

OBSERVER REPORT FORM

Jurisdiction: Puyallup City Council

Date: September 14, 2021

Observer: Rosemary Powers

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

Present: All Councilmembers

Absent: none

Others present:

The Puyallup City Council meeting of September 14, 2021 was held both in Council Chambers on 5th floor of city hall and virtually through Zoom. All council members were present, some in person and others virtually. Observation was conducted through Zoom. The meeting began with the usual Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Agenda items 1 & 2: Agenda, Minutes and Public Comment. Council approved agenda and past meeting minutes. Mayor Door invited citizen comment but no one from the public asked to speak. Note: Access to meeting agenda, proposed ordinances, other business, zoom link for attendance and public comment is available at the Puyallup City Council meeting website at <https://www.cityofpuyallup.org/637/City-Council-Meetings>.

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda. Council approved the Consent Agenda (included interlocal agreement with Pierce Conservation district on trails and urban forestry work, a purchase of property at 208 W Main, a contract with KPG for the WSU Puyallup Extension Center improvements project, vehicle purchase approval related to Public Works Water Division, and execution of contract with BCRA for design services for Puyallup Recreation Center exterior wall repair).

Agenda Item 4: Public Hearing on Emergency Ordinance 3237, 180-day Moratorium on Land Use Changes or Building Permit Applications. Council conducted a public hearing on a moratorium adopted by emergency Ordinance 3237 on July 20, 2021. Background: Washington's HB 1220 was passed in May 2021. The new law mandates that transitional and permanent supportive housing cannot be banned from zones that allow hotels and residential uses. (Effective July 25, 2021). The law also states that no city code shall ban indoor emergency indoor shelters in zones where hotels are allowed or located in a majority of zones within 1-mile of transit (Effective September 30). On July 20, 2021, Puyallup City Council passed a 180-day moratorium on processing such requests under the new state law to allow city staff time to write codes to meet the law. While citizen comment was offered at the July 20 council meeting, no member of the public requested an opportunity to speak at this public hearing.

Agenda Item 5. First Reading, Ordinance Approving Interim Zoning Controls to Accommodate Facilities for the Homeless. Council conducted First reading of an ordinance (not yet numbered) approving interim zoning controls to accommodate facilities for the homeless, which was followed by lengthy discussion among council members. Katie Baker, City of Puyallup Planning Manager, provided an overview of the proposed interim zoning regulations (including a calendar of the process: 7/20/21 - Council approved moratorium; 8/31/21 -Council discussion and direction on interim regulations; 9/14/21 - public hearing on moratorium and consideration of interim zoning regulations; 9/28/1- scheduled date for Final adoption of interim zoning regulations; Fall 2021 - Consideration of permanent zoning regulations).

This agenda item 5 (available under City Council meeting archives for Sept 14 at <http://www.cityofpuyallup.org/827/Agendas-Minutes-and-Videos>) provides the full text of the proposed ordinance with the interim regulations. A few highlights presented by Katie Baker included:

- For transitional and permanent supportive housing: Amend 8 residential zones, 5 commercial zones, and 5 mixed-use zone that allow residential uses or hotels to expressly allow these housing types prescribed by HB1220. Approximately 11 of the City's 25 zones would be affected).
- Adding definitions of emergency housing and emergency shelter in a renamed Emergency Housing Chapter.
- For emergency housing and emergency shelter: Amend 5 commercial zones, 5 mixed-use zones and the medical zone that allow hotels to expressly allow these housing types
- To have spacing standards that maintain existing required buffer from sensitive uses; establish maximum distance of 1000 feet from public transportation, establish minimum spacing of 1000 feet between facilities, limit of one per zone
- No changes proposed in intensity of use standards, maintaining CUP or development agreement requirement, and maintaining operation plan requirement.

Council action requested: to deliberate and consider first reading of ordinance establishing interim zoning controls in the areas of definitions, use allowances, occupancy spacing and intensity of use regulations. Staff will work with planning commission through Fall to draft permanent regulations for council consideration by end of 2021.

In the discussion following Katie Baker's presentation, while supportive of zoning that permits housing for serving those who are homeless, council member Farris raised a concern about how zoning that permitted emergency shelter siting near sensitive downtown areas would deal with a recent problem of indecent exposure near businesses. Others noted that there is a law already about this, and wouldn't be needed in a zoning regulation. Deputy mayor Palmer asked whether there might be a possibility of increasing zoning options for light manufacturing in the city in exchange for fewer zoning options for housing services. Members asked for more clarity in the definition of "transitional housing" as well as what the access to transit requirements/options could be.

A lively discussion took place around how zoning might limit the number of persons permitted at these sites. The number 40 was discussed as a national standard within groups working to provide homelessness services. Council member Farris thought a higher number would be OK if the need was there. Council member Johnson sought to reduce the number to 20, as a pilot, and after proof of concept could increase it for that provider. Council member Witting noted that the current hotel already has 20 people, and that Puyallup maintains 14 spaces in Tacoma at the Salvation Army, so this limit to 20 seems unrealistic. Yes, he noted, you might have two smaller sites of 20 each, but permitting a larger number initially gives more flexibility to planning to meet need. Council member Kastama noted that we have 34 spots right now, and that Puyallup is the only city on east side paying for people to be transported to shelter. His view is that neighboring jurisdictions are not carrying their weight. Mayor Door supported the 40-person limit as consistent with Puyallup's population, and expressed her appreciation for Council member Witting's service on the council's homelessness subcommittee.

Council member Johnson again stressed his preference for limiting the number of people in these housing types to 20, noting the council's responsibility to protect the city's residents, and stated his belief that the council could more easily get buy-in on a smaller number. He also stressed that non-profit organizations that sought to propose transitional, permanent housing, or emergency shelter sites should be local—people with ties to the community.

Deputy mayor Palmer countered that the number really won't matter as the city will be in charge of approving the proposals going forward and are going to lead on the issues. He is comfortable with the 40 number but open to more discussion. He asked if there is an expectation of any homeless shelter/provider making a proposal within the next 3 months. Baker replied "No."

Council member Witting spoke again for a higher number to be listed in the interim regulations. He expressed frustration that some downtown business interests imply that the hotel serving the homeless is bringing the problem of visible homelessness downtown. It isn't the hotel population that is the problem, it is others. Advocating for a higher number of people to be served is important because there are definitely more people who need housing.

Council member Jacobsen noted that the difference in ideas about how many people to permit in these housing forms needed more discussion and development of options by the planners. Council member Kastama stated that he wanted to see something in the interim plan explicitly about a safety plan. A motion was made and seconded to have the planners develop options for consideration at the next discussion. Motion passed. Mayor Door asked planners if they had enough to guide their process going forward, and Katie Baker confirmed.

Agenda Item 6. Considerations and requests—Update on the Library Space Plan. The Council moved to an update on current progress on plans for the additions and changes to the public library space. Puyallup city Librarian Patty Ayala provided an overview of the plans for café, gallery, teen space and potential uses of these spaces. Council members asked many questions, and offered a wide variety of creative ideas. The discussion was overwhelmingly

supportive in considering how this reconfigured and expanded site would add cultural value to the city. As one council member stated about the Teen Center: “Everybody needs a space where they belong.”

Note: While not explicitly noted by Council, the two major discussion items at the Sept 14 meeting (interim zoning regulations related to shelter and transitional housing and the public library plans update) both take up the question of belonging. How do we provide for all members of our community—housed and houseless, young and old, of different races, cultures, religions, and gender identities—through our public support/regulation of services, opportunities, accountabilities, gathering places, and other actions that demonstrate our common stake in the health of our communities?

City Manager’s Report. City Manager Steve Kerkelie announced upcoming twice yearly Puyallup 101 class held 8 sessions over September/October (11 participants so far), the availability of “The Puyallup Connection” e-newsletter (at the city’s website) and upcoming council study session which will look at downtown outdoor dining pilot project, privately initiated comprehensive plan (only one received) and some miscellaneous zoning issues.

Council Reports.

Council member Farris sought a fourth council member’s support to require a mandatory vaccine for city employees, noting that she is unable to join the council meetings in person, as she has had COVID and doesn’t want to be sick again, and believes it is responsible action by the City to protect the citizens. If we are not going to mandate vaccinations, we still need to do something that acknowledges how the unwillingness to be vaccinated affects all other citizens.

Council member Jacobsen celebrated the opening of the Fair, and then commented on the vaccine mandate question. Jacobsen believes that employees who are not vaccinated could be performing essential work that would be difficult to replace. She said she has received over 2000 emails (wearing her other hat) opposing the governor’s vaccine mandate. Her position is that all should protect themselves, but that this is a deeply polarizing issue and that it isn’t appropriate to fire people because of the unintended consequences.

Council member Kastama noted, for those listening in, that this is not a time on agenda for debating issues (e.g. vaccine mandates), but for council member personal comments on any issue. For his issue, he raised up the College Appreciation week and especially the Washington State Stormwater Center managed by Washington State University. They will have public celebration 28th of Sept at the chamber and further in October a tailgate event to honor of all the post-secondary institutions that provide benefits to the area.

Council member Johnson asked legal counsel about where would an order for vaccine mandates be made. For city employees an order would come through the City Manager, but not able to give legal advice at this time. Noted the importance of the Puyallup Fair.

Council member Palmer noted the importance of leading in the area in supporting vaccination, being a bit ahead of the county average. A sensitive topic, yes, but we need to have a response

of coming together like with 9/11. So we should be leaders in rallying the community to get vaccinated.

Mayor's Report. Mayor Door acknowledged the difficulty of the vaccine mandate discussion, noting she has sat in on multiple boards discussing this without much consensus being reached. She announced that the fire chief interview panel selected Chief Dustin Morrow of Key Peninsula to advance in the hiring process. He will be vetted as potential next Fire Chief. Mayor Door noted that the Puyallup Fair publicity looks great and that organizers are doing a great job of managing safety precautions. No evidence of increased Covid cases directly attributed to Fair.

Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.