

MINUTES  
**Planning Commission**  
***Committee of the Whole***  
CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU  
*Ben Haight, Chairman*  
October 24, 2017

**I. ROLL CALL**

Ben Haight, Chairman, called the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, to order at 5:37 p.m.

**Commissioners present:** Ben Haight, Chairman; Paul Voelckers, Vice Chairman; Nathaniel Dye, Percy Frisby, Dan Hickok, Kirsten Shelton

**Commissioners absent:** Dan Miller, Carl Greene, Michael LeVine

**Staff present:** Beth McKibben, Planning Manager;  
Jill Maclean, Senior Planner;  
Roger Healy, Director, Engineering and Public Works

**Assembly members:** Loren Jones

**II. REGULAR AGENDA**

**Establishing priorities for CSP2017 0021: Recommendations to the Assembly for the FY2019-FY2024 Capital Improvement Program**

Ms. McKibben told the Commission that this is the beginning of the process for establishing the priorities for the capital improvement projects (CIP) that might be included in the annual CIP. The Engineering and Public Works Department will be bringing this forward to the Public Works and Facilities Committee in November, said Ms. McKibben.

Mr. Healy said the Engineering and Public Works Department has sent out its annual request for all departments to submit their anticipated capital improvement projects for the following year. This is a six-year plan, he noted.

The passage of the one percent sales tax in the last election has brought approximately \$47 million to the community, he said. He said these funds will reside mostly in the maintenance

realm, such as \$13.5 million for wastewater, \$2 million for water, \$2 million for housing projects, \$5 million for the Augustus Brown pool, and \$4.5 million for Centennial Hall. These funds will change the future allocation of funds which have been identified, he said, within the building maintenance realm for those particular projects.

Mr. Voelckers said he thought the projections in their packet included the funds from the one percent sales tax. He clarified that funds from the one percent sales tax will be added to the existing projections.

Mr. Healy said this was so. This revenue will come in at the amount of approximately \$8.5 million per year, he said. The scheduling of those funds is a different process, he said. In late November, the staff will be bringing a schedule for the allocation of these funds before the Public Works and Facilities Committee, said Mr. Healy.

The priorities within the street sales tax program will probably remain as predicted for the following year, said Mr. Healy. Next year they will be focusing on Birch Lane, he said, as well as repairs within the City of Juneau and Douglas.

Chairman Haight asked how the letter regarding the CIP recommendations from the Planning Commission submitted last year compares with this year's projects. He asked the Commission how it would like to proceed with its recommendation process this year.

Major areas addressed by the Commission in its memo submitted regarding the CIP last year were:

- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Community vitality
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Sustainability

#### *Housing*

Mr. Healy said the mass wasting study across the downtown area was placed into the CIP, but not within the current time period. Under questioning, Mr. Healy said this would be about \$200,000 in the future. With the passage of the one percent sales tax which will not begin funding until FY 19, these items will be for a four-year period, speculated Mr. Healy.

Mr. Voelckers said that Mr. Steedle had mentioned in his memorandum that there may be the possibility of obtaining a FEMA grant. He said some individuals in the Planning Commission are thinking that items such as the mass wasting and the avalanche areas are pretty much out of date. For example, said Mr. Voelckers, subsequently there are entire chunks of the downtown area that cannot be developed due to avalanche concerns. This makes construction and

financing on some of these lots very difficult to obtain, when perhaps they are actually safe pieces of property on which to build.

Mr. Healy said he believed the most recent modification to the avalanche study that provided a less conservative approach was in the late 1990's. With recent massive damage experienced in various areas of the United States recently, he said the overall approach of FEMA may be even more conservative, as far as allowing buildings in what could possibly be fairly hazardous areas. Insurance for areas that may have been deemed a hazardous area would also be problematic, said Mr. Healy.

Mr. Voelckers said he has noted homes not selling in what is termed an avalanche zone which amounts to a death knell for the property, even though there are huge trees surrounding the property which have obviously not been knocked down by any avalanche activity. He said it is surprising that some of these areas have not undergone further studies to possibly free them up for the market.

Mr. Healy said he felt that the one percent sales tax would broadly assist with the development of a specific incentive program to promote housing development, and also to identify priority projects, which the Commission had also listed under its housing priorities for the CIP.

#### *Community Vitality*

The Willoughby District parking deficit identified as the first item the Commission mentioned in its memorandum to the Public Works and Facilities Committee last December was initially earmarked for about \$8 million generally allocated for that purpose, said Mr. Healy. Those funds did not make it onto the ballot, he added. The only allocation currently existing for that project is about \$1.4 million remaining from a state grant for the evaluation of parking proposals benefiting the Willoughby district from both a state federal and local perspective, he said.

The identification of parcels for CBJ land acquisition falls under the Lands Department, said Mr. Healy, stating he did not have much information on that item.

Mr. Healy stated that he felt the Community Development Department has been leading the charge in the general public improvements in the Lemon Creek area, by creating the Lemon Creek Plan, which is the first step towards improving the area with community facilities, and with identification of necessary public amenities like bike paths, parks and pedestrian links. They have just received plans from the State Department of Transportation for reconstruction from the Walmart to Western Auto section of the roadway which includes installation of a sidewalk on the waterside of the road, and a roundabout located at DZ School, said Mr. Healy.

Mr. Voelckers asked if there is any active planning about a fire station located in Lemon Creek.

Mr. Healy said there are currently no active plans for a fire station located in Lemon Creek. The Fire Department has stated that it would very much like to have a station located in Lemon Creek, he added, but funds are not allocated for that project at this time.

#### *Transportation*

Mr. Healy noted that the community has certainly noticed the rise in shipping costs. They can study the issues some more, said Mr. Healy, but they are currently dealing with one primary shipper to and from Juneau.

The development and implementation of a seasonal downtown circulator is supposed to be implemented by a private developer who wants to implement electric shuttles in the downtown core area, said Mr. Healy. At this time the City does not want to submit a counter proposal to that of a private developer, said Mr. Healy. He added that he has not received an update on that project for a number of months.

#### *Sustainability*

The Commission on Sustainability issued a report in September which they are reviewing, said Mr. Healy. They try to make the best decisions on the facilities that they can, he said, and it is a balance between maintaining the facilities to which they must adhere, he said.

They do have a \$2 million allocation within the one percent sales tax allocated towards prioritization of landfill diversion strategies which will be directed towards Recycle Works, said Mr. Healy. That will be used to hopefully offset future rate increases, and also to evaluate either an expanded facility with the primary goal to improve the diversion away from the existing landfill, he said. They would like to avoid having to ship the community's waste out of town, he added, as other Southeast communities have been forced to do. The drop boxes for recycling installed in various areas of the community have been very helpful in diverting waste from the landfill, he said.

#### *Commission Comments and Questions*

Mr. Dye asked if there were budget requests from the Police Department.

Mr. Healy said the Police Department has not yet submitted this year's request, and that the Department does have a long list with no immediate funding attached. He added that the Police Department CIP requests are listed on pages 18 and 19 of the Six Year Department Improvement Plans. He added the CAD (Computer Aided Design) system replacement for \$200,000 is certainly becoming a priority for the department for its computer-aided dispatch program.

Mr. Voelckers asked Mr. Healy if he could elaborate on the \$2 million allocated for housing programs within the one percent sales tax extension.

Mr. Healy said the \$47 million from the one percent sales tax will be allocated at the rate of approximately \$8.5 million a year. Of those funds the staff will select the most easily implemented projects at first, he said. For example, said Mr. Healy, they have two large building renovation projects including Centennial Hall and the Augustus Brown pool. In many of these projects that will be more advantageous to space them out over the years, he said. The housing projects will follow the same scenario, he said, as to where they can best fit in and the best scenario for the implementation. There have been no decisions made as to how the housing funds would actually be allocated, he said.

Ms. McKibben said that Scott Ciambor, the Chief Housing Officer, will be reviewing the Housing Action Plan and identifying which implementation items would be appropriate for funding. He will be presenting a plan to the Affordable Housing Commission, she added. The Commission will see that \$2 million scheduled out through the six year CIP, she said. The Planning Commission will have the opportunity, as is its job, to review the CIP document before it is presented to the Assembly, said Ms. McKibben.

Mr. Voelckers emphasized how it is important for the Commission to provide its input into the CIP process now before its final presentation to the Assembly, when it would be too late to make adjustments at that point. Chairman Haight noted that the memorandum submitted by the Planning Commission to the Assembly regarding its CIP recommendations last year was the first time this has occurred, and that he felt it was providing specific feedback to the Assembly.

Chairman Haight suggested to the Commission that they continue with this format and submit its recommendations in writing to the Assembly this year as well.

Mr. Voelckers said he could not recall if the process last year involved an informal committee to draw up the recommendations, or if it was a formal working group. He said it takes quite a bit of drafting to put it together, and that he felt it would be a good idea to create this document via a committee again this year.

The schedule of the one percent allocation will be presented November 20, (2017) to the Public Works and Facilities Committee, said Mr. Healy. Coming out of that meeting will be a recommendation to the Assembly Finance Committee, he added. The one percent sales tax allocation is separate from the annual CIP process, he noted. If the Commission has specific recommendations that it would like to see implemented in the relative near future, then that recommendation should be made sooner rather than later in the process, said Mr. Healy.

Chairman Haight said this appeared to be a two-stage effort.

Mr. Healy agreed with that statement.

Mr. Dye asked Mr. Healy if he felt that the one percent sales tax allocation for housing was the most important item to deal with first.

Mr. Healy responded that if it was the Planning Commission's recommendation that the housing money should be prioritized in the early years, then the Commission should make that clear to the Assembly in a timely manner.

Mr. Voelckers asked how the language was phrased relative to housing in the one percent sales tax allocation.

Ms. McKibben read:

*The affordable housing fund provides funding for housing activities that target families and individuals who earn 120 percent of the area median income and below. The fund can be used by local housing developers, nonprofit agencies and social service agencies for the creation, acquisition, and rehabilitation or preservation of affordable housing. Examples of the types of projects that could utilize the fund include Phase 2 of Housing First, development of a rapid re-housing program, winter or emergency programs, senior housing, and housing targeted for low income and homeless populations.*

Chairman Haight recommended that they put together another small committee to work out details for a memo regarding its CIP recommendations, and to bring it back to the Commission prior to submission to the Assembly.

Mr. Voelckers asked if the product of a subcommittee can go directly to the Public Works and Facilities Committee without review by the entire Planning Commission.

Chairman Haight said they need to get to work at developing their response for the CIP recommendations. Since the Planning Commission does not meet until November 28, over a week after the Public Facilities Committee meets, time is an important element to consider, he said.

Chairman Haight nominated Mr. Voelckers, Mr. Dye and Mr. Hickok to serve on the CIP recommendation committee. The committee will meet this week if possible, or next week at the latest, to facilitate the process. The committee will draw up its recommendations, and if necessary another public Planning Commission meeting will be scheduled to approve those recommendations, and if not, they will submit the recommendations directly to the Public Facilities Committee for its November 20, (2017) meeting.

### III. **OTHER BUSINESS** - None

IV. **REPORT OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES** - None

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.