

OUTH DOUGLAS / WEST JUNEAU AREA PLAN  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Zoom Webinar Format  
Thursday, October 13, 2022

**MINUTES**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.

II. Roll Call

Steering Committee Members Present:

Carole Bookless  
Rebecca Embler  
Liz Smith  
Matt Catterson  
Arnold Liebelt  
Linda Snow  
Robert Sewall  
Joyce Vick

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Frank Delany  
Erik Pederson, Planning Commission Liaison (non-voting)  
Kamal Lindoff, Property Manager, Douglas Indian Association Liaison (non-voting)  
Bernadine DeAris, Douglas Indian Association Liaison (non-voting)  
Jim Becker, Docks & Harbors Liaison (non-voting)  
Annette Smith, Docks & Harbors Liaison (non-voting)

Staff Members Present:

Beth McKibben, CDD Planner  
Scott Ciambor, CDD Planning Manager

III. Approval of Agenda

Agenda was approved as presented by consensus.

IV. Approval of Minutes

August 30, 2022 Minutes  
Smith noted correction that was not present.  
Corrected minutes were approved by consensus.

V. Public Participation on Agenda Items – 10 minutes

None.

VI. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items – 10 minutes

None.

VII. Agenda Topics

a. Draft Strategies/Actions

McKibben asked for general impressions on draft strategies/actions provided in the packet.

Catterson asked for clarification, noticing that some of the actions could apply to multiple goals—is that on purpose?

McKibben noted this part of the process is challenging—strategies and actions. She said they may end up pulling back some of these strategies and then add more specific actions and recognizing that all actions will not be listed. She also noted that some strategies and actions may help to achieve multiple goals and that is a good thing. However, her plan was to minimize duplication and to acknowledge that in the narrative of the document.

Snow said since this is 20 year plan she is ok with it being broader.

Sewall agreed the plan need to be general over 20 years; none of us see the future and sometimes there are ideas that work toward the goals but aren't listed in the plan.

Snow wants to make sure that if we have too many actions the plan is not used to preclude other actions not listed.

Discussion then moved to the specific elements

A Connected Community)

- Develop safe and well-maintained public spaces that encourage people to interact and allow them to connect with nature  
Staff asked the committee if they want to add specific bus stops.
- Encourage comprehensive, year-round, safe and well-maintained road, bike, and pedestrian networks

McKibben said the bench road and 2<sup>nd</sup> crossing were included by all but one person in the actions homework so these probably need a strategy that fits.

Sewall suggested a vote on the 2<sup>nd</sup> crossing as a recommendation. McKibben said the committee could later have a conversation and vote to confirm keeping these recommendations.

Snow researched the transportation sections of both the Auke Bay and Lemon Creek Area Plans. She felt they have more robust infrastructure recommendations than what we have in this draft. She also found a West Juneau/Douglas study that identified concern with deteriorating level of service at the Cordova intersection. She reminded the group that West Juneau is included in this planning area. She tried to talk with AKDOT and about the status of the Douglas Highway road project. They said that they would fix road and connections or bridge joints on the bridge next year. She suggested added “maintaining and servicing roads and all levels of the highway.” She feels adequate road maintenance to the island is too important to be implicit.

McKibben suggested adding this under 2<sup>nd</sup> goal as the strategy with action of bench road and second crossing could fit in.

McKibben provided background on 2010 Traffic Impact Analysis noted another difficulty being the intersection of 10<sup>th</sup> and Egan at the other side of the bridge.

Liebelt agreed with Snow.

Catterson liked the suggestion and the wording as it's an improvement to the first one.

Sewall also agreed with the concern that he has heard the Douglas corridor maybe too narrow. He noted that even last night there was a big clog both directions at Cordova.

Vick also the approach proposed by Snow. She noted that there was an accident last night with somebody in the ditch.

Embler asked about formatting. She suggested it help with readability to actually right out Goal and Strategy before each sentence.

Catterson suggested the second the last goals would fit into healthy initiatives instead of connected community.

Distinctive Community

McKibben asked if this should remain an independent element or is it duplicative.

Catterson suggested it be absorbed into other elements.

McKibben said one of the reasons it might feel as if there are not a lot of strategies and actions is because the Douglas people like their community.

Snow noted only one bullet addresses arts and culture.

McKibben said that some of the things in distinctive can be absorbed into the other categories.

Sewall suggested keeping the last one intact because that is a proxy for the Alaska Native Heritage as part of this community.

McKibben asked the group what they think of the idea of absorbing this element into the other categories.

Group confirms that would be a good effort for staff to work on.

Liebelt agreed with Catterson's idea; but does like the emphasis to becoming distinctive. Liebelt asked about the equity matrix.

McKibben suggested that it would be good to fine-tune the goals, strategies/action and then run the equity review. The language will likely change.

Sustainable and Future Focused

McKibben noted "Promote a built environment is similar to another goal. The one in italics feels like a strategy to go under the goal.

Snow and Liebelt agreed.

Snow on EV charging said it belongs here but could also be in transportation/connected community.

McKibben said she had intended to avoid duplication but could go either way. Staff will consider options.

Catterson thinks it is great if actions are listed under multiple goals/elements. He thinks it is helpful to document.

Embler likes sections that stand alone, but if we do duplicate to emphasize be sure to use the same exact language to make sure it is clear it is a duplication.

Catterson said that Downtown Blueprint is clear; with the icons showing how actions achieve multiple goals.

Prosperous Community

McKibben asked if “support technology” should stay or be moved.

Sewall supports this to be in more than one.

Liebelt notes that having points listed once is key; does not feel strongly one-way or another about duplication.

McKibben comments that commercial kitchen seems more of an action than strategy and Year-round local employment opportunities is a good strategy without actions. She noted that for “Right-size tourism” the narrative would have a definition/description of what this would mean. She pointed out two new strategies in this section and asked for comments.

Sewall says the more we can say what we mean about right-size tourism the more likely it will be clear that large-scale tourism is not intended. He is not talking about international operations of ten boats from a mother ship that dump out by the hour into our harbor area. He is worried that could become our future and he does not want the plan language to endorse that. He would like to flesh that out more.

Bookless was concerned about how some of these could be read other than it was intended. Maybe adding more descriptors to be clearer.

Snow suggested that under encourage use of public spaces we could add “to generate visits to Douglas businesses”. She suggested that for right-size tourism the plan could say that congestion or negative impact to levels of service to help determine right size.

Increase diverse housing options

McKibben said that Missing Middle housing point could be added here. She also noted that it is a good thing when your strategies meet more than one goal. She said that some wordsmithing still needs to happen.

Catterson suggested middle missing housing belong here and in other sections.

Sewall mentioned that he likes much of the healthy and active community but some of the actions would have a price tag, operator, or government funding. For example public forums and outreach--- who would be the operators?

McKibben notes that there will be an implementation table that could include potential partners a cost, or cost scale and time line. We just are not quite there yet.

McKibben could not find any actions in support of quiet and active nature settings. She asked the group if they want to keep it.

Bookless suggested kicking leaving it for now and coming back to it later.

Catterson suggested a potential action - expanding and accessing trail system.

Bookless suggested what about including the Fruiting Forest Douglas as an action.

Snow would like to include the Douglas Tree Lighting as an example. This is the only one offered in the Borough and it is a big deal and should make it a bigger deal. The mayor came over once.

Bookless cautioned about having art that people want. She spoke about a UAS project that gets defaced every year.

Sewall said he supports adding foster economic growth. One of Douglas' premier assets that has been squandered is the waterfront. What could that be? Especially Mayflower Island. He would like the community to stand for something before it is in the bureaucracy for many years.

McKibben noted pg. 11 added a master planning process for Savikko Park and Douglas harbor.

Sewall is in support of this idea.

Catterson noted that the waterfront is addressed in another section too.

McKibben said she would send both.

#### VIII. Committee/Liaison Comments & Questions

McKibben briefed the committee on what is to come; equity analysis which will likely take more than one meeting. After that is done, the committee will take a break while staff is writing the plan.

McKibben asked the committee provide ideas on actions vs. strategies, actions without strategies if they have time. She found this conversation very helpful.

Sewall said he was not likely to send anything in via email but he volunteered to meet with staff and talk through ideas.

Bookless asked if staff had received photos she left in the drop box.

McKibben said yes and thank you. She will resend the invitation to the drop box and reminded everyone that the photographer must be noted for each photo for it to be included in the plan document.

Embler asks if the next draft could be sent in word verses PDF.

IX. Next Meeting Date

a. November 3, 2022

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 PM.