

CITY OF COOS BAY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
May 11, 2021

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Amy Aguirre, Chair; Bill Davis, Rex Miller, Jeff Marineau, Josh Stevens.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jim Berg

STAFF PRESENT: Carolyn Johnson, Community Development Administrator.

GUESTS: Jim Hencke, David Evans & Associates; Jessica Bull, JLA Public Involvement.

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Aguirre opened the Planning Commission meeting at 6:01 p.m. Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was present.

2. Adoption of Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Marineau moved, seconded by Commissioner Davis, to approve the April 13, 2021 Planning Commission minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Work Session

a. Front Street Blueprint

Jim Hencke, project lead from David Evans & Associates, was there that night with Jessica Bull, JLA Public Involvement, to talk to the Planning Commission about the Front Street Blueprint. The purpose of the work was to bring to life the vision that was created by the City.

The study area included both industrial and commercial use zones. The West boundary was US highway 101, the East boundary was Coos Bay, the North boundary was Ivy Avenue, and the South boundary was Market Avenue.

Mr. Hencke noted that they were still early in the project schedule, which would go until next Spring. This was their first Planning Commission meeting and as moved forward there would be more information and details to share. They were just starting to wrap up the inventory and analysis portion of the work. Next, they would move into designing and then implementing their strategies before finalizing the design and adopting it. He reassured the Commission that they were passionate about creating an atmosphere that reflected the historic and cultural significance of the area.

Mr. Hencke shared information on the first memo they put together. It centered around refining and implementing past work that had been done by the City when looking at local and State plans, policies, and codes. The Comprehensive Plan was clear about the industrial zoning of most the area as well as it mainly being waterfront heritage zoned.

The 2012 Waterfront Park/Walkway Concept Plan was brought up since it led to the 2017 Front Street project. Mr. Hencke said it identified several recreational, wildlife, and maintenance needs that aligned with their action plan. The Front Street Action Plan (FSAP) had four priority investment types: open space and pedestrian connectivity, employment uses that required access to waterfront for success, improvements to transportation network that improved multi-modal safety, and public transit. As a result, there were three key themes. First, pedestrian/bicycle access to the waterfront (extended Coos Bay Boardwalk along East side of Front Street, multi-use path to Coos History Museum, crossings of Highway 101, and on-street parking). Second, programming and amenities (provide new light watercraft launch at Museum, public

open spaces, and restaurants). Third, celebrate Front Street's heritage (working waterfront and public restrooms).

The implementation categories were near-term catalytic (public waterfront access improvements), development-supportive (historical wayfinding and public parking management strategy) , and infrastructure-related (pedestrian North-South pathway along the East side of Front Street, circulation and connectivity improvements, and access/intersection improvements).

The second memo which was created looked at the baseline conditions for the project. The areas looked at were existing land uses, street networks, bicycle/pedestrian networks, and public transit services inventory, natural resources and environmental barriers, and water, rail, and pipelines. There were some water-dependent businesses and non-water-dependent businesses. They wanted to make sure they understood each business and how they worked so the project could benefit everyone. They also took inventory of all the streets, their uses, and their condition. The same was done with bike and pedestrian pathways.

Mr. Hencke wanted to open for discussion with the Commission.

Commissioner Miller was concerned with how the area from the water had not be talked about. It used to be a road before the highway was there and was the road primarily used to get to town. Accessing properties from the water was an important thing to look at. Also, he thought there was potential to do something involving the islands. Mr. Hencke thought water access was an important thing for them to investigate more. He let him know that that was something they had planned to investigate in more detail as the project went on. Commissioner Miller said that there were areas that could be connected through the water.

Ms. Johnson wanted to hear more about the boat launch idea. Commissioner Miller responded that it would be nice to have something that accommodated non-engine boats since there was need for that in the community.

Ms. Johnson wanted to hear more about Commissioner Miller's thoughts for the islands. Commissioner Miller replied that the island was very isolated from the City. It could be a good place to potentially put a few yurts or something else to help people experience the outdoors. There was some disagreement from the Planning Commission on if something could be built on the island. Ms. Johnson thought it was great to hear about the potential on the island.

4. Adjournment

Commissioner Aguirre adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Lydia Dysart)