

present were: Shanti Loustaunou, Gail Fleming-chair, Marianne Edain recording
staff: Stan Berryman, Brigid Reynolds, Kelsey (intern)
audience: Rhonda Salerno- PAB member, Peter Morton, Guy Burneko

The special meeting was called to work on the POS comp plan element review and update. Brigid said that the focus is on the goals and policies and their implementation. She has tried to clarify. The base document was written in 2005 and in need of updating. She has tried to be true to the existing policies and to reduce duplication. There have been 13 separate council workshops, the results of which are available on the website, with review and comments. The council has moved trails from POS to Transportation, in support of the multi-modal nature of the Transportation element. Brigid says the basis of the core areas concept is not clear to her. She believes that ordinances already protect Critical Areas and that should be sufficient. She has incorporated some but not all of the POS's suggestions.

Gail has copy-edited what Brigid has produced and will provide a copy of the edits.

In the Transportation element, item T3.6 – sidewalks, there is the statement “pathways should be required for residential development.” Gail asks if this is for new development only or is it retroactive? Brigid responds that it applies to new subdivisions only, not to single family residences. Gail asked that the words “not impervious” be included but Brigid said that was too detailed and suggested that it be included under ‘classifications.’ Marianne asked that the word new be included, so that it would read “for new residential development or subdivision.”

Rhonda brought up Dan Burdon's walkability study, and said that it was being ignored. She does not like sidewalks. Shanti agreed, saying the less concrete the better. Brigid responded that she was merely responding to code requirements. To which Rhonda responded that we could change the code. Brigid wanted the item adopted first, and then address the possibility of a code amendment afterward. She suggested solving this by defining sidewalks as a path. Rhonda suggested using the term ‘walkways.’

Guy asked who oversees trails if they're in the transportation element. Brigid responded that there are many options, but the city has a limited budget, and is also bound by ADA.

Gail moved on to item T.13.2.D – trail management plan, which includes the language “to and across marine and freshwater environment.” Gail asked whether this meant access across a beach to the water or access along a shoreline. Brigid said it applied to both situations.

Gail moved on to item T.13.5, which conflates trail corridors with wildlife corridors. Gail read proposed alternative language, which Brigid accepted for inclusion in the next draft. The new language is as follows: T.13.5 Establish and protect trail corridors that connect parks and open spaces within the city to the extent possible with minimal adverse impacts, using a variety of tools including but not limited to acquisition and trail easements.

Item T.13.6 to be moved to POS element as POS.3.6, to read: Establish and protect wildlife corridors that connect parks and open spaces within the city using a variety of tools including but not limited to acquisition and conservation easements.

new item POS.3.7 to read: Preserve and protect critical areas and their buffers as wildlife habitat. Where trails are within critical area buffers, ensure they will create no net loss of habitat or ecosystem function.

Rhonda asked if anyone was working on the Sustainability element. Brigid said the element lacked any policy. She is adding that. She suggested Rhonda check out the website, and said there was a need for a broader policy.

Gail pointed out that the POS element had heretofore defined Critical Areas but now does not, and asks if that has been moved. Brigid responded that they are defined in ordinance and they are mapped. The definition will be in the definitions section of the Comp Plan as a whole.

Gail asked about the long descriptions of individual parks in the inventory. Brigid said that was being moved to an appendix.

Gail asked about Level of Service (LOS) and where that had gone. Brigid said LOS was problematic, more a wish list than actual description. She said there was a need for an overall POS plan which would include LOS. This led to some discussion of just what LOS is and means. Shanti felt it was not relevant in this context. Brigid asked the POS to review the goals and policies to see if LOS is covered there.

Guy said that sustainability is important, and language is important. He asks if we can create a time and place for in depth policy discussions, and cites to hermeneutics, interpretation theory, on how to understand the world. Brigid asked if he was asking for community conversations about the comp plan, because the PAB had already done that. Marianne explained that response was in direct proportion to the degree of outreach, and that this time around there had been very little outreach. Brigid complained of the lack of public response. Rhonda wanted to see more community meetings.

Gail, getting back to the agenda, returned to the narrative at OS.17, saying that item #2 needs to be retained. She read the introduction. Brigid cited to property rights and complained that core areas and corridors are ill defined and not understood. Marianne read some definitions of core areas. Brigid objected that Langley is too small to protect large areas, and said we should look to the land use element for this. Gail proposed that we re-write this as a vision statement for the POS element. She does not want to see this entire narrative lost.

Kelsey then presented a series of 4 maps. T.5 – Langley conceptual pedestrian trails, POS.1 Parks and Open Space, South Whidbey, POS.2 Parks and Open Space, Langley, POS.3 Langley Park Walkability.

The POS agreed to drop the table of Island County parks but to keep the updated map. There was much discussion of parcels which had been thought to be city owned but which Kelsey discovered were in fact not. There was major discussion around the status of the properties which had been thought to be city parks but were privately owned. These appear to be the result of a city policy to require dedication of open space within new plats, but the dedicated space is not deeded to the city. Kelsey explained that the conceptual trails map was deliberately very general as she was not in a position to lay out specific trail corridors. This led to major discussion. Marianne insisted that there be language included to the effect that trails would not be built in critical areas.

Gail raised the issue of critical area overlay mapping. Brigid was receptive to the idea, which is basically to draw a circle around areas within which any given parcel has a high likelihood of containing a wetland. Brigid asked for greater specificity and asked if the early draft map could be overlaid on a topo map to achieve greater specificity. Kelsey agreed to do that.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm