



**Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Zoom Webinar & Telephonic**

April 15, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Karena Perry, Chair
Betsy Brenneman
Kirby Day
Daniel Glidmann

Laura Martinson
Patty Ware
Iris Matthews

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Michael Heumann, Ricardo Worl, Nathaniel Dye, Jill Ramiel, Tahlia Gerger

Staff:

Alexandra Pierce, Planning Manager

Assembly Members:

None

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. March 18, 2021 DRAFT minutes, Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting

Ms. Brenneman asked for clarification regarding the sentence, "Ms. McKibben said the visioning report is trying to capture the short-term vacation rental market."

Ms. Ware said that she assumed this is referencing how CBJ is not currently regulating vacation rentals. Several Steering Committee members agreed that they did not think the visioning report was trying to capture the short-term rental market. Ms. Pierce referenced the visioning report directly. Due to the lack of clarity of intent, Mr. Day suggested waiting until the Steering Committee is able to talk with Ms. McKibben about the matter before approving the minutes.

MOTION: By Mr. Day to delay approving the March 18, 2021 minutes until the next Steering Committee meeting. Mr. Glidmann seconded.

The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Participation

None.

IV. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. Pierce presented to the Assembly on the permitting process for the Norwegian Cruise Line dock. The Assembly wants additional public process to amend Long Range Waterfront Plan.

Ms. Martinson asked if the Blueprint Downtown recommendations would be included in the review process. Ms. Pierce said even if the plan is not yet adopted by that point, the recommendations will be available for review.

V. Chapter 2: Implementation

Ms. Brenneman said she supported organizing the table by time frame. She also said she feels that some important actions are missing.

Ms. Matthews said she felt overwhelmed by the amount of actions, and asked whether all of them will be included. Ms. Pierce said that duplicates will be removed. She asked the Steering Committee to focus on content and readability.

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Mr. Day asked if the trails referenced in the action to “identify complete connections between existing trail networks” are CBJ trails. Ms. Pierce said some are State trails.

Regarding the action to evaluate pool programming, Ms. Matthews said she did not think that pools were a large topic of Steering Committee discussion. Ms. Pierce that the Committee discussed this issue before Ms. Matthews joined. Ms. Matthews recommended identifying specific trail connections in the previously referenced action.

Ms. Ware identified actions to consolidate. She agreed with Ms. Matthews that she did not think the Steering Committee conversation about pools rose to the level of recommendation. She recommended simplifying the action related to a comprehensive study of the South Franklin/Marine Way corridor.

Ms. Matthews suggested identifying which constructions the Steering Committee most wants to promote.

Ms. Brenneman suggested possible consolidation of trail-related actions. She identified Christopher Trail as particularly in need of improvement. Ms. Pierce said staff were trying to capture that need by talking about the connections between existing trail networks.

Ms. Brenneman said she disagreed with the recommendation to evaluate whether or not to retain the Augustus Brown pool. Ms. Pierce said, at the time of discussion, the Steering Committee did not have strong feelings about the downtown pool. She suggested making a formal decision regarding the recommendation.

Ms. Matthews suggested recognizing the Augustus Brown pool as an important amenity for downtown. The Steering Committee agreed.

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Regarding the actions related to traffic calming, Mr. Day recommended allocating passenger fees to install temporary speed bumps on Basin Road.

Mr. Glidmann recommended removing the action related to the reconstruction of Capital Avenue, as the project is already under way.

Ms. Ware said she thought the action “Work with DOT&PF on developing implementation plan based on study results and recommendations” is vague and confusing; she recommended removing it. She suggested combining the actions related to traffic calming.

Ms. Matthews said she thought the action related to shared space concepts should be more specific. She agreed that it should be combined with the action to monitor and enforce speed limits in the study area.

Ms. Martinson suggested presenting the most detailed traffic calming action in a different way. She said that the action related to reducing demand from peak single occupancy vehicles through the implementation of a travel demand management program seems to be a main priority for the Steering Committee.

Ms. Brenneman asked how the Capital Avenue action reduces pedestrian and vehicle conflicts. Ms. Pierce reassured her that they are not recommending removing housing. Ms. Brenneman expressed dissatisfaction with the term “shared space concepts.” She made suggestions for ways that detailed sections of the traffic calming action could be incorporated into other actions. She disagreed that traffic-calming measures on Willoughby Avenue and Egan Drive are necessary. She said she thinks they should wait to reassess speed limits until Juneau has a normal tourist season by which to judge.

Regarding traffic calming on Willoughby Avenue, Ms. Ware said that people drive too quickly for the comfort of pedestrians trying to cross the road and use the bus stops. She expressed concerns about tourists coming from the State museum and travelling through that area.

Ms. Brenneman said that traffic-calming measures often complicate snow clearing. She is hesitant to recommend building anything in that area due to the already limited space. Ms. Pierce said traffic-calming measures usually utilize physical design. Ms. Martinson suggested an action that recommends the City engineers find the best way to tackle the issue.

Ms. Matthews said the action related to developing “Complete Streets” design standards is a much more complete recommendation for prioritizing pedestrians in the Willoughby District.

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Mr. Day suggested combining actions related to maintained landscapes and traffic calming. He said that the new crosswalk across Egan Drive connecting Glacier Avenue with the Seawalk is dangerous to use, as drivers are not yet used to expecting pedestrians and cyclists in the roadway. DOT&PF will not be lowering the speed limit despite this. He asked for clarification regarding the action to allow use of space in CBJ tour bus staging areas for off-peak loading zones.

Ms. Pierce said this probably references use by other businesses, such as for deliveries. Ms. Martinson said none of the tour bus zones would work for that purpose. Mr. Day suggested removing the action.

Mr. Glidmann agreed that it is likely someone will eventually be hit at the new crosswalk across Egan Drive. He is in favor of an action addressing this issue. Ms. Ware suggested upgrading the lights at the crosswalk. She reported that a woman was hit using that crosswalk and had to be airlifted to Seattle to receive medical attention.

Ms. Ware suggested consolidating the recommendations regarding Egan Drive. She expressed uncertainty that the Steering Committee definitively supported the action recommending construction of a new parking structure.

Ms. Pierce asked the Steering Committee if they think it is worth creating another structure with potential management issues for increased development in the Aak'w Kwaan area.

Ms. Martinson asked if the plan addresses safety in the sections mentioning parking structures. Mr. Glidmann said the Steering Committee was generally in favor of constructing new parking structures in the vicinity, such as in an area where there is already surface parking. He is of the opinion that a parking structure in the Aak'w Kwaan District would positively influence existing parking structures and parking management downtown.

Ms. Matthews said she thinks there is a conflict between the actions that recommend parking structures and ones that recommend expanding on-street parking. Ms. Pierce said on-street parking encourages traffic to move slower, so it may be more related to traffic calming. She suggested deleting the action because the issue is addressed elsewhere.

Regarding the action to reallocate on-street parking space on Glacier Avenue for cycle lanes, Ms. Martinson said this would exacerbate the current parking shortage in that area.

Ms. Matthews left for a conflicting meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Brenneman identified duplicative actions to consolidate. Regarding the action recommending to provide crosswalks between harbors, she asked if this meant providing crosswalks to harbors rather than between. Ms. Pierce said she thinks this is an opportunity to make a decision: should they recommend traffic calming on Egan Drive between 10th Street and

Norway Point? Ms. Brenneman said better connections to the harbors, such as street crossings, are needed. Ms. Pierce recommended changing the action to recommend implementing Docks and Harbors plans in order to increase connectivity to harbors.

Ms. Brenneman asked for clarification regarding the action recommending a new crossing on West 12th Street, as well as the action referencing “walking buses.” Regarding on-street parking spaces on Glacier Avenue, she stated there is an issue with snow removal and biking near the high school. Parking along the schools needs to be reconsidered. She also said she would like to see a cycle lane. She recommended consolidation of several actions.

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Mr. Day identified duplicative actions. He asked how on-street electric vehicle charging stations would be provided in residential areas. Ms. Pierce said that this would be on the side of the street for downtown areas where residents lack garages.

Ms. Ware recommended consolidation of parking management actions. She identified actions that are too detailed for a reference table.

Regarding the action related to parking data, Ms. Martinson said that former planner Mr. Tim Felstead had mentioned that the current parking data is already accurate. She suggested recommending implementing the existing data.

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Mr. Day stated he thinks the Rock Dump should be renamed regardless if it is rezoned. The action to actively pursue deep-water port alternatives to the Rock Dump needs to be examined in conjunction with a second crossing. He identified several actions that are duplicative, as well as some that have already been completed.

Ms. Martinson said the deep-water port and second crossing should be identified as high priorities.

Mr. Glidmann disagreed that deep-water port alternatives and a second crossing should be inherently linked, due to the conclusions of the most recent study of potential sites for a second crossing. This study concluded that a second crossing would be most advantageous close to the existing bridge, in order to provide an alternative route in the event of failure of the existing bridge.

Ms. Brenneman questioned whether the study’s conclusions are still correct due to population increases. She stated she does not think recommending renaming the Rock Dump is a priority. She identified opportunities for action consolidation, as well as actions that are too specific.

Ms. Perry said she thinks the actions related to bike lockers could be combined.

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Mr. Day agreed with Ms. Pierce's edit removing specificity from the action related to the circulator. He identified actions that are no longer relevant for deletion. He suggested combining the actions related to bus stops and shelters. He also suggested combining the actions related to snow removal.

Mr. Glidmann disagreed that bus shelters should be required to have three sides due to the issue of unsheltered people using them as makeshift homes. He would like to see bus stops become as minimal as possible. Ms. Perry said it is impossible to wait for a bus in some weather unless there are three sides to a bus stop. She suggested bus stops with no sides and a heated roof as an alternative.

Ms. Ware and Ms. Martinson identified opportunities for consolidation.

Ms. Brenneman said the issue of bus shelters goes back to the issue of addressing homelessness. She identified the need for better enforcement. She does not think the solution is to take away what is good for citizens and not confront the issue of homelessness.

Mr. Glidmann agreed, but reminded the Steering Committee that enforcement is not possible as it is illegal to remove someone from public property. Mr. Day mentioned the waiting area at the downtown transit center and the Seawalk as two areas that unsheltered populations utilize in a sometimes-disruptive manner.

Ms. Martinson agreed that they should not recommend removing services that citizens utilize in order to dodge an issue. She suggested addressing homelessness in the section of the plan that talks about downtown safety. Ms. Brenneman said she does not think any of the items in the table directly address homelessness, and expressed concern that this will cause people to discount the plan. Ms. Ware disagreed, and gave an example of an action that directly addresses the issue.

Ms. Brenneman suggested combining the actions related to snow clearing, and said that clearing snow is an issue in many more places than bus shelters. She identified the need for increased enforcement if property owners are to be held responsible for snow clearing, or for CBJ to clear the sidewalks if not.

Ms. Pierce suggested replacing the disparate actions related to snow clearing with one strong, forceful recommendation to prioritize snow clearing to improve pedestrianization and transit access.

VI. Rock Dump

This discussion topic was delayed until the next Steering Committee meeting due to lack of time.

VII. Committee Comments

Mr. Glidmann emphasized the need for compassion when talking about the unsheltered population. He said that, in his experience, some of them chose to live where they do on the streets because they have a social network. He identified an absence of compassion as a root issue, and said that it is sometimes necessary to compromise our lifestyle to accommodate people who chose not to live in traditional housing arrangements.

Ms. Brenneman agreed, saying the Steering Committee often talks about the problems but has yet to identify many solutions.

Ms. Ware emphasized the need to include the unsheltered population in their discussions. Ms. Martinson agreed. Ms. Brenneman suggested devoting part of an upcoming meeting to discussing the issue with people who are more familiar with the issues.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: To be determined.