

Minutes

January 15, 2015

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee

Present:

Craig Piper, Chairmain
Councilor Maxine Beecher
Tex Haeuser
Robert Foster
Mark Eyerman
Milan Nevajda
Pat Doucette
Kathleen Phillips
Stephanie Carver, GPCOG
Craig Gorris
Peter Stanton
Nathan Marles
Libby Reynolds
Jon Jennings

Absent:

Claude Morgan
Joe Picoraro

1. Welcome

Craig Piper welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members were provided with the agenda, 12/18/14 minutes, a copy of the email from Mark to Tex outlining outreach strategy, and the Mill Creek Master Plan (1/12/15) document (new format).

2. Adoption of the Minutes

Maxine Beecher moved to adopt the 12/18/14 minutes; Bob Foster seconded. Unanimous approval.

3. Mill Creek Master Planning Draft

Mark reviewed how the new Mill Creek Master Plan draft came about and the new format. He reviewed what's new, including edited graphics/filled-in graphic examples and illustration and new appendices. He then reviewed the amendments memo from Milan to Mark (provided to the group via email). He asked the group to address comments/suggestions, look at what's been laid out, and try to finalize the "committee draft." Mark also noted that the word "draft" should be added throughout the master plan.

In regards to the Memorandum, the group discussed the following:

#1. Proposed new vision statement for Mill Creek- Peter reviewed his comments/vision statement addressed in the memo. Craig P. liked the new wording. Mark was hesitant about the word "sustainable" —in some areas that word has positive and negative connotations. Peter is open to changing the word—he said we was trying to put something meaningful upfront, since the plan is a lot to go through. Maxine and Tex said the Council is very green. Milan said it was also mentioned to switch the objectives along with the vision. The group agreed with this proposed change.

#6. Consider overall district densities- Maxine asked if this should expand to talk about different zoning districts. Mark said currently it says “unlimited density” in a couple places and that may be problematic. Peter suggested adding in actual numbers. Maxine asked if it could be simpler terminology. Pat said putting a number on it can limit what can be done. The group continued to discuss other wording choices and about density being green. Mark is nervous putting a number in. Mark said they would work on wording that doesn’t say “unlimited.”

Peter mentioned how Portland talks about affordable housing as a portion of housing in a development and asked if that’s something the group should consider. The group discussed affordable housing and the impact of development on schools. Milan suggested this be added into proposal point #4 (include discussion of Planned Unit Development) to bring up the discussion of affordability. Pat and Mark spoke about affordable housing vs. workforce housing. Mark suggested that adding this point in the plan could create more obstacles for developers. Jon agreed—there are ways to achieve these goals without setting up roadblocks from the start. Peter agreed and said this is a small part of the city and there are other areas with affordable housing/where affordable housing can be made. He would personally like to see this more of a “jewel” of South Portland. Jon discussed dispersing affordable housing and not concentrating it in one area such as this. Jon also mentioned incentivizing developers to consider including affordable housing instead of requiring it. The group agreed that this is a good thing to talk about but it can be left out for now. A discussion can happen once development begins.

#2. Proposal to add a new Action Item #11 to Objective #1, “*enhance bike lane along Waterman Drive*”- The group discussed Objective #1, Item #11 (pg 17 of the draft). Jon mentioned that adding bike lanes will lessen parking that could be needed. Craig P. said the objective’s goal is to have both on-street parking and bike lanes. The group agreed to add item.

#3. Proposal to add language to Item 9, Objective #3, “*develop bike lanes*”- The group discussed Objective #3, Item #9 (pg 25 of the draft) and if “bicycle facilities” includes bike lanes. The group decided to leave this language out.

#4. Proposal to include a discussion of Planned Unit Development- Stephanie said that this is already incorporated (page 15, #5 of the draft). Tex said this is a key concept and asked if it should be worked on more. Jon asked Stephanie to explain what this means so everyone understands it better. She discussed giving developers of large parcels the opportunity to use zoning tools. Tex asked Mark if “provide a regulatory approach” will be construed as conditional zoning. Mark said that this is laid out in the back of the Master Plan draft (page 106), and he and Stephanie spoke about that paragraph. Tex said Councilors will want to know these details. The group discussed and wondered if the details should be moved forward or if a reference or new section should be added. Tex said this wording is very important. The group agreed that the clarity is what they’re striving for. Mark said he thinks one of the goals is not to take the Council out of the process but have them set up the basic framework and rules, like it does for other cases, and let the Planning Board work through the details of development, like it does for other cases. Jon said a lot of this is also on the developer. Peter asked if someone needs a Master Plan if they’re developing a smaller lot. Mark said no. The group agreed that the current language is okay but referencing will be added.

#5. Proposal to include a Low Impact Development and energy efficiency standards in recommended zoning regulations- The group discussed pg 28 of the draft. Craig P. asked if this language was already included. Mark said he strayed away from it because of the stormwater issue. Tex discussed how any development in Mill Creek will improve stormwater quality management. The group agreed this is already included.

Tex noted that the green roof picture (pg 63) is important in showing the Plan to the Council. He asked if there is anything in the verbiage that would require/steer a development project to have this sort of green roof. Peter asked if that's something that can be done as a stormwater mitigation device. The group said yes. Nathan said typically he would ask for more but it's already included. He hopes that the Planning Board and/or developer is enticed by different ideas like this. Stephanie asked if one of the objectives should be more descriptive (pg 10, #4). The group reviewed and liked the current language. Peter asked if the standards are in what's been written. Mark said improved stormwater management already exists. The energy efficiency talks about the benchmarking requirement relative to EnergyStar provisions and there's talk of encouraging LEED, but doesn't require it. Peter asked if there should be an incentive. Mark said he's heard anything new being built are meeting or coming close to these standards. Craig P. said it's on everyone's minds as a developer. Jon and Mark agreed.

Mark asked for overall comments. Craig P. said pg 24—the diagram, B3, isn't sure what the purpose is. Mark said they were supposed to take that out and will. The group agreed that the landscape format of the document is preferred.

4. Master Plan Outreach

Mark reviewed his email to Tex outlining possible outreach strategy.

Maxine and Jon suggested giving the council hardcopy of the working draft with the executive summary.

Jon asked for a timeline from Mark. This will miss the next council meeting (January 21st) and Jon and Maxine agreed that this is more of a workshop item to give a brief overview of what's to come.

Tex said that once Mark and Milan make the changes, background paper and copies of the draft will go to Jim to distribute to council members. Jim will speak about the documents and announce dates of public meetings (February 2nd). Once outreach and input is attained, then everything will go to a council workshop. Mailers will go out to the community.

Public meetings are in place for Thursday, February 26th, in Council Chambers. Businesses will meet from 4:00-5:30 pm and the public will meet from 6:30-8:00 pm.

5. Comments from the Public

None

6. Round Robin

None

7. Adjournment 8:00