

**City of Puyallup
City Council Study Session
April 15, 2014**

(These minutes are not verbatim. The meeting was recorded, and copies of the recording are retained for a period of six years from the date of the meeting and are available upon request.)

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Knutsen, Deputy Mayor Hopkins, Councilmember Door, Councilmember Palmer, Councilmember Shadko, Councilmember Swanson, Councilmember Vermillion

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:00 p.m., Mayor Knutsen announced an executive session expected to last thirty minutes, the purpose of which was to discuss matters pertaining to real estate issues. City Manager Bill McDonald, City Attorney Kevin Yamamoto, Deputy City Attorney Steve Kirkelie, Public Works Director Rob Andreotti, Development Services Director Tom Utterback, City Engineer Mark Palmer, City Clerk Brenda Arline, Mayor Knutsen and the councilmembers recessed into executive session. Those attending the executive session returned to open session and the meeting reconvened at 6:30 p.m. No action was taken.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Council Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Vermillion, second by Councilmember Swanson, to approve the agenda. The motion passed 7-0.

Presentation from Sound Transit

Mike Williams, Deputy Executive Director of Sound Transit's Office of Capital Development, reported that following extensive public outreach and collaborative efforts with interested citizens and stakeholders, several possible packages for access improvements to the Puyallup Sounder station have been developed for Council's review and discussion. An open house will be held on May 14th to gather public input on the proposals. Sound Transit will return to Council in June with the results of that process and seek an official City of Puyallup recommendation for submittal to the Sound Transit Board for its consideration and possible adoption.

Nytasha Sowers, Sound Transit Project Manager, explained that the packages consist of possible ways to improve station access via pedestrian, bicycle, traffic/bus and/or parking improvements totaling \$55 million. After Sound Transit identifies the preferred package, conceptual engineering and environmental work will proceed with the improvements expected to be constructed by 2023.

Ms. Sowers reviewed that the goals for the station access improvements are to provide better access to Sounder riders, benefit the local community, support Sound Transit's regional commitments, and maintain a healthy environment. She said generally, public comments have favored providing additional vehicle parking close to the station, installing a pedestrian overpass, and increasing local

transit connections. Of the parking options, the public has expressed the strongest interest in constructing a garage at the station. Ms. Sowers shared the results of a ridership questionnaire, of which 39% of the respondents indicated they were Puyallup residents. The questionnaire addressed current transportation modes used to access the station as well as preferred parking improvements.

Ms. Sowers explained that six different access improvement packages have been developed. Each package includes the following investments totaling \$11 million: a pedestrian/bicycle overpass at the station; transit signal priority and signal improvements in the vicinity of the station; pedestrian-related intersection, sidewalk and lighting improvements; bicycle route improvements; and added bicycle storage at the station. The way in which each package differs is with respect to the potential for up to 600 new parking spaces and whether this would be accomplished by surface lots, a small or large parking garage, or a combination.

Ms. Sowers reviewed details, including projected total cost for each of the six packages, as follows:

- A: 400 spaces of surface parking at Shaw Road
Expansion of the lease at the Red Lot by 200 spaces
A new access street for a Shaw Road lot, and
A bus shuttle from Shaw Road (unfunded).
- B: Lease of 350 parking spaces at the Fair's Gold Lot
Expansion of the lease at the Red Lot by 200 spaces
Net 80 additional spaces at the Eagles Lot
Pedestrian crossing improvements at 5th St. SW, and
Bus shuttle from the Gold Lot (service provider not identified).
- C: Construction of a 600-space parking garage at the Eagles lot, and
A pedestrian bridge across 5th St. SW.
- D: Construction of a garage at the station (net 600 spaces, total 750).
- E: Construction of a garage at the station (net 350 spaces, total 460), and
Expansion of the lease at the Red Lot by 250 spaces.
- F: Construction of a garage at the Cornforth-Campbell property (300 spaces)
Construction of a garage at the Eagles lot (300 spaces), and
A pedestrian bridge across 5th St. SW.

Ms. Sowers explained that each potential package was evaluated according to certain criteria, with packages C and D rated highest in terms of travel time and reliability; comfort, security and convenience; neighborhood compatibility (traffic, community character); the degree that they support city plans for the station area; and property, historic, parks and natural resources. She concluded that ST2 is capital funding and cannot be spent on non-capital uses such as shuttle service.

Referring to the impacts the Sounder stations have on the downtowns of Puyallup and Sumner, Mayor Knutsen advocated for siting a station in-between the cities as a way to help mitigate those impacts. Ms. Sowers responded that as Sound Transit made significant facility investments in each city's downtown area at its request, all future improvements will likewise be made in those areas.

Discussion ensued regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the potential improvement packages. In particular, Councilmembers spoke to the following: the assumption that the percentage of commuters walking to the station will increase in the future as the area surrounding the station is redeveloped, thus decreasing the need for additional parking over time; traffic patterns in the downtown and the impact of commuter vehicles arriving and departing at certain times of day; existing Comprehensive Plan policies which encourage dispersed parking in the downtown as well as incorporating parking into mixed-use developments with ground-floor commercial frontage, and the viability of successfully implementing the latter; design standards for parking garages in the areas where one might be built; if a garage at Cornforth-Campbell could include 100 spaces reserved for limited durations to accommodate patrons of downtown businesses, and the projected cost of purchasing or leasing such spaces; whether Sounder commuters patronize downtown businesses; the possible relocation costs for the Eagles and who would pay those if that property was used for surface parking or a garage; if an exit out of the Eagles lot onto 5th would offer better traffic flow than the exit from the station onto Main; the need to gather as much information as possible with respect to road impacts, travel time and traffic flow analyses, etc.; whether the improvements can be completed before 2023; and the concern of emergency responders to situations which create additional traffic and delay response times.

Councilmember Vermillion suggested that the stakeholder roundtable convened to help develop and evaluate options should provide its input to Council in the interest of forwarding compatible rather than incompatible recommendations to Sound Transit.

Noting that Sound Transit's primary objective is to serve its ridership, Mayor Knutsen spoke to the problems which arose when the station was located in the downtown. He relayed that area businesses are concerned with the potential for additional negative effects, noted that the survey which was conducted had been answered by more non-Puyallup residents than residents, and emphasized the traffic-related impacts which the downtown already experiences from various special events, non-Sounder commuters, the proximity of the high school, etc. He pointed out that no Sounder parking lot or garage is sited in unincorporated Pierce County, felt that a third station would pose no harm yet best serve commuters, and warned that whatever improvements are built will not solve the problem for long since more parking spaces were sure to be needed in the future. He urged that whatever improvements are made be accomplished in a manner that does not damage Puyallup to any greater degree and concluded that expanding the use of the Red Lot would be the best option.

Councilmember Palmer encouraged that the idea of adding more parking spaces to the downtown be placed in the context of peak traffic counts for this area, as the vast majority of downtown traffic is unrelated to Sounder commuters. He noted that traffic flow to and from any new garage would naturally be more metered than the previous scenario when commuters were allowed to park on many streets surrounding the station.

Councilmember Vermillion asked for information on the cost of operating the shuttle service to and from the Red Lot, noting this results in less pollution and fewer vehicles in the downtown.

Councilmember Shadko questioned if Sound Transit has given any thought to promoting Puyallup's downtown businesses, perhaps in conjunction with the purchasing of monthly Sounder

passes. She pointed out that not all commuters are coming or going at the same time as some catch earlier trains than others.

Councilmember Door suggested another option might be to build a 300-space garage at the Eagles lot and another one of the same size at the station rather than at the Cornforth-Campbell lot.

At 8:07 p.m., the meeting was recessed for a short break. The meeting reconvened at 8:13 p.m.

Council Action: A motion was made by Deputy Mayor Hopkins, second by Councilmember Door, to extend the meeting to 9:00 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.

Identified recreation facility and field needs and Recreation Center update

Parks and Recreation Administrator Sarah Harris explained that in the process of updating the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan, the need for five or six additional multi-purpose sports fields was identified. The plan further identified deficits of three baseball fields, one softball field and one gymnasium. The defined needs are based on Puyallup's current population of 37,980 and the fact that this is expected to rise to 43,670 over the next ten years.

Ms. Harris said options for meeting these needs include: repurposing existing city-owned properties; entering into partnerships with other organizations or agencies; and buying property and constructing. City-owned properties with the potential to be repurposed include the Flaherty property (8.63 acres adjacent to Shaw Road and 12th Avenue SE) and the Recreation Center, which has a site to its west that could accommodate a youth multi-purpose field. She noted that the City would have to conduct a wetland study and habitat assessment for the Flaherty property to determine its viability for sports fields; this would cost approximately \$6,500 to \$10,000.

With respect to possible partnerships, Ms. Harris described how the City might partner with the Puyallup School District to install three multi-purpose fields at Kalles Jr. High, and/or one multi-purpose field at Puyallup High School. She shared the potential advantages and disadvantages of the Kalles option, noting a rough estimate of \$6 million to construct the three fields. She added that another possibility is to partner with Pierce College to provide a multi-purpose sports complex and/or one multi-purpose field.

Bill McDonald, City Manager, clarified that the City has had only a very preliminary discussion with the school district regarding a potential partnership to install sports fields at Kalles. The initial proposal is that the school district would provide the land and the utility infrastructure with the City funding the improvements.

In response to a question, Puyallup School District Superintendent Tim Yeomans agreed that if this proposal proceeds and is successful, it would certainly be possible for the school district to partner with the City for additional fields at other schools in the future.

Mayor Knutsen requested information on the maintenance costs of Heritage Recreation Center at Rogers High School.

Councilmember Palmer expressed excitement about the Kalles sports fields' proposal and recommended that it be pursued. He noted the availability of lodging tax and capital improvement funds totaling \$2.5 million in cash that could be used for this effort, and encouraged the school district to consider contributing to the cost of the improvements beyond land and infrastructure.

Councilmembers discussed how the fields might be shared between the school district and the City as well as their possible use by adult and youth recreation leagues.

Councilmember Swanson advised that if this is the direction the City is heading, it should start thinking about a future parks bond for funding.

Councilmember Palmer was not convinced of the need for a bond, saying that it may be possible to accomplish the fields for \$4 million. He referred to different streams of revenue and pointed out that the Shaw Road area still remains an option for siting recreation uses.

Councilmember Door requested information on maintenance costs for the fields at Sparks Stadium and on the percentage of time that shared fields would be available to the City for use and/or rental.

Councilmember Vermillion believed this partnership would benefit the community and constitute a win/win for the school district and the City, particularly as the land would not have to be purchased.

Deputy Mayor Hopkins emphasized the need to carefully examine the investments made by each partner as compared to the projected benefits. He did not support allocating all of the City's capital investment funds for this but agreed that lodging tax revenues could be used. He suggested that the City could bundle several parks-related projects into one bond to make it more attractive to voters.

Councilmember Palmer pointed out the needs for additional cost assessment and investigation of financing options. He noted it might be possible to work out parking requirements with the Fair.

Council Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Swanson, second by Deputy Mayor Hopkins, to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes (to 9:15 p.m.). The motion passed 7-0.

Recreation Center Repair

Ms. Harris reviewed four options for performing needed repairs to the exterior of the Puyallup Recreation Center (PRC), as follows:

- Option A: \$852,655 – Reconstruct the exterior wood-framed walls and re-roof upslope areas above wall work areas.
- Option B: \$544,360 - Replace the wood-framed enclosure space identified as phases 1 & 2 with new construction; and reduce the footprint of the center by 4,300 square feet (removing existing office space, foyer, classroom, entry restrooms, and utility rooms, shown as phases 3 & 4). No remaining areas would be refurbished.

Option C: \$1,850,000 – Replace wood-framed enclosure space with new construction, reducing the footprint by 4,300 square feet. Refurbish all remaining areas.

Option D: Cost of Option A, B or C plus \$1,500,000 – Any of the above options with the addition of a new gymnasium.

Deputy Mayor Hopkins said the PRC is too valuable and too well-used to not repair it, whether or not a new gym is added. He questioned why the City would want to reduce the facility's footprint, supported proceeding with Option A, and suggested using proceeds from the sale of the Community Resource Center for this work.

Parks, Property and Facilities Manager Deke Jones further elucidated the differences between the options along with the idea of adding another new gym and the costs associated with that.

Responding to Mayor Knutsen, Ms. Harris explained that gym time is at a premium and it is particularly difficult to accommodate all of the teams in the City's youth basketball program during the winter season.

Council Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Swanson, second by Councilmember Vermillion, to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes (to 9:30 p.m.). The motion passed 7-0.

Councilmembers Swanson commented on the possibility of relocating the PRC and suggested an analysis be performed to determine the commercial value of the Valley Avenue property if it were rezoned to industrial as compared to the cost of rebuilding the PRC in the Shaw Road area. Councilmember Palmer agreed that more information was needed on all fronts, including the worth of the Recreation Center property with and without the sports fields.

Councilmember Vermillion pointed out that the City has invested a substantial amount in the PRC, its three baseball fields are important to the recreation program, and it would not be possible to site all needed fields on 30 acres. He requested additional information on improvements to the PRC, including the addition of a gym, and was not interested to pursue the siting of a sports complex at Shaw Road at the current time. He suggested considering enclosing and lighting the two tennis courts at the PRC on an interim (five to eight years) basis to increase their utilization year-round.

Ms. Harris additionally reviewed options for renovating the Memorial Center, including the addition of a second gym. She explained that updating and expanding the facility would preserve the viability of a historic city building located within walking distance of residents in the downtown. She described potential funding sources for either the PRC and the Memorial Center, including bonds, lodging tax revenues, LIFT grant funds and the Parks CIP budget.

Mayor Knutsen suggested that the City explore the possibility of partnering with private gym owners such as churches or the National Guard Armory in an effort to meet the growing need for this type of facility.

Deputy Mayor Hopkins believed that adding a gym to the PRC would make more sense than adding one to the Memorial Center, and was interested to compare the costs of these projects. He encouraged conducting the necessary evaluation of the Flaherty property to determine its viability for sports fields.

Council Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Shadko, second by Deputy Mayor Hopkins, to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes to 9:45 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Shadko noted that because the Memorial Center is located within walking distance of many students and residents, it requires less parking than a different location would.

Councilmembers Vermillion and Door agreed that the Memorial Center's green space is well-used during nice weather and offers a nice amenity for the surrounding community.

Organizational Change

Due to the lateness of the hour, this item was deferred to a later meeting.

ADJOURNMENT 9:34 p.m.