

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

October 26, 2021

5 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

PSC Commissioners Present: Jeff Bachrach, Jessica Gittemeier, Katie Larsell, Oriana Magnera (arrived 5:20 p.m.), Valeria McWilliams, Steph Routh, Gabe Sheoships (arrived 5:14 p.m.), Eli Spevak, Erica Thompson; 1 open position

PSC Commissioners Absent: Johnell Bell

City Staff Presenting: Andrea Durbin, Eric Engstrom, Joan Frederiksen, Sandra Wood; Marie Walkiewicz (BES); Nick Falbo (PBOT); Andrew Eickmann (PHB); Karl Dinkelspiel (Prosper); Tate White (PP&R); Andrew Gulizia (BDS)

Guest Presenters: Nuhamin Eiden, Mohanad Alnajjar (Unite Oregon/SWEC); Coya Crespín (CAT); Mohamed Salim Bahamadi (HAKI); Muna Daher, Salma Sheikh (SWEC Leadership Cohort); Jilian Saurage Felton (CPAH); Brian Harper (Metro)

[Documents and Presentations for today's meeting](#)

Chair Spevak called the meeting to order at 5:01 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 Routh* noted the November 4 Families for Climate conversation with Dr Vivek Shandas about heat islands. Familiesforclimate.org
- *Chair Spevak* noted the email PSC members received about the Inclusionary Housing work at PHB and the RFP. Jeff, Valeria, Erica, and I had a conversation about this last week, and I talked with Matt Tschabold, and they are happy to have a meeting with a subset of PSC members to

provide input on the RFP. A few of us met to discuss this about a week ago, and if anyone has ideas for things to be included in the evaluation of the program, and I can compile them. Ultimately, it's PHB's decision as to what to include in the RFP, but they welcome the PSC input.

Director's Report

Andrea Durbin

- Welcome to our community and bureau partners who are joining us for the WPTC Plan discussion today.
- Historic Resources Code Project is at Council on November 3. Eli will be sharing the PSC letter for that meeting.
- Call for PSC members to serve on this year's BPS Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). Steph has already committed – thank you. We're looking for 2 more PSC representatives. Valeria will also serve (thank you) as our PSC/CIC member. Meetings will be November through January, probably 2 meetings a month over that time frame. Erica will also join the BAC this year. *Chair Spevak* moved for this panel. *Commissioner Larsell* seconded. The BAC members will be Routh, McWilliams, and Thompson.

Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes from the October 12, 2021 PSC meeting.

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

(7 – Bachrach, Gittemeier, Larsell, McWilliams, Routh, Spevak, Thompson)

West Portland Town Center

Panels & Work Session: Eric Engstrom, Joan Frederiksen (BPS); Marie Walkiewicz (BES); Nick Falbo (PBOT); Andrew Eickmann (PHB); Karl Dinkelspiel (Prosper); Tate White (PP&R); Nuhamin Eiden, Mohanad Alnajjar (Unite Oregon/SWEC); Coya Crespín (CAT); Mohamed Salim Bahamadi (HAKI); Muna Daher, Salma Sheikh (SWEC Leadership Cohort); Jilian Saurage Felton (CPAH); Brian Harper (Metro)

Presentation

Disclosures

None.

Written testimony is open through this Friday, October 29, at 5 p.m.

Eric introduced the project team of Joan Frederiksen and Hanna Osman. In November, we will dive into the details in work sessions. Tonight, we have a community-based panel to give more background on what we've done with the community and their interests and needs. We also have a panel of agency partners if you have questions about the more technical work. If we have time, we can start to talk about how you want to structure upcoming work sessions and topics you want to make sure are

discussed. Starting with bigger theme discussions in first November session and then potential amendments and other related details would be discussed at the following meeting.

The first panel includes:

Nuhamin Eiden, Mohanad Alnajjar (Unite Oregon); Coya Crespín (CAT); Mohamed Salim Bahamadi (HAKI); Muna Daher, Salma Sheikh (SWEC); Jilian Saurage Felton (CPAH)

Nuhamin: The SWEC has been working to advocate for investment in communities ahead of infrastructure investment and to do the work rooted in racial and economic justice. Resourcing equitable development plans is one way we can ensure commitments are equitable and that it becomes a reality. We've seen equitable investment commitments and plans happen in the past without investment paths, especially when transit-oriented development is involved. And we've seen community displaced in the north/northeast neighborhoods. Also pledges of support for anti-displacement that was never fulfilled. This led to displacement as well as loss of generational wealth and stability. We want to prevent that from happening in SW Corridor. A lot of our community partners and government agencies are interested in doing things differently this time and the WPTC Plan is one vehicle to ensure displacement is not going to happen. We have been doing this through a workgroup made up of community members, community-based organizations, housing providers and government partners and a leadership development cohort. The Panel today is made of some of these, and they will discuss their involvement with the work and their community priorities.

Mohanad: The core mission of the SWEC is to understand and acknowledge historical and ongoing racial inequalities and be committed to actions challenging those. We do this by working closely with diverse communities that live, work, worship and recreate in the SW Corridor and make sure they are engaged at different levels and in processes of our work. They inform decisions and make decisions for equitable development in the area. With the WPTC Plan in particular, the coalition and the communities we serve have been involved since the beginning in crafting this plan. We want to ensure the community priorities are resourced in the plan and other development in the SW Corridor.

Coya: Zoning reform can be used to allow for more housing near transit and help ease the pressures that make housing unaffordable or completely insecure for so many here in Portland. Affordability protections are needed with more transit development to ensure we aren't pushing out our community. We can't afford to make the situation any worse. Thank you for helping to reconcile affordability and upzoning issues. Low-income people who live near transit use it much more than higher-income people. Without market intervention property near high quality transit is unaffordable to most transit riders, and rising prices displace low-income residents. For TOD to fulfill its promise, it has to be as affordable as possible. Some of the ways we can do that considering how non-profits can fit into being on the ground level to operate properties in the SW Corridor. As well as talking about policies such as tenants opportunity to purchase can be used to retain community control and housing affordability.

Jilian: Thank you for opportunity to speak with you about how zoning can impact and instigate affordable housing in SW. I have five recommendations for the PSC to consider. Make sure that affordable housing organizations have the first option to purchase to help acquire land for affordable housing. Land is the first step in any affordable housing effort. No funding can be sought until land or site control is secured. Density and FAR bonuses, as well as parking reductions are helpful. More capacity on a site allows more economy of scale providing more viable projects with reduced costs on a per unit basis. We can have the best policies and zoning, but funding is the key component including land. This area of town has a lot of infrastructure needs. Typically, the onus of meeting the

infrastructure requirements is on the developer. A big lift would be to have a pot of funds for affordable housing providers to rely on for those types of expenses. We are at a critical moment in SW, we have naturally occurring affordable housing in area but as prices go up people are at imminent risk of being displaced, whether being pushed farther out or in or doubling up or plus in housing. This is an area that is ripe for gentrification and we are at a unique point in time where we have the ability by putting investments in to off-set this dynamic, getting ahead of gentrification.

Mohamed: Neighbors shared that part of their vision for the WPTC is a multicultural center is what the community wants here – small businesses and something like the Portland Mercado. A place to support the local cultures and community for people to get together and share their stories. The community wants to access services within the town center – at the multicultural center or in affordable housing communities. Everyone needs to be able to access services like healthcare, training, and childcare.

Salma: We want to be aware of what has happened in other communities and ensure our communities are not forgotten in this process. We have lived here for so long and contribute to the community we've built here. Safety is a key concern. Please keep our community as a priority in this plan and process.

Muna: Teen houselessness is another issue we want to care for. 1280 teens in Portland are houseless this year and are unable to get a stable education. We should take more action and find ways to help our youth in their education and making sure they are able to get education. Stable housing is a key issue with this.

Chair Spevak: Thank you to all our community members who have shared your thoughts tonight.

Commissioner Magnera: Thank you so much to the community members who have joined us tonight. We have a tendency to make plans and not resource them. What resources are necessary to ensure the community is safe, the community center is helpful, etc?

- *Nuhamin:* The highest priority would be to secure more affordable units and homeownership. Natural affordable housing stock is important, and we are quickly losing time on that. We need to be investing in housing here.

Commissioner Gittemeier: Thank you all. I was curious about the right of individuals to buy homes for affordable housing. How can the PSC make this a reality?

- *Coya:* There is some policy work being developed around tenant opportunity to purchase. This should be revived. First right of refusal is another opportunity.
- *Jillian:* I don't know if we have a legal method to force a landholder to offer it to a non-profit, but that would be a good tool. Properties can be acquired by the City when the staging land is done being used, and that should be at the front of any development work.

Commissioner Thompson: I am also curious about resourcing and capacity-building with the ongoing need for cross-agency efforts to bring affordable housing efforts to fruition. Do you feel like the capacity is there to continue to navigate this or if there is ongoing support that could be provided?

- *Nuhamin:* There is opportunity for coordinated efforts to provide and prioritize the area for investment.
- *Jillian:* SW area is the only neighborhood in SW Portland with a concentration of Black folk – with a high risk of gentrification and displacement. Bring all the tools to the table, everything possible, because if we miss this opportunity, we will again be displacing a Black community in the city of Portland.

- Salma: There are so many organizations that are interconnected, so they all can support these communities.

Commissioner McWilliams: Has there been exploration for community land trust models? Does the ARPA funding trickle down to any infrastructure projects that could be used in West Portland?

- Nuhamin: We have applied for ARPA funds, one of which was partially funded for a feasibility study and financing for land acquisition. This needs more for the FY2022 year. For land trusts, this has come up too.
- Jillian: The land trust tool is really important. You can keep property affordable through different buyers. It requires a non-profit that is savvy to administer it, but it is not new to Portland. Including commercial space in the affordability is not familiar to me, but it is an exciting idea.

Commissioner Larsell: Thank you for joining us tonight and your involvement over such a long time. Is there anything missing in the plan in terms of committing funders? In terms of the Housing Bureau, might you consider asking them of City Council about giving you some sort of precedent/preference?

Commissioner Magnera: In context of other questions, does the phase in of zoning seem sufficient for the speed of which housing is going to be developed?

- Jillian: It is often an issue of changing zoning. If there were a system to set the way/code when we start would be helpful as early and transparently as possible.

Chair Spevak: What should happen first? I think it's affordable housing. I am also interested in hearing about economic studies that show much higher rents for more housing to be built for the market. In the code update, we see things that may increase the cost of building too. How should we think about this and balancing costs with amenities?

- Nuhamin: Rents will go up regardless, and communities will be displaced if we don't do anything. We need to preserve already-affordable housing and make sure they stay affordable. We need to make new units deeply affordable and for the long term.
- Salma: Specifically when we're having conversations like this, we talk about so many families. We need to invest in youth with programs to support them.

Eric introduced the second panel with those from partner agencies.

Brian: Metro supports the plan and a positive recommendation as noted in the record. It is clear the plan was done with the SW equitable development strategy in mind, and it's couched exactly through the community vision. We stand with our partners here. Preserving affordable units as much as possible is also something we heartily support. Metro is committed to investment in the SW Corridor in the future – in infrastructure that support the communities' visions. We are committed to trying to stabilize community.

Commissioner Larsell: Can all include in their comments, a more direct response to the question of how much money they are going to be putting into this effort, if possible, in a specific number.

Brian: Can't speak for the whole organization but can say that Metro will have invested over \$2M in planning and implementation outcomes once our next federal grant is fully spent. Metro also manages regional flexible spending allocations for transportation. We will continue to seek funding for light rail infrastructure and bike/ped/etc investments along with it.

Karl: As far as the Plan is concerned, Prosper supports it. We are an implementation agency. In terms of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), it is a tool that has been examined, particularly when the light rail line was more likely than it is at the moment. We worked with Metro and partner bureaus about a TIF district. We have put on the back burner a TIF district here but would be open to considering it in the future, but it is likely more contingent on larger decisions.

Andrew: We remain committed to the affordable housing goals in the plan with community and inter-agency work. We know the dire need for more affordable housing in this area. SW Equitable Housing Strategy – stretch goals assumed land coming out of acquisition for light rail and TIF. Base goals were for 300-350 units of affordable housing. We intend to meet these goals through Portland and Metro housing bonds.

Nick: We support this area. Historically PBOT has struggled with funding in SW Portland. The money we use for projects are often based on grants we're applying for, and we're not always successful. But working with SWEC and helping to advocate for funding here is key. West Portland is already recognized as a town center, and the work builds on this. The Plan proposes a phasing approach for land use growth with key transportation priorities. This allows for more technical work and time to seek more funding opportunities. The adoption of this plan helps us advance discussions about alternative funding mechanisms. ODOT is super influential in this area because of the highway system there.

Marie: How things work for us at BES is about transportation and stormwater. We are thinking about how well development can be served and what public investments are needed to support the public here. Stormwater, sanitary, and streams are in this area. Stormwater management is different because how we plan for it is defined by the local conditions, which is clearly different in SW – it's hilly here, and there was not investment here before the area became incorporated. More development exacerbates stormwater issues if the soils are difficult to deal with as they are here. Some water will have to leave the site, and it needs to connect to a public system, but we don't have public systems in all parts of SW. So in developing the phased zoning strategy, BES gave input into areas we thought we could connect to an existing system, so we support upzoning in those areas. Where slopes, soils, and the absence of infrastructure exists, we need to do more planning. We have initiated a system plan in SW already so we can better understand the situation and ultimately come up with strategies to address the issues. Until we know what the strategies are, we can't tell a developer how the site will be served and connect to the system, so in those areas we need a plan before we change the zoning.

Tate: The area could be served with improved provision and developed parks and recreation areas. We are trying to guide proposals to plan and guide future changes. We had funding cuts and we need to identify more funding with the WPTC Plan work going forward.

Commissioner Thompson: How do we preserve existing non-regulated affordable housing? What are the options and what other tools outside zoning code provisions are available?

- *Chair Spevak:* We should focus one of our work session topics on this.

Commissioner Bachrach: For BES, can you specifically help us understand stormwater planning in this area?

- Marie: We are serving the existing development, and we support upzoning in much of the area. We are in the beginning of the planning process for this area of SW. We inherited an incomplete system here, so we are still working on getting information to identify where elements of the

system are and who is responsible for them. The plan takes a few years, which will include capital strategies.

Commissioner Gittemeier: For Prosper, I am interested to see how you are measuring economic development and keeping community wealth in the area.

Chair Spevak: For BES, I appreciate your being optimistic to complete infrastructure systems, but is it an equitable use of City resources versus less expensive areas of the city?

Eric noted the staff memo and narratives about particular parts. Potential work session topics could include:

- Zoning as a tool
- Affordable housing
- Urban Design Framework
- Market conditions and economic feasibility
- Zoning code provisions – specific PSC areas of interest

Please let Eric and Julie and Eli know if you have suggestions for other topics for work session discussion.

The WPTC Plan will continue to the November 9, 2021 PSC meeting.

BPS Strategic Plan & Workplan

Briefing & Work Session: Andrea Durbin, Eric Engstrom, Sandra Wood

Strategic Plan Presentation

Workplan Presentation

Andrea shared the 2021-24 BPS Strategic Plan in a high-level overview of the plan. The mission hasn't changed much from the previous plan, but what is different is that we are looking at the four guiding components as the structure for the plan: equity, health, prosperity, and resilience.

The plan focuses on our three-year outcomes; Andrea shared examples for each of the four categories of work in the integrated, interconnected way BPS is more and more working to focus our work.

Sandra started the workplan conversation. This is a 1-year plan as opposed to the 3-year strategic plan Andrea just shared. We know the PSC has questions about your role with the BPS workplan and the work you all do. We won't resolve those questions today, but we will have a refresher about the planning programs and what the sustainability programs are, what's on our workplan, and we'll share why some projects are on our plan. We have an hour reserved at your November 9 meeting to continue the conversation as well.

Our common lens for PSC work is the Comp Plan.

Comp Plan Vision: Portland is a prosperous, healthy, equitable and resilient city where everyone has access to opportunity and is engaged in shaping decisions that affect their lives.

BPS Mission: BPS takes action to shape the future of Portland and advance climate justice for a more equitable, healthy, prosperous, and resilient city.

Outcomes:

- Equity
- Health
- Prosperity
- Resilience

Eric shared information about the ongoing planning programs (slides 5-14).

Sandra shared information about planning projects – grouped by the Comp Plan themes of equity, health, prosperity, and resilience (slides 15-19).

Andria shared the overview of BPS' sustainability program work. In the past, we have had three separate teams at BPS; we recently changed into one group of climate, energy, and sustainable development (slides 21-22). We map to the 100% renewable energy and climate emergency declaration.

Andrea highlighted the work of PCEF, Waste Collection, and the Sustainable Consumption & Production teams (slides 23-25).

Commissioner Routh: On equity in the key strategies and measurements, we talk about community-informed priorities and coordinating with communities in East Portland. Why is this focused only on East Portland in the Strategic Plan? What is the choice of wording? Urban Design Studio says to advance the Green Loop. But this is where it gets salty on the East Portland aspect.

- Andrea: The emphasis on East Portland is because the City hasn't prioritized this area of the city. It doesn't mean we aren't focusing on other areas, too. Our Equity & Engagement Team is working with staff about community-led and/versus community-informed to better define our relationships.

Commissioner Thompson: How do values in the Strategic Plan connect to the outcomes? That would tie this and community engagement together more for me so I can better understand. I also had questions about community-led efforts as Steph asked about. And also, what about internal efforts to make BPS a more equitable workplace?

Commissioner McWilliams: One of the resilience factors is about net-carbon zero buildings. PHB is starting to require developers to have HVAC in City-funded affordable housing projects. I would like to understand a bit more about how that policy may be in potential conflict here. And then beyond adding this, it might add more burden on tenants, which affects prosperity and equity.

Commissioner Larsell: BPS role is to... convene. I appreciate that you're thinking about this, but I encourage you to think about this very deeply. It seems like you shouldn't have a plan where there isn't funding behind it – if you're convening, you should be able to have answers too. I want to see trees under key strategies. Under resilience, natural systems – can you include plant communities and fighting invasive species in this work? PCEF seems like such a new part of BPS, and it's its own entity. It's like a foundation. I wish I could hear more about it about how it has an impact with measures around East Portland specifically.

Commissioner Bachrach: I share a bit of the question about PCEF – I don't know what planning's role is, our role is, etc. This is not BPS money, it's tax dollars. There is a disconnect here for me. It's interesting that the Strategic Plan doesn't mention the PSC at all. This highlights my concern about what the PSC's role is and our relationship to our bureau, what is in our policy scope.

Sandra shared the projects for the PSC organized by the Commission's role: formal recommending body role; informal role around the built environment; not land use or built environment; no role (slides 26-29). Andria share information about the emissions inventory update, which will come to the PSC. And in terms of Build/Shift and building standards is included in the building standards note in the informal role slide.

We can continue the workplan discussion at the November 9 PSC meeting. PSC members will also be receiving an email from Julia Thompson as noted in the email from Jillian / Commissioner Rubio to participate in discovery interviews in the upcoming days. And thank you to Steph, Valeria, and Erica for being our PSC representatives on the BPS Budget Advisory Committee this year. We also want to get back to the PSC to respond to your questions you've raised today.

Chair Spevak: Thank you to those of you who are stepping up into the unfilled roles at the bureau right now.

Commissioner Gittemeier: Thank you for this presentation – it was really helpful to see it and walk through it. I still have a general question of where PSC fits into this. Maybe that is at a retreat so we can talk about what we as commissioners want to see and what our structure is. I know there are some legal aspects of what we have to do, but there is that grey area of what we do/don't participate in.

Commissioner McWilliams: Something that would be helpful to see are the different projects the PSC doesn't have oversight or decision-making to see who does make decisions on those other projects. I feel like we are limited in our scope and I want to have clarity on who to tell people or organizations to go to that we might be able to support but don't necessarily have influence over as a PSC member.

Commissioner Larsell: That's why I keep bringing up the convening – so many problems of the city evolve as they are worked on after the PSC's role.

- Eric: Don't underestimate the power of an adopted plan. Even if the PSC can't appropriate money, adoption puts momentum behind work, and that is often the beginning of how we get things funded.
- Sandra: This is example of having plans so we can jump on opportunities when funding is available (like the ARPA funds).

Adjourn

Commissioner Spevak adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.