

# Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

October 12, 2021

12:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

**PSC Commissioners Present:** Jeff Bachrach, Johnell Bell, Ben Bortolazzo, Jessica Gittemeier (arrived 1:04 p.m.), Katie Larsell, Steph Routh, Gabe Sheoships, Eli Spevak, Erica Thompson; 1 open position

**PSC Commissioners Absent:** Oriana Magnera, Valeria McWilliams

**City Staff Presenting:** Andrea Durbin, Kyle Diesner, Bill Cunningham

**Guest Presenters:** Katie Stringer, Callie Riley, Nuhamin Eiden, Franklin Chen, Khanh Le (Unite Oregon)

## Documents and Presentations for today's meeting

*Chair Spevak* called the meeting to order at 12:32 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

- *Chair Spevak* noted the discussion on briefing topics for the PSC at upcoming Officer Meetings. If you have ideas, please send your ideas to me, and we'll see what rise to the top. A number of us participated and attending the Tribal Training. Thanks to Gabe for presenting during the afternoon session.

## Director's Report

Andrea Durbin

- Tribal Training: Last week the City hosted a Tribal Training for public employees. 500 people attended, including many of our staff, who were inspired by the many speakers. Thanks to Laura John (the City's Tribal Liaison) and Sallie Edmunds for helping with coordination of BPS and PSC members, including Gabe Sheoships, who presented.
- Historic Resources Code Project (HRCP) is at City Council! 10/21 Work Session. 11/3 Hearing. Eli will represent the Commission.
- Chief Planner recruitment: The job description is posted. Julie will share the link/details in the minutes; it will be open for the next 5 weeks. Please share broadly with your networks.

## Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes from the September 28, 2021 PSC meeting.

*Commissioner Bachrach* moved the Consent Agenda. *Commissioner Routh* seconded. The consent agenda passed.

(Y7 – Bachrach, Bell, Larsell, Routh, Sheoships, Spevak, Thompson)

## East Portland Community Summit

Briefing: Bill Cunningham; Katie Stringer, Callie Riley, Nuhamin Eiden, Franklin Chen, Khanh Le (Unite Oregon)

### Presentation

#### **Disclosures**

*None.*

Bill introduced the briefing. The summit was held in June and was funded by a Metro 2040 funding grant, which Leslie spearheaded and led, coupled with funding from BPS. Centering the perspectives and needs of communities of color in East Portland. Some of the guiding documents are the East Portland Action Plan (2009) and Outer SE Community Plan (1996). East Portland is much more diverse from when those plans were developed, including a huge growth in the most impacted communities.

The outreach was led by Unite Oregon to bring communities, particularly those not included in past planning processes, to the table. Today's presentation includes outcomes and recommendations from the summit as well as further community engagement.

Nuhamin joined the PSC meeting not long ago as part of the West Portland Town Center Plan. Khanh won't be joining us today as he has taken over as the new Executive Director for Unite. Nuhamin introduced Unite Oregon. Focus on equitable investments throughout various areas of Oregon.

The focus is on building generational wealth for communities of color by empowering them to advocate for a number of opportunities. Investments in and for the communities to build power and generational

wealth. The goal of the first phase of the project is to identify needs and connect them to those who can help.

Even when services are available, it can be hard to navigate to get to the resources. The Summit in June included a report that the PSC received in the briefing materials. Today we're focusing on process and initial outcomes, similar to what was documented in the report.

Callie provided background about why we're focusing on East Portland in our work. Many communities here have been displaced out of inner neighborhoods, which has harmed their ability to achieve and maintain wealth. There is also a history of disinvestment in these areas. East Portland has been left out of Portland's becoming a big city since becoming incorporated in 1983. It is likely we will have 24,000 more housing units, and we need to make sure communities that are here now are not displaced as development takes place.

Concerns include lack of access to city parks; higher levels of pedestrian deaths; and higher poverty levels, lower educational levels, and higher levels of income inequality.

Franklin continued the presentation highlighting the community engagement process. We had two surveys to gain an understanding of priorities and services. The second community assessed the needs and assets of community members to identify needs for change. Focus groups were conducted to collect more qualitative data with small groups to understand living, working, and transportation needs. The East Portland Community Summit brought together people from across the city to hear about priorities, outcomes, and discuss next steps.

Katie shared the demographics about participants. She shared key findings in themes that were identified throughout the process and shared by those who live, work, and engage in East Portland. The most common priority expressed throughout the community engagement process was the need for more affordable housing options. Public safety was the second most-frequently community priority, followed by job training / small business help.

Other key findings included affordable childcare options, community centers, and road and infrastructure improvements.

Callie and Nuhamin highlighted the recommendations in the report to make sure East Portland is a place where people can thrive: investments in affordable, culturally-specific housing; small business help; workforce training; community centers; affordable childcare; infrastructure improvements; public safety; and resource navigation. We want the City and service providers to be partners in these efforts.

Katie noted the service providers who attended the Summit. Service providers include affordable housing, youth services, transportation advocacy, tech literacy, meals and hygiene services, and others. We ask these to contribute to our work for an equitable, healthy, and safe East Portland. We believe the city can make tangible allocations to East Portland. We need a clear, bold, and collaborative vision for all our communities, particularly those who have historically been left out. Unite Oregon is uniquely able to lead this work in the community, leveraging resources, and working with our partners.

Bill shared next steps: We are planning to go with Unite to present at City Council, likely in early 2022. BPS is currently working with other City bureaus to explore opportunities to leverage ARRP funds and

looking at an East Portland package. We are continuing discussions about what a future planning framework and strategy could look like to address the concerns and policy in East Portland.

Khanh Le was able to join at the end of the session and introduced himself as the new Executive Director of Unite Oregon. We are looking forward to working with the City.

*Commissioner Routh:* Thank you all for today's presentation. In terms of ARRP funding, what is the current disposition of these asks, and how can PSC support?

- Andrea: We are still waiting from the budget offices' specific instructions. We expect the funding guidelines to run in conjunction with the 2022-23 budget process for the City. We definitely will share back with the PSC the funding guidelines.

*Commissioner Sheoships:* Thank you to all for sharing, and I appreciate Unite's work and thorough community engagement. This shows that one organization can do this work and effort, and it's very important for our community in East Portland right now. This is a very thorough, thoughtful approach.

*Commissioner Larsell:* I also wanted to say thank you. The problems in East Portland have been evident for a long time, and it's so good to have a next generation going on to our community. I have been advocating for a new plan for East Portland since the EPAP has aged out. Is this what the policy framework would be?

- Bill: This is dependent more on community conversation to discuss what kind of policy framework is needed.

*Commissioner Thompson:* Thank you for today's presentation. The idea of a community center has been in play for a long time. What can the PSC do to create a sustained focus and momentum around the priorities? And can you share more specific examples or idea for continuing to work with the City to move forward in building trust with the community?

- Nuhamin: Previous attempts at ensuring public safety through policing or investing in the system are not helpful at all, and they result in more violence in communities. We ask for the City's focus on investment to be through workforce development, providing infrastructure investments, and working to a shift in how we think about safety and listening to our communities. The Summit was one way we could demonstrate that. This was the first time many of our community members could speak directly to leaders, which we need to continue.
- Khanh: One thing we heard lots was about seeing reports and plans, but we want tangible steps and commitments. The issues have evolved, but the challenges have always been here. It's about investments and resources being allocated to East Portland.
- Callie: We have lots of broken promises that have not been realized. If we're going to make a plan, let's make sure it's fully actionable and realizable, not just aspirational.
- Bill: General areas that could use PSC push on include the Comp Plan – prosperity, centers for the community, equitable development, etc. Zoning only gets you so far.

*Commissioner Bachrach:* I appreciate your last comments. I'm not sure if the PSC is the most affective ally; you don't want to talk about planning and zoning. It seems that funding is the critical ambition, and I think that should be included in your plan with your top priorities. The Housing Bureau may be a good partner and ally for delivering what we're after.

*Commissioner Routh:* I also want to appreciate Callie and Khanh’s statement about promises that aren’t fulfilled, leading to lack of trust. Unite, like many other CBOs, is trusting us by presenting here today. I think it is everyone’s job to support you and these efforts. The TSP, RTP, and other transportation plans are things the PSC can weigh in on, and we should remember how these plans show up and help fund East Portland. What is the conversation to be had around legislative barriers that the City can help with?

*Chair Spevak:* We will have decisions coming to us that affect East Portland. This is the forum to help us make better decisions as other projects come to us. Thanks so much for your efforts.

## Clean Air Protection Program

Briefing: Kyle Diesner

### Presentation

#### **Disclosures**

*None.*

Andrea provided an overview of this draft policy. It was out for public comment at the end of last year, and we’ve been doing stakeholder engagement. This is an update on where we are as we head into more public comment. The Carbon Fee proposal will continue into 2022, but we are focusing on this Clean Air proposal for now.

Kyle noted we’ve been working on this policy for the last year in collaboration with DEQ, Multnomah County, and the Governor’s office.

Air toxics in Portland are a huge issue and there are gaps in federal and state regulations, so the City and County are working to address this. In 2018, we commissioned the study “Ensuring Healthy Air” that looked at the role of local government to improve air quality.

The scope for the project is relayed on slide 3. We will go lots deeper to maximize the impact of pollution-reduction projects. We don’t account for air quality impacts in many of our decisions, which is a focus of this work going forward.

June 2020 Climate Emergency Declaration directed BPS to develop policy options to fund climate emergency declaration and air quality. We took public comment on the original proposal last November-December. In April 2021, Commissioner Rubio kicked off four months of stakeholder workshops. Coming out of the process, we all agreed on a shared set of policy goals, which is reaffirming:

- Portland is a leader in clean/carbon-free industry
- Existing businesses transition to zero carbon
- BIPOC and local businesses centered in clean energy transition
- Portland is healthy, just and equitable place to live
- Portland meets carbon and clean air goals

A Clean Industry Hub and Incubator would be a collaboration space to develop new and cutting-edge low carbon, low waste, clean air technologies, and circular production practices that benefit Portland

industries. We have submitted a Fall BMP request to initiate this work. We are also seeing federal funding and funding from other philanthropic organizations.

The goal is to establish a new air quality program at the City. The program would be funded through a clean air fee would be applied to about 72 facilities that hold air contaminate discharge permits with the state. We are proposing to levy the fee against this class. There are 3 high-level permits (simple, Standard, and Title V) held by the larger entities. We have adjusted the fee based on stakeholder feedback.

The public comment period will be over the next two months, followed by a City Council hearing in the next few months, and then BPS will continue to work on Carbon Fee proposal in 2022. We welcome feedback from the PSC.

*Chair Spevak:* The PSC is not obliged to opine on this, but we can. We would need to put this on a future agenda, but we can discuss that.

*Commissioner Gittemeier:* Have you done analysis for prices for consumers? Also, I've seen quite a bit of BPS projects come that try to prioritize BIPOC or women-owned business, but what about coops and others that would meet a wider range of ownership.

- Kyle: This is a different set of entities, and we don't expect fees to be passed on to consumers. The fees are relatively low aside from the Title V entities. We haven't considered how cooperatively-run businesses would be impacted by this fee, but it might not apply in this context since the businesses here were identified by the state.

*Commissioner Larsell:* Diesel is something that I know goes before the legislature almost every session. It seems like lately I've been noticing a strategy that goes for a subset of entities here that we're taxing on different levels, but we don't see the whole picture. It would be good to see this to see if it ends up being counter-productive and businesses move out of the city (or don't locate here). I do love that we're looking at air pollution, but these are things I'm concerned about.

Kyle: I have testified year after year on diesel bills. A large bill was passed a couple years ago that solved some of the challenges, but it didn't address diesel in the construction sector, which Oregon DEQ has identified as a key issue for Portland. So, there is continued work to do at the local level, which is something this new air quality program will consider. While the covered entities are stationary, they are not responsible for the mobile toxics that we also need to address.

*Chair Spevak:* Are there approval criteria that relay on air quality data? Does the County have regulations/policy? Is there a nexus with climate action for use of funds?

- Kyle: This is a gap – we don't have the data that can be used to make decisions. We don't have air quality data that gets integrated into planning at this point since we don't have the technical expertise here, and the DEQ data is limited. The County has piloted a wood smoke program, so we may look to partner with them to take their resources further. It will be critical to partner with all our jurisdictional partners and leverage and fill in gaps where we can. And to the nexus point: there are actions we can take to reduce carbon emissions and reduce air toxics (e.g. electrification). That will be a program priority.

*Commissioner Bachrach:* Right now, the \$2M is earmarked for staff – what FTE level will this be? We've had a Climate Action Plan, but I don't know if that gets actionable implementation. So is air quality

programming and reduction a priority for addressing climate action concerns? What about transportation impacts on climate?

- Andrea: The impetus for the clean air program is in response to what the community is asking from the City. There are gaps that the City needs to address regarding clean air. It is a health and environmental justice issue, directly impacting BIPOC communities and low-income communities. The resources will be about 11% for administrative purposes (revenue division), some to BPS to create a program and hire staff (4 FTE), and some to community-based solutions via grants to reduce air pollution that is impacting highest-risk communities. Climate continues to be our priority, and we are aiming to get more resources to do that work. And working on addressing air quality does have co-benefits to climate action while responding to community needs.

*Commissioner Thompson:* Do we have two overlapping circles with air quality and climate action – are we missing out on something? Where are the gaps? What is the break down between the sources of air toxics and where is the harm to human health, and how does that translate to the fee proposal?

- Kyle: The grant fund is about \$800,000. The PCEF funds are restricted and can't go to air quality projects, though they can go to climate issues. We have work to do on both sides, and both are critical for our community health – both air quality and climate. Portland Metro has higher levels of pollution, with higher issues along freeways, railyards, and in industrial districts. People of color are 4x more likely to be impacted by air pollution. Another note is that PCEF funds can't go to City programs. We don't think the fees will reduce pollution on their own, but we can then hire experts on staff to reduce emissions by working with industry and other large sources.

*Commissioner Routh:* Has there been active conversation with folks from East Portland and Unite about a climate-resilient job training and incubator may look like?

- Kyle: We have connected with labor and supporting workers in a workforce transition. We are hiring a BPS staff person to focus on workforce along with a study. This is a great opportunity to connect with Unite Oregon on this.
- Andrea: We are doing a PCEF study about workforce development as well. The studies and efforts will be coming together, and we'll be intentional about new job creation, particularly for East Portlanders.

## Adjourn

*Commissioner Spevak* adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

Submitted by Julie Ocken