Ad Hoc Tree Committee
Meeting Notes
March 2, 2016

Committee Members in Attendance: Jon Quitslund, Sarah Blossom, Kol Medina, Ron Peltier
COBI Staff: Jennifer Sutton, Josh Machen, Joe Tovar
Public: Kelsey Laughlin, Olaf Ribeiro, Jonathan Davis

The meeting began at 2:35 p. m. and adjourned at 4:00, approximately. The first order of business was review and approval of the notes from the previous meeting (2/17/16). A few errors were noted and, assuming that corrections will appear in the public record, the notes were approved.

In connection with item 3 on the agenda, "Committee Purpose and Workplan, Jennifer distributed a form describing the committee's purpose in the year 2015, "To review tree and landscaping regulations and recommend any changes," and a **Work Plan** for 2016 based on the previous meetings, 2/10 and 2/17: "1) Review Subdivision Design Standards for open space & tree preservation/buffer requirements; 2) Review management of trees & landscaping in the City rights-of-way; 3) Discuss adding new tree preservation requirements for existing single-family lots; 4) Review and potentially consolidate BIMC 16.22 (Vegetation Management) and 16.18 (Land Clearing)."

The Work Plan included two recommendations from the 2/17 meeting: "For properties zoned R-2 and denser, NO Cluster Subdivision Option, only Open Space subdivisions allowed" and "Roadside Buffers won't count towards meeting Open Space requirements in Subdivisions."

Ron brought up affordable housing: is that objective consistent with environmental preservation? Granted that the Island's housing policies are related to environmental policies, what should be the focus of the committee's work? Jon cited Goal EN-25 from the update of the Comp Plan Environmental element, now in DRAFT form and subject to Council review: "Retain, conserve and improve portions of the community forests where people live, work and learn, through public education and through management and protection measures that will help to conserve these resources." Kol commented that the committee's focus should be on implementation of this and related goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. We will, as Ron noted, be dealing with competing interests in development and conservation.

Jennifer will bring to the next meeting draft language modifying BIMC 17.12 (Subdivision Design Standards) to make the recommended changes noted above. Also, the committee requested the City Attorney's advice on constitutional and statutory constraints in state law that must be observed in regulating conservation and clearing for development.

Josh expressed reservations about excluding roadside buffers from the 25% of subdivision area that must be preserved as open space. He also mentioned recent experience in a pre-application conference for residential development on a forested 2.5 acre site: according to BIMC 16.22, only 20% of the lot can be cleared unless the property is being developed for farming.

We discussed approaches to modification of the subdivision ordinance that might set aside the 25% rule. Joe observed that Low Impact Development regulations might provide a rationale, and Planned Unit Development could be another approach, better than doing things by the numbers. Kelsey brought up the Kitsap County Manual as a possible source of alternative regulations. Jonathan spoke of benefits derived from smaller building lots and more open space. Sarah said that for her, preservation of existing open space comes first, and replacement of trees is secondary; she also expressed a hope that we can combine definite standards with flexibility.

March 16, 2:30 to 4, was mentioned as the next meeting.

Notes Approved: March 16, 2016