



## **City Council Study Session Minutes – July 13, 2009**

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At 7:30 p.m. Mayor Maxwell called the regularly scheduled study session of July 13, 2009 to order. Kevin McKeown, Nick Petrish, Erica Pickett, Brad Adams, Bill Turner, Cynthia Richardson and Brian Geer were present.

Mayor Maxwell introduced Marcia Hunt who will henceforth be taking Council minutes as Kathy Janke retires at the end of the year.

### **Shoreline Master Program Briefing**

Planning Director Ryan Larsen gave a brief update on the SMP schedule which includes extensive public process between September 9 and the anticipated final approval date of March 1, 2010. The Watershed Company will have materials prepared for Council review for the scheduled meetings on September 21, November 23 and December 14. February 1 and February 16, 2010 will be public hearings before Council. Staff will address public comments from those hearings in time for the final hearing date before Council and anticipated adoption on March 1, 2010. The City received word last week that it did receive the grant it requested. A final letter making the grant award official is due within a couple of weeks. The City can start withdrawing funds from the grant account already. The amount is expected to be the full amount requested.

### **Discussion**

Mrs. Richardson noted that Department of Ecology is formulating new rules cities are to incorporate into SMPs. Anacortes started its SMP process prior to these changes so may not be subject to them. Mr. Adams noted that four public hearing opportunities are included in the schedule.

### **San Juan Passage – Schedule Update**

Planning Director Ryan Larsen outlined the review schedule for the proposed Native Growth Protection Easement (NGPE) Restoration and Management Plan for San Juan Passage. After the last site visit staff met and determined that some public involvement was in order. The proposal will go before the Planning Commission on September 9 for public comment, consideration and recommendation, then move on to City Council on September 21 for public comment and either approval or deferral of action to a future meeting, likely October 5. Prior to September 9 staff will meet with the applicant to clarify exactly what will be brought before Council and will prepare a memo clearly stating what action the applicant is looking for from Planning Commission and City Council.

### **Anacortes Futures Project**

Mike Trafton, incoming president of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, introduced the Anacortes Futures Project. The Project's report, the product of two years of research, has been out for two months now and includes an executive summary of the 99-page report. The Project team includes Mike Trafton, Kirk Kennedy, Mark Bunzel, Pam Allen, Steve Wilhoit, Jim Clarke, and Patti Anderson. The Project follows up on the Berk Study that the City commissioned in 2006 regarding the economic drivers of the local economy.

Mike Bunzel presented a slide show summarizing the report which looks at the economic history and present of Anacortes and examines a range of economic development scenarios for our future. After considering history, trends, land use, demographics, housing, employment, and taxable retail sales, the recommendation of the AFP is to develop a collaborative master plan for the City's economic future to be created by a task force including stakeholders such as the City, the Port of Anacortes, and the Chamber of Commerce. The AFP report is available free on line and at the Anacortes Public Library and may be purchased at Bayshore Office Products.

#### Discussion

Mrs. Richardson noted that historical economic development reacted to industrial changes but now we can be more proactive to steer our economic future. Mrs. Pickett complimented the Chamber on the AFP report and asked if the Project looked at the energy cluster at all. Mr. Bunzel confirmed that it did; that information appears in the printed report. The Mayor asked if the plan has been updated to reflect public comments received thus far. Mr. Bunzel responded that new material is being developed now but no major revisions have been made yet. The Mayor encouraged the AFP to make those revisions sooner rather than later so the public has complete and accurate information. Mr. Geer expressed his appreciation to the AFP and asked if a City Council member or two could be on the task force. Mr. Bunzel responded that the temporary team including the Mayor and Mr. Larsen is looking now at what the best make up of the task force would be. Mr. Petrish praised the report's independent and neutral view of possible futures for the waterfront and observed that decisions made now will impact the future for 50-100 years. Mr. Turner thanked the project for its hard work and noted that radical economic changes in the past two years may require that the assumptions in the report be adjusted. Mr. Adams thanked the AFP for its objective report, noted that our fairly rigid geographic boundaries constrain our decisions, and urged expanding retail opportunities in town. Mr. McKeown thanked the AFP for a blueprint that injects optimism into the community about how we can grow a sustainable, enriching community.

#### **Parks Comprehensive Plan and ACFL Comprehensive Plan**

Parks Directory Gary Robinson provided an overview of the process and schedule for approving the Parks Comprehensive Plan and ACFL Comprehensive Plan. Councilors received copies of the current drafts of each plan. The two plans are being considered concurrently because they affect each other. An approved Parks Comprehensive Plan is required for grant funding, the ACFL Comprehensive Plan is not. Mr. Robinson reviewed the process undertaken to date to arrive at these drafts including formation of a steering committee, identification of interested parties, three rounds of public input, a telephone survey, drafting of initial plans by staff, taking public comments on the drafts before the Parks Commission and the ACFL Advisory Board, a SEPA review (the plans received no comments from state agencies), presentation to the Planning Commission including public comments, and a small round of revisions made to the drafts based on the Planning Commission's hearing and recommendations. The resulting drafts now presented are thus fairly well refined.

Mr. Robinson highlighted some major issues in each plan. The Parks Comprehensive Plan reflects revised service level recommendations since the last Plan, a major interest in pathways and trails, conformance of goals and policies to the City Comprehensive Plan, the need to obtain County funding for services Anacortes provides to non-Anacortes residents,

potential expansion of off-leash dog recreational areas, a planning process for Heart Lake, and significant community interest in a small boat center.

In the ACFL Comprehensive Plan the current draft deletes references to logging and reflects significant discussion about use of Mt. Erie and motorcycle use in the ACFL. There was a great deal of discussion about off-leash dogs that is not reflected in draft Plan because the Forest Advisory Board recommended dogs should continue to be welcome in the ACFL on leash only as they always have been. The Plan reflects the importance of environmental education as well as allowing recreational opportunities while still preserving the space.

Regarding the schedule for adoption, Mr. Robinson proposed that Council consider both plans together, on the same night, September 8, with public input. On September 21 Council would discuss the Parks Comprehensive Plan, on October 5 Council would discuss the ACFL Comprehensive Plan, staff would incorporate any requested changes, then on October 19 Council would take action on either or both plans if that has not already happened on the earlier dates. Written comments will continue to be accepted through September 8; over 200 pages of written comments have already been received. Both the Plans and the comments will be available on line by approximately Wednesday this week and printed copies will be available for public review at the library and at City Hall.

#### Discussion

Mr. McKeown spoke on behalf of the Council Parks & Recreation Committee to endorse considering both plans together. Mr. Turner commended staff for taking so much public input thus far and urged the audience to review the draft plans and comment in September if appropriate. Mr. Robinson reminded people who are pleased with the plans as drafted that they may also still express that opinion. Mr. Petrish inquired about the location of Anchor Cove Park. The Mayor clarified that it is west of Trident. Mr. Geer complimented staff on the draft plans and on the new Kiwanis Field at Volunteer Park. The Mayor observed that the Kiwanis clubs and Rotary clubs have contributed hugely to our parks. Mrs. Richardson agreed that our staff could never provide and care for the facilities we have without the financial support and physical labor donated by volunteers. Mr. Adams reminded that the Parks plan is actually a Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan and Council is interested in public opinion on recreation programs and activities as well as facilities.

At approximately 8:38 p.m. the Mayor adjourned the regularly scheduled study session of July 13, 2009.