

CITY OF FIFE
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING

Fife City Hall

June 25, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Chair Brown.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Brown, Commissioners Fagundes, Lemoncelli, Bond, Edwards and Braden (arrived 7:14 pm)

Absent: None

Staff: Director David Osaki, Senior Administrative Assistant Katie Bolam, City Manager Dave Zabell, Public Works Director Russ Blount and Executive Administrative Assistant Andrea Edwards

Presenters: Seth Harry of Seth Harry & Associates; Michael Lapham, Joe Giacobazzi and Paul Fuesel of KPG

Public: None signed in. Those present included Councilmember Glenn Hull, Milton Mayor Debra Perry, Milton Planning Commissioner Jacquelyn Whalen, Stelian Paraschiv, and Randy Cook of TCF Architecture.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. June 4, 2012

Motion (Fagundes/Bond) to accept the minutes of June 4, 2012. **Passed 5/0.** (Commissioner Braden had not yet arrived.)

4. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

None.

5. PRESENTATION

a. KPG, Inc. / Seth Harry - Reporting on City Center Open House

Director Osaki opened the presentation with an introduction of Seth Harry, a nationally and internationally known speaker in Urban Design. He briefed the Commission on the Open House, saying the overwhelming response was supportive, with a "What are we waiting for?!" atmosphere.

Joe Giacobazzi with KPG first presented a recap of the last Planning Commission meeting, in order to bring all present up-to-speed with the transportation concepts. He said that the remaining presentation by Mr. Harry will show how the comments received from the Planning

Commissioners and the public at the Open House have been incorporated into a City Center vision.

Mr. Harry explained that the job now is to align the transportation plan to the Council's vision of a walkable community with a city center, including a neighborhood grocery market. In order to bring the population up enough to attract a market, the plan requires expanding to the north side of Interstate-5 and reclaiming 54th Avenue. This can be done through the creation of four quadrants, each with a specific neighborhood feel, defined as having a five-minute walking (1/4 mile) radius, a clear center, neighborhood amenities, walkable streets, and mixed use where bordering a major thoroughfare. For Fife, that could look like this:

- **Civic Campus** – comprising the southeast quadrant, with a focus on public facilities and services already existing (City Hall, Community Center, schools).
- **Neighborhood Serving Commercial** – comprising the southwest quadrant, encompassing small regional markets with existing commercial.
- **General Mixed Use** – comprising the northwest quadrant, with a variable scale according to market-driven development.
- **Specialty Retail/TOD** (Transit Oriented Development) – comprising the northeast quadrant, building on the brands and entertainment already existing to become a destination spot, perhaps attracting light rail – only needs a single-interest destination to jump-start.

Using one of the quadrants (southwest), Mr. Harry gave a potential scenario of how the Vision could be phased into reality:

- Phase 1 – a small-scale market with locally-grown produce could locate across 54th Avenue from City Hall, giving a sense of place by capturing the 23rd Street/54th Avenue intersection, and introducing a new pedestrian-scale roadway into that property. This would then attract other retail and mixed use. (This scenario could occur in any of the quadrants, as the market dictates.)
- Phase 2 – implementation of the new interchanges begin, with little disruption during build out.
- Phase 3 – 54th Avenue is transformed to a walking thoroughfare, reconnecting all of Fife.
- Phase 4 – reached when the value threshold to redevelop has been met, and all the regulatory framework is put into play.

He showed the various roadways that would define and bring coherence to the City, from 2-lane neighborhood circulators, to 3-lane neighborhood collectors, to 5-lane arterials, each with on-street parking. He emphasized the need for "like-to-like" development and urban form on each side of each street, especially along 20th Street East.

The framework needed is met through form-based codes, which are regulations that take the focus off land use and traditional zoning and place the emphasis on the size, scale and style of building form, the streetscape and amenities to serve the neighborhood.

Comment Time:

Commissioner Bond said this plan makes a lot of sense, and the future looks bright for Fife!

Commissioner Fagundes asked for clarification of the "like-to-like" suggestion. Mr. Giacobazzi answered that people interact better with the surroundings when the two sides of the street they are on look similar in size and design. Mr. Harry added that this can help the City to have a

compelling image of where Fife is going, which will better sell the location to a grocery or other retail. It creates the impression that something is happening.

Commissioner Bond asked what a sort of timeline this might take. Mr. Harry answered that, normally a city prepares a packet to attract interest (this presentation could be that packet) and the market could respond anytime. Conceivably, Phase 1 could happen in 12-16 months. This is a very manageable/doable concept.

Commissioner Braden asked about KPG's experiences in other communities. Mr. Harry mentioned Nashville, TN and Chico, CA, saying that a lot of their work is in smaller communities like Fife, and their focus is to address the needs of residents today while positioning the community for the future. Commissioner Braden says he is excited to see this, calling it a paradigm shift for this corridor and the first realistic vision he's seen of what can happen. His two concerns are: 1) connectivity for the large residential neighborhoods south of the railroad tracks – this plan needs to be strengthened by (at a minimum) pedestrian/bicycle access across the tracks at 54th Avenue; and 2) resurrection of the historical farming roots of Fife to create a unique character – attracting the small market with locally-grown produce would be a perfect way to do that.

Mr. Harry agrees that a key watchword is connectivity, and knitting Fife back together is at the core. Mr. Giacobazzi said that this plan doesn't focus on the railroad crossing because the transportation issue at I-5 is paramount, but that this goes a long way toward overall connectivity.

Commissioner Bond asked about KPG's experience with Sound Transit. Mr. Giacobazzi said that KPG has done a lot with Sound Transit. What is imperative is that Fife sets the stage for the potential of transit lines. Mr. Fuesel added that this vision sets the stage for all outside stake holders, not just transit.

Commissioner Edwards said that this is exciting, it breathes life into Fife. To have a plan for the entire City is great, and he looks forward to seeing it come together, even 20-30 years down the line.

Commissioner Braden added that this is a positive message that tells businesses, "Look what we can do for you," instead of "You must abide by this regulation." It says, "We're going to bring people to your business, and here's what you can do to help."

Commissioner Fagundes agreed, and asked if it's plausible to approach the school district, maybe work for a big stadium. Mr. Harry emphasized that Fife can build on the framework that is created through codes to bring forth whatever asset is desired. It's not dictatorial but accommodating, easy to administer and attractive to business.

Commissioners thanked the City Council and City Manager Dave Zabell for bringing KPG in. Commissioner Fagundes asked how to ensure that these plans are carried out, even with future changes in staff, Council and Commissioners. Mr. Giacobazzi answered that well-written plans that have been vetted with the public don't die even with changeover. These concepts have gone, and will continue to go, to the community of citizens, businesses and outside stakeholders; so far, there's been zero pushback.

City Manager Zabell addressed the Commission with his experience in Bothell, where KPG helped lead the way to a very-recent ribbon cutting. Although the Bothell City Council was comprised of two distinct factions regarding the concept, the plan was well-conceived, presented to the public and became reality.

Mr. Fuesel added that the vision is a response to what they've heard from the community; that vision sets the bar and makes people want to participate.

Commissioner Lemoncelli asked about two things: 1) coding for parking lots – Pacific Highway East has a lot of parking in front, while the artists' sketches show it in back; and 2) in the Civic Center quadrant, there are businesses that aren't civic in nature – does this plan envision moving car dealerships out of that area? Mr. Giacobazzi pointed to the I-5 frontage area, saying that is designated for high exposure businesses. Mr. Harry added that for any desired change such as parking and land use, after it is incorporated into the code, it would become reality as redevelopment occurs.

Commissioner Braden asked about signage and landscaping. Mr. Harry emphasized that this is not a one-size-fits-all for the whole City, that signs, landscape, architecture, scale, etc. can all be tweaked according to meet the needs of the individual neighborhoods.

Chair Brown asked for confirmation that the public opposition has really been zero. Mr. Giacobazzi said that's true, as far as the vision goes. The 54th Avenue railroad crossing that Commissioner Braden mentioned has come up a few times, but the vision itself has met no opposition. Chair Brown asked if the southeast market vision in the Phase 1 scenario is the actual step one in the process. Mr. Harry answered that no, not necessarily. The vision can move forward on several fronts simultaneously, or is able to move forward in any single direction while keeping the rest of vision alive. It can be responsive to each interest as the market directs. Mr. Fuesel further clarified that the illustration shown for the Phase I scenario could just as easily be placed in any of the quadrants. Mr. Harry added that transit funding is driven by adjoining land uses. The basic outline of the plan should tell a very compelling story to bring development from a broad range of potential interests.

Chair Brown brought up the need to address probable confusion for people unfamiliar with Fife, since the ramps to north and south I-5 will not be located together. Mr. Giacobazzi agreed, saying that "wayfinding" is an important feature to plan. Mr. Fuesel explained that the public comments gave clear direction to plan more for pedestrian ease, which led to the on and off ramps being situated the way they are.

Director Osaki said that the Planning Commission will continue to be the primary conduit for developing a recommendation. He will be working with KPG to get all this information on the City's website, followed by a 30-45 day comment period. Over the next 12-18 months, the framework will be set, which includes the transportation plan, land use regulations, and either a subarea plan or a more detailed element to the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Glenn Hull addressed the Commission, thanking each of them for his/her service and complimenting the professional City staff working on this vision. He encouraged everyone to stay above any issues that seek to tear it apart; the zoning and coding can be regulated, but the psychology can't. We need to come together as community. He emphasized that together we can do this.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. CPA12-04 - Capital Facilities Element

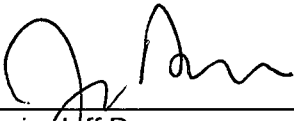
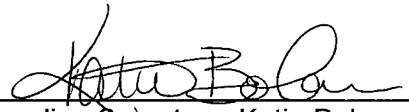
Director Osaki explained that this is an annual update to the Capital Facilities Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. It will be discussed more thoroughly as part of the full Comprehensive Plan update process.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Osaki announced that Commissioner Thornhill has resigned due to other personal obligations. The vacant position is being advertising now.

He said that City Council will have the first reading on the Electric Vehicle Ordinance that the Planning Commission recommended last year. And the Shoreline Master Program public hearing at City Council will be held in July.

8. **ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:36 pm.

	<u>10-1-2012</u>		<u>10/2/12</u>
Chair, Jeff Brown	Date	Recording Secretary, Katie Bolam	Date