

City of Sammamish – 2013 Council Retreat Recap

Thursday, January 31, 2013

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Council discussion was informal, focusing on relationships and roles between Council members and City staff.

Friday, February 1, 2013

TEAMBUILDING

Facilitator Eileen Soisson led City council members and staff in various teambuilding exercises to help the group identify ways in which communication and working relationships could be more productive.

Saturday, February 2, 2013

FIRE SERVICES

Assistant City Manager/Administrative Services Director Mike Sauerwein reviewed the City's fire services contract history with Eastside Fire and Rescue and concerns raised in the FCS Group's and the Technical Advisory Board's reports. Since the funding model for the Eastside Fire and Rescue consortium is based solely on assessed valuation, Sammamish believes it is paying more than its fair share because its volume of calls is relatively low compared to other jurisdictions. A funding model based solely on assessed valuation is unusual. Other Fire Service Contracts in King County use assessed valuation and other variables like calls for service and population. The FCS Group and Technical Advisory Board would like the following changes to the City's contract with EF&R:

- A funding model for operations that includes a 50/50 split between assessed value and calls for service as an integral part of the Interlocal Agreement.
- Retention of existing veto powers.
- Crediting emergency medical service levy collections attributable to each partner as a part of their individual operating fund contribution.
- Base the equipment/facilities reserves fund contributions on usage.
- Retain city ownership of capital assets with building maintenance responsibility retained by the respective city.
- 18 month notice of termination.

A proposed funding model, The 75/25 Plan—introduced by the City of Issaquah – would have reduced the City of Sammamish's 2013 contribution to EF&R by about \$445,000. Under this plan the Issaquah Park and Ride Fire Station 72 and Sammamish Pine Lake Fire Station 81 would

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be treated as regional assets. The Cities of Issaquah and Sammamish would pay 75% of the cost for these two Fire Stations and the remaining 25% would be shared by all EF&R Partners. The 75/25 Plan also would change the current funding model from 100% assessed valuation to 75% assessed valuation and 25% calls for service. Fire calls for service would be weighed 75% and emergency medical calls would be weighed 25%.

Discussion followed focusing on the financial impact of this plan on other cities within the Eastside Fire & Rescue consortium and their willingness to consider a new funding formula. Although the partners feel strongly that Sammamish should continue to maintain its membership in EF&R, they are currently not in favor of the 75/25 proposal, which they feel would hurt other jurisdictions. Sammamish sees it as a fairness issue.

Fire Chief Wes Collins clarified EF&R's perception of itself as an organization that funds itself on a "readiness" model. Sammamish, however, views calls for service as more important. According to the rate of outbound to inbound call, about 50% of calls to Sammamish fire stations are responding to other jurisdictions; only 10% of other jurisdictions respond to calls within Sammamish. Council believes the majority of calls to Sammamish fire stations should be providing service to Sammamish citizens.

Collins also emphasized that cost is based not so much on actual incident response, but on having the stations and personnel in place and ready to respond. Perhaps the problem isn't the funding model but the operations or "coverage" model. Discussion moved to the "move up" model and mutual aid. Move up is a situation in which one fire station is out in response to a call when another comes in. What station is identified to then "move up" to cover that call?

Sammamish Fire Station 83—Klahanie—is the most effected, responding to many calls from Providence Point in Issaquah. This goes beyond what would be considered mutual aid. It was also noted that Issaquah is considering providing more resources to Providence Point so that calls to Station 83 could be reduced.

The Council also discussed the impact of the Pine Lake Fire Station 81's crew being out of town for a call or moving up to another fire station. Models indicate that by doing so, response time along East Lake Sammamish Parkway would be effected. Staff also stated that Eastside Fire and Rescue staff has been very helpful in providing information and numbers for Sammamish to use while it deliberates its next steps.

Consensus was reached that Council representatives on the Eastside Fire and Rescue Board would attend the next board meeting with a clear message that the bottom line for the City of Sammamish is the 25/75 funding model. To mitigate financial impact on the other partners, the funding model could be implemented in phases. Further discussion also needs to take place on service delivery with models to address those areas that are underserved.

Fire Chief Collins recommended that the City's EF&R representatives contact other EF&R Board members for "one-on-one" discussions prior to the next board meeting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City Manager Ben Yazici provided an overview of the City's economic development strategy. He indicated that Council will be most helpful if it adopts a vision, goals, and policies. Although a lot of visioning has been done previously, we need to see where we are currently within that vision. More information may be needed now, and information we already have may need to be reassessed—numbers, the economy, population growth, etc.

The economic development consultant—scheduled to be brought on board in February—will assist in developing an overall vision, a comprehensive strategy and a road map to guide economic development efforts to be undertaken by the City of Sammamish in cooperation with other public and private partners. This strategy will be used to inform programmatic efforts (e.g., market strategy, code amendments and permitting, and policy development in the City Comprehensive Code as well as next steps to be undertaken. The consultant's budget was discussed and approved as part of the 2013-2014 budget process.

A question was raised concerning the meaning of economic development. Discussion followed. It can mean different things to different people. The consultant will help Council define what economic development means for the City of Sammamish by proceeding through a series of steps outlined below:

Step 1: Compile work already completed

- Town Center market Analysis (2006)
- EDSAT analysis results (2012)
- Chamber of Commerce data
- Regional information from PSRC, enterprise Seattle, others
- Examples of ED plans from peer cities

Step 2: Develop our Vision, Goals and Objectives

- Think long-term, prioritize near-term actions
- Facilitate the private market to invest in Sammamish
- Implement Town Center plan with private sector development
- Promote existing city businesses / Recruit new businesses

Step 3: Undertake analysis and evaluation

- Demographics, psychographics
- Review/update Town Center Market Study and pro-forma analyses
- Confirm/update market area, regional trends, business inventory
- Potentially develop a SWOT analysis

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Step 4: Involve appropriate participants

- Chamber of Commerce, regional ED organizations, local businesses, land developers, real estate experts
- Special purpose districts, service providers
- General public
- Hold forum(s) on ED plan

Step 5: Adopt ED Strategy and Action Plan

- Website upgrades/updates, map and contact info of available land
- Outreach/Education/Marketing plan, branding strategy
- Business retention/attraction, start-up support
- UZDP plans for two quadrants
- Optional elements: Identify TC plan/code refinements, TDR-TIF proof of concept study, ULI Technical Assistance Panel, SEPA Planned Action

Discussion then turned to the Town Center Developer Database, and staff commented on contacts made in recent months. Some have approached the City expressing interest in developing their business in this area. The question was raised whether current or past developers are concerned about our existing regulations. Staff responded that has not been their experience. Council has provided enough flexibility to enable staff to work with most developers. Challenges that remain include: market conditions, lack of infrastructure, and land assembly.

Consensus was reached to proceed with the selection of a consultant and implementation of an Economic Development Strategy.

ENVIRONMENTALLY CRITICAL AREAS PROCESS UPDATE

Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director Kamuron Gurol reviewed the process by which the amendments to the City's Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) code have been developed by the Planning Commission (PC) and now will be reviewed by the City Council. The PC followed the direction from the Council to "Be Inclusive, Thorough and Well-Documented" and the PC focused their attention on the Known Topics list adopted by the Council in late 2011.

Each major amendment was rated by the Planning Commission using a new evaluation form that included criteria for environmental, property and implementation categories. Only those that were rated an overall positive were recommended to the Council for adoption. The hand-off from the Planning Commission to City Council is scheduled for February 12. There will be a transmittal memo that addresses the PC majority's recommendations, and there likely will be a handful of minority reports from individual PC members as allowed in the PC bylaws.

Public comment during the PC process was discussed. Over 280 public comments have already been received and responded to. Given the limited time available for Council review and the

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fact that the PC has done a large amount of the public input, data gathering and analysis work, the Council can feel confident that new research and analysis should not be needed.

Staff noted that there will be a Council public hearing as well. Prior to the ending of the public hearing, any email communications to a single councilmember should also be forwarded to the rest of the Council as well as a copy to staff—the City Clerk, the City Manager, and Community Development Director. After the Council’s public hearing has been closed, emails received by any council member should be forwarded to staff only. It was suggested that clear guidelines need to be distributed to the public, staff and City Council.

Staff will work with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to lay out a detailed schedule and procedure for the Council’s review and adoption process.