

COMMITTEE FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

5:30 p.m. - Meeting – Rosemont Conference Room

Present: Ken Pryor, Ramiah Ramasubramanian, Emily Smith,
Gail Holmes, and Gary Walvatne.

Citizens Present: None

Staff Present: John Boyd

The following meeting notes are a general representation of the discussion. For full meeting content, audio is found under the Committee for Citizen Involvement using the specific meeting date www.westlinnoregon.gov/meetings.

1) Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m.

2) Approval of the March 6, 2018, meeting notes.

Chair Pryor noted he had reviewed the meeting notes and asked if there were any questions. Member Ramasubramanian raised a general concern about significant discrepancies between what was discussed at the meeting and the completed meeting notes. Until a better system is developed that provides precise and accurate summaries, he would not be voting on meeting notes approval. He cited ORS 192.650 "Recording or written minutes required; content; fees" and clarified what he desired for meeting notes content.

The committee discussed the evolution of meeting notes, public meeting law requirements, and council by-laws. There was a lengthy discussion on the needed content of the meeting notes, a concept of hiring additional staff to draft meeting notes to meet the proposed standard, and a suggestion for additional discussion in the future.

The members discussed potential changes to the meeting notes, differing methods to refer to the recording and a new heading (shown above) that provides the reader the location of the audio recording. The concern expressed was need for more specific information depicted in the meeting. The committee discussed methods to initiate time limits for each speaker and limiting discussion to the agenda item.

The Committee returned to the meeting notes asking content questions. Staff clarified items relating to Planning Commission land use decisions were not included and content related to Committee agenda topics are included as a guide to provide concise meeting notes. The review of the meeting notes continued and committee members provided changes to clarify content or provide minor corrections.

Member Holmes made a motion to approve the revised meeting notes for the March 6, 2018 meeting. Seconded by Member Walvatne. Motion passed four supporting approval (Pryor, Smith, Walvatne and Holmes) to one not approving approval (Ramasubramanian).

Member Walvatne supported a change to the meeting notes that points the reader to the option to reviewing the audio tape online. The consensus of the committee supported that addition. Member Ramasubramanian requested the vote be recorded by name because it was not a unanimous vote.

3) Public Comments

There were none.

4) Follow up – Use of the term “Public Comments” in agendas; provide letter for Council consideration.

Staff Boyd provided background information of a request by Member Axelrod to provide a letter to Council supporting a change to “public comments” by the City’s boards and commissions. At the February 6, 2018 meeting, the CCI discussed a request to clarify the use of terms. The proposal considered the use of the term public as it related to the comment section of the agenda. The CCI discussed other terms (i.e. resident versus citizen) that Committees could use as part of their meeting materials. Only one change was proposed for recommendation to council. At the February 6, 2018 meeting, Member Smith moved to recommend to City Council that agendas for City Council and all advisory boards use the term “Public Comment”. The motion passed unanimously. As a needed follow up, it was requested a letter be submitted to Council that represented the action taken at the February 6, 2018 meeting.

Member Walvatne made a motion to approve the letter dated March 13, 2018 for presentation to City Council. Seconded by Member Smith. Motion passed unanimously.

5) Continued from March 6, 2018 meeting – Planning Process: Continuation of Problem Identification & Topic Review

Member Pryor summarized the submittal to the committee he provided prior to today’s meeting. He explained the purpose of the graphics proposed was to bridge the understanding of the information in differing formats and provide additional clarity. He felt the CCI packet should be provided to the council formatted in a manner that includes a time line to illustrate the information discussed. He noted the timeline description is available in the material contained in the latest version. The summary material should identify key points, such as the adequacy of information provide with the application, substantive change, options for a tracking system that educates the public on land development applications, and tracking working group product evaluations. The Committee considered those topics and provided feedback on how those points could be integrated into the report.

The Committee considered how the report was compiled. The core bullet points list the six problem areas. The outline addressed the report issues and the directions given by Council for the working group to evaluate those issues. The Committee discussed how the report could identify some key solutions for specific issues on which the committee dedicated discussion time and group effort. The goal was not to work on potential solutions but for the more complex problems, illustrate how the Committee evaluated problem areas and what obvious solutions arose during those discussions. Chair Pryor discussed the efforts that could be undertaken by the work group. He noted the goals should be broad and generally promote citizen involvement. Member Ramasubramanian discussed his first concern is the goal provided by council. He noted that he was unable to find the exact direction provided by Council when the CCI was directed to review the planning process. Chair Pryor provided a quick summary that the goal is to enhance citizen

involvement in the process. He noted the report for presentation to Council contains milestones that compresses the planning process and proposes suggestions that include actions to write code in some instances, provides education in other instances. The goals were broad and should provide shorter intervals to allow more time and opportunities for citizen participation.

Member Pryor noted the process evaluation is technical. The goal of the workgroup will be to address a citizen's view of the process and provide recommendations to consider issues raised in the process.

Member Ramasubramanian listed two concerns, the first was how the CCI examines the process of land use and finds the ways and means to enhance citizen involvement. The second was related but asks how the CCI reviews the process issues and identifies problems areas and provides that report to Council. Member Pryor noted that the two questions raised may have been combined in the Committee review process. Member Holmes noted that the 120 day rule required by the state may force some actions before the land use action is deemed complete. Member Pryor noted the Committee had also focused on providing a staff report earlier in the process to allow all parties an opportunity to evaluate issues raised. He noted that the committee also considered a lessor review for simple types of applications and a full review for more complex application types. The review changes when the application is deemed complete.

Member Pryor continued with a consideration starting with the pre-application process, continuing to how applications are processed, deemed complete, to how the information is addressed in the staff report. The goal is to provide a path for citizens to understand the process, to provide input on the product that is presented and then to identify issues for change or improvement earlier in the process. Member Ramasubramanian noted the land use process should be examined to enhance citizen involvement in the land use process. If Council had instructed the Committee toward a goal to get more citizens involved in the process, this would have been a different review process. Instead, Council may have asked the Committee to look at evaluating the land use process and consider where there could be efficiencies in the review process.

The committee discussed citizen involvement generally. The intent is to assure that citizens are made aware of the proposed activities, identify how they may become involved and define how to participate. It is not just the process, there is education, administrative review and code writing that work to enhance citizen involvement. The best outcome is a clear process that defines the expectation at the differing levels of the review process. There was a discussion on how citizens can become involved. The challenge is most citizens are not aware of the complex rules or process. Others do not want to take the time to be educated on the process but simply want to express their opinion. Both should have an opportunity to be notified of land use hearings, attend if they wish and provide input in person or in writing on an issue. Chair Pryor noted that until the working group starts and considers the problem statement, that evaluation of needed changes will not be available.

Member Ramasubramanian asked how the citizen process will be enhanced. The land use process needs improvement to promote involvement and this must come from the Council or Planning Commission. He asked how the process can enable citizens to become involved in the process. He felt the underlying process was broken and the Committee has not addressed the needed solutions or changes that would enhance involvement. Chair Pryor agreed and noted it was a broader question than just process. It includes the education, and he reported some of the process issues were already fixed and others may not be open to change. Member Walvatne noted there are limits to what we can change due to statutory restrictions. There was a discussion of how the differing aspects could be completed. Members had some confusion of the roles of Council, Planning Commission and what role the CCI could play. They discussed items considered in the report that addressed the land use process and review of other city functions.

Member Holmes asked about the availability of needed feedback and how that feedback is provided in a timely manner. She noted for example, engineering reports are proposed and not submitted

to the Planning Commission regularly. There was a discussion of the work group membership. The thought was there should be CCI membership to assure continuity of the knowledge base. The Committee reviewed the timelines for presenting information to council, the creation of the work group and the completion of a report to Council. Member Walvatne noted the information in Section One provided a road map for the document. It was suggested the document created by staff that depicted graphically the land use process could be inserted in this first section. The committee ended the discussion by reviewing past efforts to compile the planning process report and differing graphics created to help illustrate the process. The agenda item discussion ended with a consensus it will be continued at the next meeting on March 27, 2018.

6) Member Comments

Staff Boyd provided a short summary and caution on a recent court case regarding “electronic meetings.” He reviewed tonight’s discussion on an email sent to the committee that initiated review emails on tonight’s agenda topics in a chain of email correspondence. The point was to be educational, to use the example to illustrate the process to avoid and to consider the decision supports transparency and citizen involvement. After a short question period, the members understood the issue and will filter emails to staff only for distribution and follow up.

Member Holmes discussed her role as a member of the Economic Development Committee. She raised a question about a committee that has a function to distribute funds related to tourism projects. Her thought was there should be a citizen involvement function to assure that the outreach process is appropriately followed. The question raised was should this type of outreach (to inform or educate citizens) be discussed at future CCI meetings. There were follow up questions on the purpose of the grant and the scope of the grant funds. This was an informational update and no action was required.

Member Smith asked if the charge of CCI was focused on land use. The Committee discussed the statewide planning goals and noted that citizen involvement was goal one. The goal seeks to educate the public and inform them of input opportunities. The Committee noted there are aspects of involvement in each of the goals if a community desired to work on that topic.

7) Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 7:15. The next meeting is March 27, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. and will be held in the Rosemont Room located in City Hall.