



Clark County Schools Advisory Council Meeting Notes

Thursday, April 22, 2021 – 9:00-11:00am

Members/Alternates Present: Eileen Quiring O’Brien, Clark County Council; Julie Olson, Clark County Council; Mark Ross, Denny Waters, Kevin Jolma, Battle Ground School District; Connie Hennessey, Jasen McEathron, Camas School District; Mike Merlino, Evergreen School District; Tyson Vogeler, Green Mountain School District; Dave Holmes, La Center School District; Nathan McCann, Ridgefield School District; Kyle Sproul, Brett Bleschmidt, Vancouver Public Schools; Kristine Grindy, Lester Brown, Washougal School District; Sharon Kruse, Washington State University – Vancouver; Bridget McLeman, Ila Stanek, Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County; Monica Santos-Pinacho, CREDC; Brian Schlottmann, County Services; Mike Nerland, ESD 112

Staff, Presenters: Susan Ellinger, Dan Young and Melissa Curtis, Clark County Community Development; Jose Alvarez, Jacqui Kamp, Jenna Kay, and Oliver Orjiako, Clark County Community Planning; Matt Hermen, Clark County Public Works

Absent: Hockinson School District, Woodland School District, Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance, EOCF

1. Welcome & Introductions

- October 2019 meeting notes: adopted

2. Community Development Update

- Community Development Director, Dan Young, and Land Use Review Manager, Susan Ellinger provided an update on residential development in the county, the school district response team, and recent process improvements.
- Copies of the maps and data of recent residential development by school district in the unincorporated county are available on the county website: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/school-advisory-council-meetings>
- Community Development is working with the GIS department to figure out ways to provide more development information to the school districts moving forward. Right now, the data pulling process is not automated.
- There was a request to confirm if there were any projects in the Green Mountain School District since 2019.
- Projects in preliminary review are good for 7-years to come in for final review. Lately, it seems like projects are moving through the review process quickly, from roughly 9-months to 2-years. There was a request to identify which projects have

building permits.

- Process improvements and school district response team:
 - Regarding the permitting process for new schools getting built, county staff are available to meet with school districts at the beginning of the process as well as during it. It seems like communication between the school districts and county staff is going well but reach out to Dan Young at any time with questions or concerns.
 - Implemented concurrent review for final engineering and building, to reduce permitting timelines. A 6-month trial is underway and will be evaluated for additional refinements at the end of the trial.
 - Community Development staff worked with the Development and Engineering Advisory Board (DEAB) on concurrent final site plan and engineering review. In the past, there have been two separate processes for final site plan and engineering review. Moving forward, the two submittals will be combined into one. This change starts May 1, 2021. The county is also working on improvements to pre-application conferences and reports, to consolidate application forms and revising the submittal checklists. For submitting files for projects, the county can now allow uploads of ZIP files rather than needing to spend the time submitting files individually. Working to improve the preliminary process.

3. Long Range Planning Update

- Jose Alvarez provided an update on the county Buildable Lands project. The county updates its comprehensive plan every 8-years. The state updated guidelines for conducting buildable lands reviews. The county uses a vacant buildable land model (VBLM) to estimate current capacity of each urban growth area. The current project is looking at updating the methodology for the VBLM to be consistent with the state guidelines and to look back at how the county has grown. We can see if we are meeting target densities and if we can accommodate the population projections. Essentially, the project is a check-in and refinement of methodology. This project is a precursor to the next periodic update of the comprehensive plan (in 2024). Related to schools, we need to address how we account for land that school districts need to accommodate their growth. We have discussed doing that within the VBLM model or when working on our periodic update to the comprehensive plan. We would rely on the capital facilities plans of the school districts which details the growth expected in the next 6-years and would account for the land school districts already have on hand. The VBLM already considers land school districts already have. The county would use the capital facilities plans to inform how much additional land is needed beyond what's needed for residential and employment. Additional project information and updates are on the county website: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/program-update>
- Jacqui Kamp provided an update on the Housing Options Study & Action Plan project. The purpose of the project is to understand local housing challenges in the Unincorporated Vancouver UGA, encourage creation of housing affordable to

low and moderate-income households by removing regulatory barriers and consider other strategies, to provide access to affordable, quality, and flexible housing for future generations. Additional project information and updates are on the county website: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/housing-options-study-and-action-plan>

- The group discussed the request to delay the due date of the 2020 School Capital Facility Plan (CFP) updates until 2022. Issues the school districts are grappling with include:
 - Decrease in enrollment due to the pandemic makes it difficult to project long-term growth and need. Housing development is continuing, but the school districts are still experiencing enrollment loss. The school districts would like an opportunity to delay their CFP updates until things have stabilized in the fall. The additional time should provide a clearer picture of what school district needs are.
 - Seeing slight increase in enrollment now, but it is not near pre-pandemic enrollment levels.
 - Enrollment seems to be increasing since schools started to re-open.
 - The enrollment declines disproportionately affected kindergarten numbers. Kindergartens have been especially small this year. School districts expect these kids will start school next fall.
 - With the declined enrollment, the school districts don't think families are leaving the area, but rather, families are deciding to homeschool or find other education options. The school districts are confident that roughly the same number of students are in their district, there is just a percentage not attending public school this year.
 - If the CFP updates are postponed, the school districts will have more valid data informing those updates.
 - The CFP update delay also gives the school districts time to see what types of development are coming in and getting permitted, which can help with enrollment projections. For instance, larger homes in one area of the Battle Ground School District didn't bring in families. In another area with more apartments, they saw more student enrollment.
 - Nexus between delaying and school impact fees: the school impact fees would stay the same until the next CFP update when they would be recalculated. While impact fees are one piece of the CFP, the impacts of the pandemic largely impact the school district's planning ability. If school impact fees were calculated now, they would only go down if a school district's enrollment projections and capacity needs went down. The school district data isn't valid right now because they don't know if kids who have unenrolled in school will come back or not. This makes it challenging to determine needed capacity. The school districts don't typically rerun the impact fee formula until after they update their CFPs and know what their needs are.
- Transportation/Public Works Updates
 - Enhanced pedestrian crossings: locations mid-way between intersections. Interested in hearing from schools for prioritizing locations for new enhanced

pedestrian crossings. May be part of safe routes to schools' network or location hear students crossing at locations that are unsafe. Schools can impact priorities of locations. Suggestions: contact Matt Griswold, matt.griswold@clark.wa.gov, (564) 397-4372

- New school, expansion, or remodeling: want to be as proactive as possible. Can help address frontage improvements, crossing improvements, sidewalks, bus, and parent drop off circulation prior to pre-application submittal. Staff available to help proactively detail site layout before things get put on paper. County point of contact: David Jardin, david.jardin@clark.wa.gov, (564) 397-4354
- Safe Routes to School: sidewalk network key to safe routes to school requirements and ADA compliance. The county is using a pragmatic approach to sidewalk improvements. Any identified locations as being unsafe where pedestrian connections could be enhanced and mediated, could take focus on improving sidewalks to protect our most vulnerable members of our community such as students. County point of contact: Matt Griswold, matt.griswold@clark.wa.gov, (564) 397-4372

4. **Other**

- There were no additional announcements or updates

5. **Next steps**

- Community Development follow-up: staff to relay additional data information from Community Development once available
 - Staff to confirm if any projects in the Green Mountain School District since 2019
 - Additional data that indicates which projects in the pipeline have building permits
- Long-range planning updates: staff will share county staff contacts and links to projects discussed
 - Project links to VBLM and Housing Options Study & Action Plan projects
 - Staff to confirm development engineering contacts for new school expansion or remodeling proactive transportation and circulation discussions and safe routes to school sidewalk priorities.
- June 1, 2021 Council Hearing on requested CFP delay
- Group will next meet in December 2021

The meeting adjourned at 10:11am.