

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

June 9, 2020

12:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Jeff Bachrach (left at 1:30 p.m.), Ben Bortolazzo, Mike Houck, Katie Larsell, Oriana Magnera, Steph Routh, Katherine Schultz, Chris Smith, Eli Spevak [2 positions]

City Staff Presenting: Andrea Durbin, Joe Zehnder, Ryan Curren, Sandra Wood, Phil Nameny, Lora Lillard

Guest Presenters: Cristina Palacios, Mohamed Salim Bahamadi, Julie Livingston

Documents and Presentations for today's meeting

Chair Spevak called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Chair Spevak: In keeping with the Oregon Public Meetings law, Statutory land use hearing requirements, and Title 33 of the Portland City Code, the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission is holding this meeting virtually.

- All members of the PSC are attending remotely, and the City has made several avenues available for the public to watch the broadcast of this meeting.
- The PSC is taking these steps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to limit in-person contact and promote social distancing. The pandemic is an emergency that threatens the public health, safety and welfare which requires us to meet remotely by electronic communications.
- Thank you all for your patience, humor, flexibility and understanding as we manage through this difficult situation to do the City's business.

Items of Interest from Commissioners

Commissioner Larsell acknowledged what's going on in the world today. Realize we're in the middle of something that's so different from anything I've experienced before. The time for incremental-ness is over; we should be thinking in terms of a bigger, more visionary Portland.

Director's Report

Andrea Durbin

- I agree with *Commissioner Larsell*. This is our moment of change and to move boldly to advance the work we know needs to happen. As the bureau that is responsible for long-range planning and sustainability, we need to embrace and accelerate our vision for the city. This is a call to action for us. In working with our BIPOC staff, we are looking at how we can put our work and effort behind this movement. We are making bold commitments and look forward to working with the PSC.
- Council: The Expanding Opportunities for Affordable Housing vote is tomorrow. Continued hearing for RIP is Thursday with a vote on amendments on June 18 and July 22 as the final vote. Climate Emergency at Council on June 30 for consideration.

- Reminder that our June 23 PSC meeting will start at 4 p.m. instead of our usual 5 p.m. evening start time.

Commissioner Bachrach: Can you brief us on items we've worked on when they are changed at Council so we understand what and why they did? That is helpful to closing our work/loop.

Commissioner Larsell: One of the plans I was thinking about was the Marshall Plan. Is there anything going on about doing something really big like that?

- *Andrea:* For BPS, we did the report of the Racist History of Planning and Zoning in Portland last year. We are looking at what the next step from there is and what we need to do and opportunities to right those wrongs. This is an opportunity after hearing from our Black community for years, and it's time for us to step up and deliver.
- *Chair Spevak:* We've started some conversations about the PSC's role in this work what the role the Commission has in the work BPS is doing.

Commissioner Routh: What could a toolkit, for example, look like to have and ensure the PSC is asking the right questions about each project? We may need to slow down and be sure we're asking the right questions.

Commissioner Smith: A general reminder of a document is the State of Black Oregon report (Urban League) is something we should all be reading and rereading. The actions in that report are still valuable today.

We will share the OEHR Equity Toolkit, PAALF People's Plan, and the State of Black Oregon report with PSC members.

Commissioner Magnera: The SF Planning Commission just passed a resolution that is a good model for action to build accountability too.

Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes from the May 25, 2020, PSC meeting
- R/W #8824, Proposed Vacation of NE Everett St

Commissioner Smith moved to approve consent agenda. *Commissioner Houck* seconded.

(Y9 – Bachrach, Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

The consent agenda passed unanimously.

West Portland Town Center

Briefing: Ryan Curren; Cristina Palacios, Mohamed Salim Bahamadi

Ryan introduced the project and the team including two advisory committee group members. The came from a Council resolution. Both Naito Main Street and WPTC are part of the Inclusive Communities work along the corridor.

Planning going forward is about inclusive communities and centering the voices of those most impacted by racial and economic disparities so there are better outcomes for all people as the WPTC grows and changes

WPTC serves neighborhoods that have lots of civic amenities, good schools, good jobs, and is a high-opportunity area. We want to increase housing choices for people of all backgrounds to have access to this area. We are applying lessons from the Historical Context of Racist Planning Report.

This builds off the work from the SW Corridor Equitable Housing Strategy.

West Portland Park is an area within the WPTC and is the most racially diverse part of all of SW:

- 28% POC
- 17% foreign born
- 9% from Africa

This is where displacement risk is highest so we have to get it right here and try doing our work a new way. Centers the community vision for a healthy, equitable, and climate resilient community.

The [WPTC health equity report](#) identified barriers for the community and did a deeper dive into the West Portland Park census tract where health and economic disparities are greatest. We think the solutions are identified in community engagement. CAT and [Unite Oregon](#) are partners in this work.

Cristina and Mohamed are two advisory committee members who shared their work.

Cristina noted that on top of anti-displacement measures, we need a space where everyone is safe and is treated the same. Unite Oregon is happy for the opportunity to mobilize community members to go to three WPTC meetings, neighborhood walks, and focus groups. We've worked with HAKI, CAT, and the Muslim community. We built relationships, had one-on-one conversations, and people were very excited to know that we were there and the City is making the information available for all.

People need more affordable housing, specific cultural gathering places, business opportunity, and healthy food options (e.g. halal stores).

We want to be sure you're listening to the community, hear their priorities, and make sure their voices are truly heard: prevent housing displacement; provide transportation that is better and safer, including more bus lines with greater frequency; rent stability.

Mohamed shared information about [HAKI](#), which serves East African immigrants. HAKI is a resource of education, advocacy, and empowerment with multiple programs including health and wellness; community cohesion; community organizing.

We did a walking tour along SW Capital Highway, Barbur Blvd, and discussed things the project needs to consider. We want to see a multi-cultural community center with a variety of amenities. There is a mosque on Capital Highway, PCC, and Marquam Elementary School, and we want to be sure we are preserving this diversity of community. Small businesses and markets owned by minorities, and preservation and building of new affordable housing is key to maintaining our community here. We would like to see wider sidewalks for safety and comfortability as well.

Ryan noted the broad goals and vision of the plan reflect the sentiments from the community. The Barbur Transit Center is a cornerstone of the plan. This could include affordable housing, community event and meeting space, multi-cultural marketplace, office space for community services, and an outdoor gathering space. We hope ODOT and TriMet will work with us to put this on a path to development in conjunction with light-rail coming in.

Commissioner Smith has been the PSC liaison to the group. I was also the liaison to the Barbur Concept Plan. We had tried hard for getting consistent representation from the East African community for that project, and I appreciate the work that staff and communities have done to engage the community. On the equitable development strategy, one recommendation was to create a fund to acquire and stabilize properties as they come on the market; Council has not yet approved this, and it's concerning as we get closer to funding. Another thing we heard from the community is that Barbur World Foods is a key component, but the traffic situation and access to the site is difficult; perhaps we move this community resource to a larger center. And a question: as we plan HCT project, a City priority is to get lots of housing near them. A version of the zoning has a lot of upzoning, and the community group has not processed this yet, so I want to be sure this is part of the work before the Discussion Draft is released.

- Ryan: The question about what a great place with equitable access was asked. A majority of responses have preferred a shared growth concept with more housing choices throughout the town center, not just along the corridor. We workshopped them in March, and people chose the broader growth concept. Infrastructure bureaus and the TAC have capacity and growth management questions for us to work on as well.

Commissioner Magnera: Thank you to Mohamed and Cristina for the work they've done. I would like to see this more with all the projects that come to the PSC. Are there new outreach events and reassessing in the COVID moment? Are there more opportunities for the PSC to engage in the work more directly? *Chair Spevak* is also interested in a tour if that's an opportunity.

- Cristina: Unite Oregon is doing check-in calls with community members. During COVID, we have discovered so much about extra barriers to participations. We need to be ready to start engagement in a different way since we don't know what the situation will be going forward. Internet access is not always an option; there are language barriers; and there are other barriers such as getting unemployment benefits, so people are at risk of losing their housing. Building trust with the City (and the police) now is going to be our next need to do to ensure the community continues to advance the work in this area.

Commissioner Routh: Thank you. We talk about long-range planning, but there are immediate impacts that we need to be much more responsive to now. Incentivizing to ensure there are spaces for small business owners in the community is key.

- Cristina: We understand that lack of access and computer skills is an issue with community members being counted for in the census.

Commissioner Houck: I want to also "third" the opportunity to get a tour and see the community and area on the ground.

Commissioner Magnera: Fears of policing and displacement – what resources are available to move to community? What actions are there in existing ordinances to move resources from projects to support the community in ways that forward the project longer-term? If the project can't move those resources, what can the PSC do to lobby Council to make sure there are resources to engage and support?

- Ryan: Hanna and Mohamed have been doing direct service to meet food needs (e.g. during Ramadan) and have found funding to help make this happen. We hope the community development action plan in this work helps in this and in both preserving and advancing priorities from the immigrant communities.
- Mohamed: Funding is key. Assistance for computers, engagement in ongoing planning and implementation, etc.

A Discussion Draft is expected to be published this August, and the project will return to the PSC in the fall or winter 2020-21.

Design Overlay Zone Amendments

Work Session: Sandra Wood, Phil Nameny, Lora Lillard

Disclosures

While it's not clear whether the proposed changes create a potential conflict of interest for PSC members because the changes affect such a broad class of property owners, in the interest of transparency, we have the following declarations:

- *Commissioner Smith* owns property in the design overlay zone.
- I, along with Commissioners *Schultz* and *Bortolazzo*, work for architectural or development firms who conduct work in Portland.

Memo and Attachments

Attachment A is an updated list of 20 process amendments that were considered by the PSC on April 28. At that meeting, we discussed all except Item #20 and the PSC asked for further changes to 4 items. The text that is highlighted in gray indicates where changes were made. Unless there is a request to discuss one of the changes, we will treat this list as a consent list.

Attachment B addresses the PSC comments/requests to amend the design standards and related components. All areas of change from the Proposed Draft are highlighted. Those highlighted in gray are consent items. Those highlighted in yellow are for discussion. Attachment B contains three parts:

- A new proposal to address the PSC's decision to allow taller buildings (over 55-feet) to use the Design Standards.
- Revised Design Standards (Table 420-2), based on a PSC's work session on 2/25, the Standards Working Group and the 3x3 discussions.
- Changes to the Exterior Finish Materials Table (Table 420-3), based on comments from the PSC and the 3x3. In addition, staff have proposed to further define material types based on concerns heard from staff and the Design Commission about how the number of materials are counted.

Sandra introduced the project and the work we've done to get to this point. The Design Commission (DC) met last week, and they will vote at their June 18 meeting. We will return in July to the PSC for your vote after giving time to reflect after getting through the "weeds" of work today and our previous work sessions.

Attachment A

There are 20 process amendments the PSC has worked through. The amendments highlighted in grey are the ones that had discussion and a request for code language amendments.

4 – PSC Role in Design Guidelines

7 – Bridges

17 – Design Commission membership

19 – Factors reviewed

20 – Changes to approved design reviews

Commissioner Routh: I would like to pull Item 7 for discussion.

Commissioner Routh moved to accept Attachment A except Item 7, the consent list. *Commission Bortolazzo* seconded.

The motion passes.

Item 7

Commissioner Routh noted the current process around bridges is for DC to have a briefing that allows feedback. If it has to go through full Design Review, you also have one DC review. There are stakeholder advisory committees with community members sharing their needs from a community perspective, and a full Design Review creates an imbalance over lived experiences.

Chair Spevak: Is there parsing between private and public-proposed bridges?

Commissioner Schultz: Thank you. The first thing I think about is if you're questioning Design Review all together. Bridges have as much impact on our community as a building does. If you believe in the value of DC, one of their charges is to listen to community. DC brings a different (equally valuable) perspective as community perspectives.

Commissioner Routh: I don't suggest that DC doesn't listen to community voices. Bridges are publicly-held and in the public ROW. Community voices need to be front-and-center.

Chair Spevak: Are there bridges in the city that don't have review?

- Sandra: There are a variety of situations for when and how the public is involved. Bridge location, size, etc are all factors. Remember we're talking about 60-foot spans and larger here.
- Julie: I echo what Sandra is saying. What we see at DC is very inconsistent when it comes to bridges. The hearing room can be a backstop on that process.

Commissioner Schultz moved Item 7 as written. *Commissioner Bortolazzo* seconded.

(Y7 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Schultz, Smith, Spevak; N1 – Routh)

Attachment B (Design Standards)

Part 1 – New Amendment related to Taller Buildings

1 – Ratio of optional points

2 – Design standards for taller buildings

Lora noted the design standards for large buildings and making it harder. We didn't want to add any new standards. We calibrated points at a higher rate for buildings taller than 55 feet. Larger buildings need to achieve standards at 2 points per 1000 feet (still capped at 20 points). The second part is about public realm. PR2, QR14, and PR15 are required for taller buildings.

Chair Spevak noted staff did a great, creative job on this piece. I'm supportive of this proposal.

Commissioner Bortolazzo is also in agreement. I assume these work concurrently (you have to earn points sooner but you're not earning double points). What's the rationale for these three? Were there other standards that were considered?

- Lora: Both parts are part of the proposal. You recalibrate the points for taller buildings and the three I mentioned are required (not optional) points. We did consider an external materials standard, which we'll get to later in conversation.
- Sandra: You already voted to increase the height from 55 feet to 75 feet.
- Julie: This is a fundamental shift from neighborhoods to provide input in the Design Review process. DC believes this should be discussed with the neighborhoods, fundamentally changing the public engagement process.

Commissioner Magnera: As we get into a reflective space, I want to be mindful of whose voices are being heard. Just because public process is available, it's not necessarily accessible or open to everyone. I want to be mindful about how the spaces are serving community, not just neighborhoods.

Chair Spevak moved to accept to increase the ratio of points for buildings over 55 feet. *Commissioner Schultz* seconded

(Y8 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

Part 2 – Design Standards

Context

C1: Corner Features on a Building

Phil noted this was originally a hybrid of required and optional points. We created two options for centers: bring building out to the corner or provide a plaza at the corner.

C3: Preservation of Existing Facades

For major remodels or additions to a building. A tiered approach to the types of points you can get based on PHLC input.

C6: Buildings Abutting, or Across the Street From, Historic Landmarks or Properties on Historic Resources Inventory.

C7: Buildings Abutting a Residential Historic Landmarks.

We originally proposed one contextual standard when a building is abutting a historic landmark. This now is expanded. The new standards is about buildings abutting a residential historic landmark or abutting/across the street from other historic resources. It allows more flexibility in how a building relates to a historic landmark or historic resource.

C8: Tree Preservation

There are now a maximum 6 points possible on a site (preserving 6 trees 20" or larger on a site)

C14: Maximum Building Length Adjacent to Willamette River

C15: Building Features Adjacent to Willamette River

C16: Open Area Adjacent to Willamette River Greenway Trail

These are 3 new standards intended to work with the river plan.

Commissioner Houck: We did lots of back-and-forth on the tree preservation work.

Commissioner Schultz moved to adopt the Context standard amendments and items on the Context design standards. *Commissioner Bortolazzo* seconded.

(Y7 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

Public Realm

PR1: Ground Floor Height

Rather than create brand new standards, we found existing standards that we have for more intense development in plan districts. This mimics the language in those plan districts.

PR2: Ground Floor Height

Gives bonus points if you maintain a ground floor height of 15 feet for 50% of the frontage. You'll get points for doing this if the building is 55 feet tall or less. If this is for a building 55-75 feet, this is a requirement as opposed to optional.

PR8: Ground Floor Bicycle Parking

This came from the 3x3 with discussion about addressing how buildings should incorporate "back of house" items. There are incentives to provide parking that is accessible but not dominating the frontage. This encourages someone to put the racks not up close to the street-facing wall. We checked in with PBOT staff. The places where we're more likely to see bike theft are where the parking doesn't have great visibility or access. Because this is optional, this is an opportunity for a point for the bike room towards the back.

PR10: phrase addition

A change that may make the point a bit more difficult. Limit the use of this standard so points aren't awarded if ground level bedrooms face the street.

PR14: Weather Protection at Entrances

Now a requirement at all main entrances.

PR15: Weather Protection Along a Transit Street

This is an optional standard unless in the 55-75 foot range when it becomes a requirement.

Commissioner Schultz: For PR10, what if it's a corner unit? It doesn't clarify if you have two street-facing facades, it may need clarification.

- Phil: Originally we thought this would be a bullet point, but it's a qualifying piece. If it's a corner lot, you now have two frontages. This does not apply on neighborhood or civic corridors.
- Julie: We didn't have the conversation about primary versus secondary streets. Corners are very important, especially for large units.
- *Commissioner Schultz:* The qualifier could simply be "unless it's a corner unit."

Phil: This was originally to create a softening on the side streets to create walk-up space to private dwelling unit entrances, which we don't necessarily want on the commercial street.

Commissioner Smith: For PR8, I know the idea of exposed bike rooms is controversial. I tend to like it as it normalizes cycling. In the past we have made allowances for multi-family buildings to be more exposed like this. This provision creates a dynamic tension between the approaches, and I'm quite comfortable with it.

Commissioner Schultz moved to accept the Public Realm items with the inclusion of language to PR10 "unless for corner units". *Commissioner Smith* seconded.

(Y8 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

Quality and Resilience

There are 23 standards overall.

QR14: Ground Floor Windows

The changes to the standard were mostly to clarify the enhanced window requirements. 2 points for providing more ground floor windows... but if over 55 feet tall, it's a required standard.

QR15: Exterior Finish Materials

We made more nuanced distinctions between the ground floor requirements and the rest of the building. 80 percent still applies to the whole building, but it increases to 90 percent on the ground floor. Require higher threshold on ground floor and limit number of material types to 3 per building instead of per facade.

QR18: Use of Sustainable or FCS Certified Wood

QR19: Low Carbon Concrete

These are two new standards. They encourage the use of salvage/FCS certified wood and low-carbon concrete.

Chair Spevak: I like the idea to support FCS options and low-carbon concrete. I wouldn't want the standard to give incentive to use concrete on the first floor. The language as written doesn't talk about the size / square footage you need to do to get the point.

Sandra noted QR18 and QR19 on the screen is the latest version, which is slightly different than what's in the memo. The main difference clarifies the standard and makes it more implementable.

Chair Spevak: If someone is doing a building with cross-laminated timber, I would like for them to get a point. I'm not sure if having it exposed is viable.

Commissioner Bortolazzo: For QR19, it seems that it's getting really in the weeds to put in the qualifier *Chair Spevak* suggested. Concrete can look really good, so I like to keep it simpler as it is proposed.

When we start diving into structural and systems parts of the buildings, it takes us away from the design aspects. CLT is generally used as a structural alternative, so it may not be visible to the public realm.

Chair Spevak: The real opportunities for low-carbon concrete are in the structure, not the walls.

Commissioner Routh: On QR3 it looks like it's had a few evolutions. At one point it was required, but now it looks to be optional.

- Phil: Yes, correct. There was a concern about providing it but not being able to gain entry to the site, so this was something of a balancing act. We didn't make it a requirement, but if provided, you would have to commit to keep it unlocked during business hours.

Commissioner Routh: It makes me sad that it's not required. Is 1 point enough to incentivize it?

- Phil: The idea was that if someone is going to do it anyway, it's a fairly easy point. We may have situations where, because of topography, it might not be feasible to create a trail without stairs or a ramp for example.

Commissioner Routh moved to accept the Quality and Resilience items. *Commissioner Schultz* seconded.

(Y8 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

Table 420-3 Exterior Finish Materials

This is the amendment. The piece about wood is getting swapped out with clarified language. Phil explained when the finish material is invoked and the amendment. There is a bit more nuanced distinction in looking at the material types.

Commissioner Schultz: I'm curious how we ended up here and/versus our conversation about concrete.

- Phil: There were some terms such as "architectural concrete", but I'm not sure how we'd get that into a standard.
- *Commissioner Schultz:* There is an industry standard for this. I can provide this, and I'm still a proponent of allowing the flexibly.

Commissioner Bortolazzo: I also share this concern.

Commissioner Bortolazzo: For the requirement for a clear finish or stain, some wood (e.g. cedar) doesn't require this, and it likely lasts longer than some composite materials. Some of this seems to limit flexibility and design unnecessarily.

Julie: I agree with Kat that architectural concrete should be considered. It is a design solution that can change the world. The conversation about percentages and number of materials is very relevant. We've struggled with that as it is largely subjective in terms of beauty and aesthetics. DC typically wants to see wood protected – typically not on the facade in a way that will cause it to be hit directly by rain.

Commissioner Schultz approved the exterior materials list as proposed with the addition of precast and architectural concrete. I'm happy to work with staff. *Commissioner Houck* seconded.

(Y8 – Bortolazzo, Houck, Larsell, Magnera, Routh, Schultz, Smith, Spevak)

Staff will work with *Commissioner Schultz* on language before the project goes to City Council.

Sandra: We've had several discussions about how DOZA arrives in this moment at City Council in terms of COVID, where we are in social justice discussions, equity. Some questions to consider in framing your work to City Council:

- What are the high-level proposals?

- Is DOZA meeting our goals?
- How are we addressing affordability?
- How is equity incorporated?
- Do we feel like the standards and design review processes are balanced?
- Summary of points system for design standards.
- What issues will Council hear about and is our collective message clear?

We will come back on July 14 for a further discussion and PSC members' reflections.

Commissioner Houck: I enjoyed most the interaction between the DC and PSC on this process. The more we can interact with the DC better.

Julie: It was a very good, productive process and discussion. Very big thanks to staff.

Commissioner Magnera: I am grateful to *Commissioner Schultz* for her expertise and other members of the commission in an area I don't know so much about. I do still have plenty of concerns about this project and design review in this moment and role of the PSC and BPS. I want to go further on the issue of racial equity and racial justice, and I'm hopeful to have more conversations about this at future PSC meetings.

Chair Spevak: I am happy we'll have largely similar recommendations to Council as the DC. I have a general concern about discretionary processes. People rarely do them quicker with more housing options in them. So I am generally erring on the side of getting housing built when and where we need it. This code goes a long way to try things we haven't tried before.

Commissioner Routh: Thank you to everyone for helping me understand a bit more. I am also concerned about how this impacts affordability with predictability. As we're looking at a diversified portfolio for affordable housing, I want to be sure those projects move forward to get people housed at the time we need it.

Commissioner Bortolazzo: As we step back, this whole body of work does provide more certainty. Is there an opportunity to do a quick test drive of this update, looking at prototypical projects and running them through the standards and guidelines?

Lora: The standards we approved today were tested like we've been doing throughout the project, looking at a design that was rejected at Design Review because it wasn't hitting the public realm and resilience factors based on current standards that we put through these updated standards.

Commissioner Schultz: I know we were sometimes in the weeds, so thank you for bearing through the minutia. I think we've made an easier, more streamlined process in this work, which was one of the challenges we were hitting on with this project.

The DOZA project will be continued at the July 14, 2020 PSC meeting.

If Commissioners have thoughts that you think should be in the PSC's letter to Council, please let staff know. We will have that conversation on July 14.

Adjourn

Chair Spevak adjourned the meeting at 3:36 p.m.

Submitted by Julie Ocken