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**PHILOMATH PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

November 18, 2019

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Stein called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. at the City Hall Council Chambers, 980 Applegate Street, Philomath, Oregon.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Chair David Stein, Commissioners Steve Boggs, Gary Conner (via teleconference at 6:03 p.m.), Jeannine Gay, Lori Gibbs, Joseph Sullivan, and Peggy Yoder.

**Staff:** Chris Workman City Manager; Deputy City Attorney David Coulombe; and City Recorder Ruth Post.

**Guest:** City Councilor Doug Edmonds.

**Absent:** None.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

3.1 **Minutes of September 16, 2019**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Yoder moved, Commissioner Gibbs second, to approve the minutes of September 16, 2019, as presented. Motion APPROVED 5-0 (Yes: Boggs, Gay, Gibbs, Stein, and Yoder; No: None; Abstained: Sullivan).

*(Commissioner Conner joined the meeting at 6:03 p.m.)*

4. **BUSINESS**

4.1 **2040 Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group involvement** – Commissioner Yoder stated her belief of the outcome of the Planning Commission’s (PC) meeting on November 12 was that the Commission should be an integral part of the advisory committee. After discussion, it was agreed that having the entire Commission plus the proposed appointees would create too large of a committee at 16 members. Commissioner Yoder proposed any members of the PC who want to serve on the committee should be allowed but it shouldn’t be a total of more than 7 members.

Chair Stein suggested reducing the nine proposed appointees and add a couple of PC members for a mix of PC and the proposed members. Commissioner Yoder stated she would prefer to see the committee consist of more citizens, and it should be a mix.

Commissioner Sullivan noted they are making a recommendation to the City Council, but the root issue is that it is unclear what the deliverable expectations are for the committee. It would be helpful to know specifically what they are going to be doing. Chair Stein summarized his understanding, including if City gets the grant, a consultant will be hired who will prepare the reports and report back to the advisory committee with the consultant’s findings and the advisory committee will provide feedback. The consultant will adjust accordingly and the reports will move on for approval. Commissioner Sullivan stated he understands what the consultant will do but doesn’t understand the role of the committee. Chair Stein explained the use of citizens in helping to direct the study because they know the town. There was discussion about the time commitment of the advisory committee members. Commissioner Sullivan stated there are lots of rules for the PC but how this committee will work doesn’t seem to be defined.

53 Chair Stein stated it seems pretty clear that the committee will meet anywhere from four to six  
54 times and will then be disbanded.

55  
56 Commissioner Yoder questioned if this committee will have the same constraints as the PC  
57 regarding ex parte contact. Mr. Workman stated the committee will not be setting policy or  
58 making a land use decision, so ex parte contact won't apply. He stated it will, however, be  
59 subject to public meetings law.

60  
61 Commissioner Gay questioned if the consultants would be paid by the report. Mr. Workman  
62 explained he hasn't previously hired this particular type of consultant before but his expectation  
63 is that it will be a matter of hiring a firm to gather the data and write each report. Commissioner  
64 Gay had concerns that consultants don't know the city or the history. There was additional  
65 discussion about the expectations of the consultant and the cost. Mr. Workman noted that if  
66 staff has to do the work, it will take much longer. Commissioner Gay expressed her concern for  
67 having to pay money to a consultant when all of that work was performed for the current  
68 comprehensive plan and now someone has to be paid to do it all again. There was discussion  
69 about the funds the City has budgeted to begin this process. Commissioner Conner stated he  
70 has familiarity with this type of work and explained the process is to select a consultant and  
71 negotiate a price. Commissioner Boggs stated the PC should be involved in this process just  
72 the same as the standing committees that the City Council serve on.

73  
74 Mr. Workman suggested adding a couple more names from the PC to make 11 on the  
75 committee. Chair Stein commented that the problem with the draft list is there are nine people  
76 and seven are business people. He felt this was too many business people. Commissioner  
77 Sullivan stated the desirability as a business person to be on the committee and impact  
78 business policies. He felt this should be a more democratic process.

79  
80 There was discussion about the likelihood of receiving the grant. Mr. Workman stated the  
81 information he has received is promising but not a sure thing. He was doubtful that the City  
82 would get the full \$50,000 requested, but noted the City does have \$20,000 budgeted this year  
83 towards the project. He expects to receive a final decision within a couple of weeks and would  
84 like to get the project kicked off in January. He further explained the need to have discussions  
85 with the consultant to determine which reports are a priority to get done first and this may be  
86 somewhat dependent on what types of funding may be available now and in the future.

87  
88 Chair Stein requested a timeline. Mr. Workman explained the timetables aren't necessarily set  
89 and will be impacted by the consultant. Chair Stein questioned if there was a need to rush into  
90 establishing a committee. Mr. Workman described a timeline of a couple of weeks to receive  
91 the grant response, two to four weeks to get the consultant on board, and the committee  
92 beginning meetings after that.

93  
94 Commissioner Yoder stated she would like to see an application process for committee  
95 members. Mr. Workman explained this process was based on the City Council's direction.  
96 Commissioner Yoder questioned if other options were considered by the Council. Councilor  
97 Edmonds stated the Council did consider other options and decided to use this one. He  
98 suggested the PC put their recommendation together for the Council to consider.

99  
100 Chair Stein questioned how many members of the PC were interested in serving on the  
101 committee and how many other types of people they would recommend. Commissioner  
102 Sullivan stated he only knew one name on the list, Troy Muir; and with an open process, he  
103 could feel good about the list. He suggested the process should start over. Councilor Edmonds  
104 encouraged the PC to make that recommendation to the Council. He added that the Council is  
105 responsible for directing the City Manager to complete the comprehensive plan and this is their  
106 committee.

107  
108 Commissioner Gibbs felt there is no perfect mix. She did think it was worthwhile to have a  
109 couple of PC members on the committee but also saw the benefit of having the different  
110 representation from the community. Commissioner Sullivan stated this was the cornerstone of  
111 the comprehensive plan and this committee would decide where we're going to start.  
112 Commissioner Gibbs stated she does think this commission should have a role.  
113

114 Commissioner Sullivan recommended asking the Council to use some type of open process.  
115 Commissioner Yoder stated it sounded like the Council had already had that discussion and  
116 chose not to go that way. Commissioner Sullivan emphasized going to the Council with their  
117 recommendation.  
118

119 Mr. Coulombe explained the Council has the power of the City Charter to determine process  
120 and it's not the PC's job to direct them. He stated appointment power is not within the PC's  
121 purview and they appear to be getting bogged down on a piece of the process that they have  
122 no authority over. Commissioner Sullivan confirmed that the PC understands they have no  
123 authority. Mr. Coulombe noted the PC and citizens can make suggestions regarding process  
124 but it's up to the Council to make the decision.  
125

126 **MOTION:** Commissioner Boggs moved, Commissioner Gibbs second, to recommend to the  
127 City Council to add a minimum of two Planning Commission members to the Comprehensive  
128 Plan Advisory Group. Commissioner Yoder explained she would vote no because she wants to  
129 add more than two. There was additional discussion about the motion stating a minimum.  
130 Motion APPROVED 5-1 (Yes: Sullivan, Boggs, Gibbs, Yoder and Stein; No: Gay, Abstain:  
131 Conner.)  
132

133 There was discussion about having two people who wanted to participate. Chair Stein,  
134 Commissioner Yoder and Commissioner Sullivan said they would be willing to participate in the  
135 committee. Mr. Workman suggested he could just add the information about the Planning  
136 Commission's meeting to the Council memorandum along with the three names or that the  
137 Commission could draft a separate document with its own recommendation. There was  
138 consensus for him to include it in his memorandum.  
139

140 *Chair Stein called a recess at 6:46 p.m. and reconvened at 6:54 p.m.*  
141

142 **4.2 Planning Commission rights, responsibilities and functions** – Chair Stein noted the  
143 agenda packet contains state statute and city code directions on what the PC does and doesn't  
144 do. He added that the name, Planning Commission, suggests they do a lot of planning but that  
145 isn't what they really do.  
146

147 In response to a question from Commissioner Boggs, Mr. Workman explained that the City  
148 does not presently have a Traffic & Safety Committee. He stated although the code provides  
149 for one, there hasn't been one established since he's been with the City. Commissioner Yoder  
150 stated she was surprised to see the assignments in PMC 2.30.080 Public Facilities. She stated  
151 the City has parks that have never come before the PC. Commissioners Sullivan and Boggs  
152 stated agreement. Commissioner Sullivan added there were a number of things the PC is  
153 supposed to be doing that they're not. There was discussion about parks and any that have  
154 been created. Mr. Workman noted the Parks Master Plan was reviewed by the PC before it  
155 was sent to the Council for adoption. There was discussion about the ODOT medians in the  
156 highway.  
157

158 Commissioner Sullivan suggested the PC should remind the Council that these things are in  
159 the code and the PC would like to be involved. There was additional discussion about the  
160 recent property donation for use as a memorial park in memory of Paul Cochran. Mr. Workman  
161 stated the process was only beginning and the Parks Advisory Board would likely be  
162 responsible for a lot of the design and planning. Commission Sullivan stated the PC needs to  
163 respectfully remind the Council that it is their job to make plans for the City on future growth,  
164 parks, and buildings. Chair Stein noted that Section 2.30.090 says the Council may call on the  
165 PC, not shall. Ms. Post pointed out that Chapter 2.30 of the code was adopted in 1987 and the  
166 Parks Advisory Board has been added since that time. She suggested it may be as simple as  
167 the code needs to be amended to correct which body is responsible for certain activities.  
168

169 **MOTION:** Commissioner Sullivan moved, Commissioner Yoder second, that the City Council  
170 should consider whether the Planning Commission should be consulted when starting actions  
171 that could lie within the Planning Commission’s scope of responsibility. Motion APPROVED 7-0  
172 (Yes: Boggs, Conner, Gay, Gibbs, Stein, Sullivan and Yoder. No: None).  
173

174 Commissioner Sullivan reported he had a discussion with the City Attorney, City Manager and  
175 Mayor regarding the comprehensive plan kickoff and there is obviously some steam behind it.  
176 He believes there should be work on a vision to come up with a picture of what the community  
177 wants for the next 20-plus years and that the PC should get together and begin work on that.  
178 Chair Stein suggested that during the public discussions surrounding the 2040 plan would be a  
179 good time to discuss that.  
180

181 Chair Stein recommended that all members of the PC should have a copy of the Oregon  
182 Planning Commission Handbook and Mr. Workman offered to get copies distributed.  
183

184 **5. ADJOURNMENT:**

185 There being no further business, Chair Stein adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.  
186

187 SIGNED:  
188 David Stein, Chair

ATTEST:  
Ruth Post, MMC, City Recorder