

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**May 20, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Jennifer Yeh, Alan Zelenka, Chris Pryor, Greg Evans, Betty Taylor, Claire Syrett

Mayor Vinis opened the May 20, 2019, work session of the Eugene City Council.

Councilor Yeh made a statement about the use of white nationalist language during a recent rally; she supported the right to free speech and called for the community to speak out against prejudice and discrimination. Mayor Vinis and Councilor Yeh extended their gratitude to the Eugene and Springfield Police Departments for their skillful handling of the situation.

Councilor Zelenka joined the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

1. WORK SESSION: Clear & Objective Housing: Approval Criteria Update

Senior Planner Jenessa Dragovich and Principal Planner Alissa Hansen presented on the project's goals, timeline, outreach process and proposed code changes.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked questions regarding the net effect of the policies on buildable lands.
- Councilor Taylor – expressed concern about changing the South Hills Study without neighborhood involvement, especially regarding setback, open space requirements, tree protection and building on slopes; did not support the proposed motion.
- Councilor Pryor – noted the general agreement among the Planning Commission on most recommendations; supported protecting the ridgeline above 900 feet; supported motion, especially because so many people were a part of the development process.
- Councilor Semple – voiced concern about tree preservation and would have liked to have seen an increase in mitigation; would like to promote tree species that would do well with climate change and would bring greater variety and diversity; expressed concern that an owner could cut down all the trees on their lot if those trees were not native; did not support the motion.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked whether there might be more time for council to consider the motion; asked for clarification about cases in which the proposed rules would apply; was unsure whether he would support the motion and would like the Planning Commission to do more review; supported planting native trees.
- Councilor Syrett – asked whether the production of meeting materials two weeks in advance of the meeting contributed to staff not having enough time to work with the Planning Commission on recommendations; would like to hear from the public about their reaction to the proposals; would like more real-world examples.
- Mayor Vinis – questioned whether council should amend the motion to move forward on some of the recommendations and send the others back to the Planning Commission for more analysis.

- Councilor Pryor – asked council to get specific about which areas of the policy it would like the Planning Commission to review further and what its direction would be on what kind of work was needed.
- Councilor Clark – reminded council about the history of the issue and the council’s intention to wrap up the process within a year’s time.
- Councilor Zelenka – hoped the eventual passage would clarify the term “needed housing” for everyone; expressed concern about the tree preservation, setback, slope, and open space requirement.
- Councilor Clark – voiced concern about how buildable lands are counted.
- Councilor Taylor – voiced concern about any relaxation of the requirement that people not build on steep slopes.
- Councilor Clark – asked whether it would be possible to move the recommendations forward for now and keep incorporating more changes along the way.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked for clarity about the process if council were to move the recommendations forward.
- Mayor Vinis – pointed out that council could attend the Planning Commission meetings; would like the Planning Commission to have ample time to work on the issue because the council relies on its review.
- Councilor Taylor – expressed desire for more time for council to work on the policy.
- Councilor Syrett – supported advancing the recommendations and trusted that the policy would be improved through the process.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Taylor, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to advance draft land use code language substantially consistent with Attachment C to this AIS but also reflecting Planning Commission discussion regarding tree preservation, 300-foot setback, 20 percent slope and quarter-mile open space to the formal adoption process. **PASSED 7:1**, Councilor Taylor opposed.

2. Committee Reports and Items of Interest

- Councilor Taylor – expressed concern about residents not being notified when a 5G box is installed close to their property; would like the City to stop permitting the installations.
- Councilor Evans – clarified that private industry was responsible for the installations and asked staff to explain the installation process.

MOTION AND VOTE (including friendly amendments): Councilor Clark, seconded by Councilor Taylor, moved to direct the City Manager to schedule a council work session on the 5G issue with the focus on the City’s requirements under the Federal Communications Commission, the City’s local options, a survey of what other cities are doing to permit it or not, scientific information about the health and safety of the technology as can be brought to council. **PASSED 8:0**.

- Councilor Semple – expressed concerns about there not being a large enough applicant pool for the number of openings this year on the Human Rights Commission; shared her intention to make a motion to reopen the recruitment for a week.
- Councilor Zelenka – questioned whether a week was enough time to recruit a bigger pool and suggested at least two weeks’ time.
- Councilor Taylor – said she preferred not to ask for more applicants.

- Councilor Syrett – said she would support an extension and would like to clarify the amount of time; thought two weeks would be preferable; noted council received a memo from the group’s chair indicating that the recruitment did not yield the diversity desired by the committee.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to reopen the recruitment for the Human Rights Commission candidates through close of business on May 31, 2019. **PASSED 7:1.** Councilor Taylor opposed.

- Councilor Taylor – asked for clarification about whether a homeowner could remove a tree in the park strip area between the sidewalk and the curb.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted concerns from his ward about removing people who are camping on the park strip; would like to give residents the authority to remove someone camping on that strip.
- Councilor Evans – said he felt it was important to support the children taking action to protect the environment in the Juliana case and introduced a resolution of support for their case; said he felt the children’s case was in alignment with the City’s stated values.
- Councilor Clark – expressed opposition to the resolution; noted that while he admired the initiative of the children to get involved in something they believe in, he does not support the trust doctrine.
- Councilor Pryor – expressed support for all the “therefores” within the resolution.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Evans, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to adopt a resolution calling for support of the Juliana v. U.S. Youth Plaintiffs and the science-based recovery plan they seek. **PASSED 7:1,** Councilor Clark opposed.

- Councilor Semple – shared that the idea to adopt a resolution supporting a Green New Deal was proposed to her by the South Eugene High School Earth Guardians 350; said she felt the resolution was important in terms of making a commitment to the City’s environmental and economic future.
- Councilor Syrett – said she was especially supportive of the portions of the resolution that pertain to labor, protecting the sovereign rights of tribal nations, and mitigating deeply entrenched inequalities and biases.
- Councilor Pryor – agreed with Councilor Syrett; wanted to talk about the resolution’s “therefores” when council has not discussed many of the subjects mentioned; could not support without more conversation.
- Councilor Clark – supported some of the overarching ideas but found others nonsensical and/or untenable.
- Mayor Vinis – noted that the resolution is an aspirational document, noting that it is appropriate to lend support to its values without a discussion.
- Councilor Zelenka – said he was not sure he supported all the details but supported the overall resolution and the sentiment.
- Councilor Clark – cautioned against adopting a resolution lightly that would support a wholesale change in the country’s economy.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Taylor, moved to adopt a resolution calling on the federal government to pass a Green New Deal **PASSED 6:2,** councilors Clark and Pryor opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Forrest

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Cas Casados)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting: [here](#).