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## Draft Summary Meeting Notes

### Comprehensive Plan Update – Community Involvement Committee (CIC)

**Date and Time:** February 23, 2016, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** 1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, Conference Room 7A

**Meeting Goals:** Review Task 5 outreach lessons learned; prepare to review CIP; discuss Neighborhood Coalition Chairs and Directors feedback on public involvement

**Attendance:** Jason Barnstead-Long, Denise Barrett, Christina Blaser, Lois Cohen, Linda Nettekoven, Stan Penkin, Laura Stewart (by phone), Alison Stoll

**Absent/Excused:**

Paula Amato, Judy Bluehorse Skelton, Jessica Conner, Kenneth Doswell, Howard Shapiro, Maggie Tallmadge, Jovan Young

### Task 5+ Outreach Check-in

#### Central City 2035

Derek Dauphin briefly outlined the public involvement for the Central City 2035 project (outside the Comprehensive Plan purview, but closely tied). The project has made about 8000 contacts with Portlanders thus far.

One issue raised in the process was an inquiry into conflict of interest in the West Quad Stakeholder Advisory Committee. One CIC member asked what the answer would be to a community member who wanted to see the process redone with different committee processes. BPS staff noted that the Ombudsman's report did not question the validity of the West Quad process, but found that committee members should have been required to disclose potential conflicts of interest. The committee acted purely as an advisory body, not a decision-making body. CIC members stressed that the public perception of the advisory committee is negative, creating further distrust.

#### Issues that came up during the process

- Put together stakeholder advisory committee thoughtfully. Clarify who members are representing (especially if they wear many hats). Design transparent processes to ensure that members have equal weight in the process. Note that ombudsman has determined that stakeholder advisory committee members, regardless of the weight





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that the advisory role plays in the process, are public officials and thus subject to state ethics laws.

- Organization participation and concerns can change dramatically during an extended process. In this case, a neighborhood association board with one stance on an issue at the beginning of the process was entirely replaced in an election, and came to the project later in the process with an entirely different stance.
- It's important to include groups focused on issues that are not geographically based to get broader input.

### *CIC members' feedback on CC2035:*

- There are a variety of interests. You can invite people to disagree, but you can't force them to participate.
- Make sure the people you're talking to actually represent the people they claim to represent. (And when it comes to notification, make sure you have the correct list, and are notifying the people you mean to notify.)
- When you reach out to an organization, make sure you're actually connecting to a person who is most likely to be interested and/or will follow through.
- Talk to other staff at BPS who go to neighborhood association, district coalition and other organizations' meetings, to broaden reach
- District coalition staff can provide helpful info to get a sense of what's going on with neighborhood associations.
- Staff from other bureaus can provide additional information about who to talk to and how to reach them.

## **Campus Institutions**

John Cole described the public involvement for the Campus Institutions Zoning Project. The project was built on the Economic Opportunities Analysis. Reviewed 15 dispersed colleges and 2 hospitals, goal of providing development capacity that works within neighborhood context. Concerns were raised by neighborhood associations, who make the point that what's good for the regional economy isn't necessarily good for neighbors. Staff last visited CIC in Jan 2014, during the recruitment for the advisory group. Staff met 25 times with neighborhood associations, and individually with institutions. Open houses were not useful, as attendance was very low.

### *Issues that came up during the process*

- Advisory group makeup. Staff deliberately worked to recruit a representative advisory group. In the end, most of the advisory group members who lasted the duration of the process were representing institutions, and were likely paid to participate, or were neighborhood representatives who had previously gone through campus planning processes with the institutions. There was some diversity representation on the advisory group, but all group members who were





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people of color dropped out of the process when the conversation moved to setbacks and height limits. During outreach and recruitment, staff worked with Tiffani Penson (OMF), Diversity and Civic Leadership partners, and staff from the Office of Equity and Human Rights for advice on whom to recruit and how.

- Some institutions who didn't engage when initially invited got interested later in the process. They felt that until they had a product to review, they didn't know how to react. They also went directly to City Council with comments, rather than working with staff earlier in the process. The staff proposal did change substantially in response to feedback from the advisory group, which provided advisory recommendations on a consensus basis.

### *CIC members' feedback*

- Almost feels like process should be reversed – start with implementation, then go to goals and policies! People don't care until the process hits their street. It's so hard to get your arms around it, and it feels almost impossible to bring people into it.
- PSU has a new VP of Global Diversity; might be worth talking to her.
- Outreach is difficult. Can start internally on process level. Make people aware that this is the plan, these are the metrics to ensure that we're taking steps to try to be more equitable. Make general public aware of that, for the sake of accountability. Best if metrics are put in place at the beginning of the outreach – it helps get everybody on the same page.
- Nuts and bolts are hard, you have to work hard to support people so they can follow. Lots of visuals help, repetition helps, specificity to place helps.
- Reporting back along the way is important.

## **Mixed Use Zoning Project**

Barry Manning described the public involvement for the Mixed Use Zoning Project.

- Met with CIC in January 2014; project has pretty much followed the PI plan presented at that time. Activities included neighborhood walks in several locations, roundtables, workshops, etc.
- The project advisory committee formed early on, explicitly in an advisory role rather than decision-making. Tried to balance membership from neighborhood associations, development/design, businesses, etc., and sought to form a more diverse committee. Membership has dwindled over time, as process has drawn out. Interest and participation levels have waned and waxed and waned again. Most members representing under-served communities have left the group. The group has, however, been very helpful for advisory feedback throughout the process.
- Release of Proposed Draft in March is expected to attract a strong response.

### *Issues that came up during the process*



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- Level of technical complexity makes this proposal difficult to communicate to audiences, whether it's the advisory committee or workshop attendees. Materials and presentations include a lot of important information for stakeholders to understand what may change and what won't, but the details can be overwhelming to most audiences.
- Recruitment and retention of members of under-represented communities for the PAC was difficult.
- Effective public engagement for citywide projects are more challenging than area-specific projects, because there are so many stakeholders, many with particular issues and problems they'd like addressed in specific ways .
- Last-minute participation is very challenging.

### *CIC members' feedback*

- Maybe BPS needs to separate audiences – have an advisory committee for the big picture and one to go into the weeds, like the PEGs.
  - But you'd have to keep reconnecting those groups.
  - Don't underestimate people's ability to engage productively.
  - Can't put the onus on the community to meet standards of expertise.
- Need to better communicate the connection between policies and implementation.
- Committees
  - Need to review committee processes. We need to talk to people who have left and find out why they left and what would have supported them to stay. Committee participation is very, very demanding.
  - Committee participants need to understand how their work is tied to final decisions. More feedback loops and transparency.
- Staff need to highlight achievements along the way, and work with communities that have been involved.

### **Residential and Open Space Zoning Update**

Deborah Stein spoke about the Residential and Open Space Zoning Update project. The project primarily proposes straightforward zoning changes corresponding with the changes to designations recently recommended by PSC to City Council. Some changes, however, are proposed for areas where the zoning has never matched the designation applied in 1980. The initial Discussion Draft presents two approaches – for the areas where zoning is being proposed to align with the new designation, the approach followed the usual practice of presenting a proposal. For the areas where the zoning and designation currently do not match, the approach was to identify "Zoning Review Areas" where planning staff would do further analysis to determine if the areas were appropriate for up-zoning to align with the designation. The analysis was based on a set of evaluation criteria established by staff, and





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refined through discussions with the affected neighborhoods. District liaisons reached out to neighborhood associations in the relevant areas to share information and take feedback on the analysis methods.

### *Issues that came up during the process*

- Capacity building is a major problem – this conversation required a lot of education even for savvy participants.
- Overload for people already engaged. With the number and complexity of projects in play at the moment, volunteer-based organizations feel overwhelmed.

### *CIC members' feedback*

- How are we prepared for the storm when people get Measure 56 notices?
  - Staff response: Helpline is set up for high volume of calls; also providing drop-in hours around the city and advertised in the notices.

## **Neighborhood Coalition Chairs and Directors letter to City Council**

CIC members noted that this probably should not be considered a letter so much as notes from a meeting. Members also felt that most of the concerns raised in the letter have already been reviewed and discussed by the CIC, and included in the 2014 evaluation memo – transparency, timeline, scope, clarity about ability of public feedback to influence decisions, capacity-building, etc. Frustration is clearly expressed in letter, but not any new concerns about public involvement. CIC members agreed that several members would reach out to Chairs and Directors to explore ways to develop proposed solutions for issues.

The meeting ended at 5:10 p.m.

For more information, please contact Sara Wright, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability at 503-823-7728 or [sara.wright@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:sara.wright@portlandoregon.gov).

