cooper, Matthew Robinson

**Absent:** Scott Yelton, Caroline Dao, Kristin Wells

**Staff:** Shawn Wood, Madeline Kovacs

**Guests:** Kathleen Petrie (phone), Vic Remmers, Bruce Howard, Marty Treece, Eric Thompson

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### Welcome and Introductions

Shawn Wood began the meeting with an overview of the Deconstruction Advisory Group (DAG's) timeline, and goals for remaining meetings before recommendations are due to City Council, at the hearing scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup>. He also notified the Group that the deconstruction training for City contractors has been postponed, rescheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. Shawn then gave an overview of a draft Deconstruction Incentive Pilot, and the DAG provided feedback.

### Next Steps

The final DAG meeting will be held on May 20<sup>th</sup>, from 2:30 – 4:30 pm in the same room (7A, 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup>).

### Summary of DAG purpose

The Deconstruction Advisory Group has been charged with advising Bureau of Planning & Sustainability (BPS) on options to increase deconstruction activities, to provide BPS with diverse input from a range of stakeholders, and to share any expertise critical to making deconstruction a success in Portland. BPS will bring a resolution to City Council on June 3<sup>rd</sup> which establishes a



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deconstruction incentive program and recommends actions for next steps. There will also be the option for public testimony concerning which options we are directed to pursue.

Concurrent projects to the Deconstruction Advisory Group include:

1. The creation of a web-based deconstruction calculator to assist contractors and others in determining carbon and energy impacts of deconstruction versus demolition.
2. Deconstruction training for City contractors, preparing them to successfully bid on and complete the removal of city-owned structures. The first training is scheduled for September 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Summary of discussion**

Main points from the discussion are summarized below, according to topic. Comments are not attributed to specific Advisory Group members.

#### Program Scope and Funding:

- There is a potential trade-off between being able to fund pilot participants to a full enough extent to make participation feasible/attractive, and the number of participants we can fund
  - Covering the current estimated average cost gap (\$5,000) for 350 projects comes to about \$2.5 million
  - Pilot will be somewhat dependent on who volunteers, and moneys sought may be ratcheted up/down accordingly
- A critical barometer to evaluate our impact will be how many deconstructions versus demolitions occur as a result
  - About 375 full demolitions were permitted the last couple of years
  - The Rebuilding Center did about 30 deconstruction projects last year
  - Group estimate was somewhere between 3-10% are currently deconstructed
- There are some features that could make deconstruction more competitive without having to offer a monetary subsidy
  - Tax write-offs right now do not make deconstruction on par with typical demolition
  - Time & expediency can make a huge difference for builders: If an inspector were assigned to help navigate bureaus, permitting and/or process incentives were put in place to cut the time delay by months, that is also very valuable to the developer
    - BDS FIR program a potential model?
    - More on the bureaus' side to administrate than meets the eye



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- Need to give neighbors adequate notice remains: Fast track after demo delay?
- Who needs to be certified in order for a firm to be a certified deconstructor?
  - Option for field experts/ leaders to test out?
  - How long would a certification last?
  - Cost is a participation barrier
- How do we successfully and fairly encourage the participation and further the professional training of MWESB firms in accordance with City goals?
  - Front end: Focus on training, incentives to send employees from these firms to be trained and boost their capacity
  - Back end: Boost on the incentive amount for hiring these firms
  - Seed money up front for trainings across the board would greatly incentivize participation and further education
  - Making a first training free for everyone would be a drop in the bucket, and participation could be huge: \$300 fee each– could train ten firms for \$3,000
- Remember our over-arching goal: To get people who currently do one day “crunch and dump” demolitions to begin to change their practices, and consider deconstruction
- If a \$5,000 minimum incentive for a developer to even consider deconstruction is needed, should we be considering alternatives to a carrot approach?
  - Make it mandatory: across the board is still fair, will do it, but may drive up housing costs
- Option for a certified deconstructor to do an initial inventory, and then receive multiple bids base on this initial assessment?
- Credit system for fee reductions on SDC charges? These keep going up

### Program Education and Notification:

- We need to be able to defend all our decisions in designing this program, including timeline and waste diversion goals/ requirements
- Notifications don't need to get additional notification for the pilot program, from BPS explaining the program goals should be sufficient: For the time being, utilizing BDS list (within 150 ft) and sending out a form letter should be fine



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- Notification for future phases will be important as one means to ensuring compliance
- Continued support for only certified companies to qualify for projects

### Documentation and Verification:

- Who determines what's salvageable?
- Can the deconstruction calculator or other tool be utilized to help estimate whether a project is a good candidate up front, and then if so, on the back end as a reporting tool?
  - Would allow a trained contractor to do a cursory pass: In the ballpark for incentives to make deconstruction worthwhile?
  - Could be a simple inventory sheet listing materials & amount
  - Points system for all components, weighted towards bigger/ more difficult items?
- Perhaps keep incentives fairly low but requirements less rigid for partial deconstruction, while requiring much more and also offering greater rewards for full
  - Incentives weighted towards full deconstruction supports diversion goals
  - Keeps entry point low/ allows many new participants to get their feet wet
  - Over-arching goal = to get more people thinking and engaged
  - Full deconstruction is much easier to define
  - If a company determines they want to fully deconstruct, the time invested will ensure they will want to salvage and sell as much material as possible
- Can we also support documentation of:
  - On-site re-use, or something that maybe didn't go to the re-use store, but directly to another project via photographic documentation?
  - Material that was ruined/ not salvageable (for exemptions)?

### Other Main Points

- Plan ahead so that we don't encounter a situation where there is a month-or-more long lag time for projects, leading to a perception of failure due to lack of capacity. We want this process to be positive for people as it becomes better known



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- One potentially positive result could be that costs are driven down
- The market is still partially a result of a boom following a recession: pent-up demand
- What is the cost, to people and the environment, for free dumping of toxic waste at Metro? Metro currently subsidizes this.
  - Charge more to polluters to dump; make harmful practices reflect their true costs