

City Council Work Session Transcript – 04/08/2014

Title: ATXN2

Channel: 6 - ATXN

Recorded On: 4/8/2014 6:00:00 AM

Original Air Date: 4/8/2014

Transcript Generated by SnapStream Enterprise TV Server

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>> Mayor Leffingwell: Good morning, I'm austin mayo lee leffingwell. I'm going to call this work session of the austin city council to order on tuesday, april 8, 2014. 9:08 a.M. Board of commissions room, austin city hall, austin, texas. Before we start on the agenda, I have a special announcement I want to make. That is that all of the councilmembers will be accommodated at president obama's speech on thursday morning. The planned start time is 11:30. So assuming that a majority of the council will want to attend, we're going to delay start of our council meeting until 1:00 p.M. Or after, we'll send out a memo on that later with details. But what needs to be done is this morning, as soon as possible, let nancy -- give nancy williams your name, if you plan to attend because she needs to notify both the library and the secret service of your attendance and we'll work out the details and the transportation and all that later on. For the agenda itself, I've asked the city manager to postpone as many items as we can to account for the lost time we have in the morning. So, again, please advise nancy right away. And whatever method you might choose, a hand signal or a thumbs down or whatever. But this special privilege for us here at austin for civil rights week. A national event. And I felt like most of you would like to take advantage of the opportunity to attend. >> It would be my pleasure to punt a few items. >> Mayor Leffingwell: So we're going try to punt a few. So, we'll begin with the agenda which is the first item is

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preselected. We have one item. Item number 26 which was open for discussion by councilmember morrison. >> Morrison: Thank you, mayor. I see that we have an amendment to it here in front of us. I wonder if you want to walk through the amendment first and then I'll make my comments? >> Riley: Sure. This item is the one we discussed last time relating to the relationship between our transit and housing and more specifically, the standards that we apply in our -- with our smart housing program to affordable housing projects. We've been talking with a lot of folks in the affordable housing community about that. And what we've learned is part of the problem relates to changing standards at the state level, partly because of the federal litigation out of dallas. The state has modified its standards to largely

remove any efforts of transit in its award -- in the qualified allocation fund applicable to the 9% credit tax project. A very large chunk of the affordable housing bond funds. A very large chunk of our affordable housing funds are not affected by those state standards. I understand the concern about running the risk of losing out on the tax credit projects, that's a critical part of our affordable housing program. So I understand the need for flexibility with those projects but I don't believe the delusion of the projects has to affect

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the other projects that we fund through the bond programs. We addressed that a couple of ways. One, I met with the representatives of the affordable housing community here in Austin. As well as Diana McGoofer. And we visited with those officials about this issue and how we might review the standards. Those standards are reviewed annually and have changed them over time. They place a much stronger emphasis on transit, in 2009 and 2010. It's a very important part. It's not a part of this scoring at all. If we have transit, there are potential issues there. But the state officials we met with recognized that's a subject that could be discussed and, in fact, during the course of this year there will be opportunities for us to weigh in on that process. By the end of this year, there will be new standards coming out where we could call for some additional waiting for transit with respect to the standards they apply to the 9% tax projects. What we've done is acknowledge the issue in the first paragraph and in the -- in the third paragraph of the resolution. And then we've added under the under the be it further resolved paragraph in page 3, we suggested in the code amendment process we considered distinguishing those projects that are involved in the 9% tax credit standards from the other affordable housing funds so we allow flexibility where needed as a result of the state standards, but we take transit

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more seriously with respect to the expenditure of our other affordable housing funds. This is simply initiating the code amendment process. We'll have opportunities to visit with the stakeholders down the road to make sure we're not running the risk of losing out on any affordable housing dollars. Even with that change, the rationale for the resolution remains the same, that there is a -- there are many reasons why we should be making extra efforts to direct the affordable housing dollars. As I mentioned before, transportation is a very large expense for our households, typically it's the second major expense after housing. And it's my belief that it's a great challenge we face going forward is to accommodate more housing in those places that are well served with transit. That are more walkable areas and that is exactly the challenge that's presented in our comprehensive plan. As we look at achieving the goals of the comprehensive plan and we seem to be more compact and connected and to enable everyone in Austin to be able to reduce their dependence on cars, there's a special need to -- to focus on that with respect to our affordable housing projects. And so I believe there is every reason to move forward with the resolution while still acknowledging that we have some issues to work through at the state level. We can keep doing that while working to influence the state standards but acknowledging that there may be -- that we may need to have some flexibility pending those -- the outcome of those discussions so that we don't endanger our -- our prospects. We don't harm our

prospects for receiving the 9% taxpayer

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projects in the future. >> Councilmember morrison? >> Morrison: My first question would be for scott or maybe you know the answer or the attorneys. You mentioned that the initial change at the state level as a result of some litigation. Can you talk about that? Does anyone know what the issue was? I take it there was some concerns that there would be impediments to fair housing if this requirement was put into place? I don't know if that's -- >> I'm sorry, I thought you asked staff but -- >> Mayor Leffingwell: I'm sorry, I thought you asked staff. >> Morrison: If staff knows, that would be terrific. >> Good morning, betsy spencer, director of neighborhood housing. The litigation that may be referenced is the one in dallas. So the standards for the gap changed drastically because in dallas there was a fair housing allegation that occurred because all of the tax credit projects were being funded in a certain area. So it was basically being segregated. To that point, the legislation then changed the requirements so it would be more geographically dispersed. So in that, transit has -- they shifted as I stated a couple of weeks ago, they do shift their priorities every year. A lot of it has to do with litigation. Sometimes with different conditions. Sometimes just based on public input. Again, the tax credits accommodate the entire state of texas so there's a lot of different conditions, rural areas, urban areas and so so it's hard to predict year-to-year what the tax credits -- what the priorities will be for the next round. >> Morrison: Okay, great. That really brings me to the point that -- some of us had the opportunity to attend the forum on friday morning on housing and transit. And it was really terrific. There's lots of great pieces of

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information and good discussion. And one question was asked -- the question was asked -- first, let me back up. The speaker was shelly p o'tive -- poticha -- she's the national leader in linking housing and transit, the leader in the initiative to bring the elements together in the new startles funding which we talked about recently to ensure that we have a housing link to our rail proposal, which is we have a great opportunity there. So the question was and if anybody would be a proponent of linking housing and transit, she would be. The question was, what about this issue of trying to balance the two values that we have? That is linking housing and transit pause of all of the opportunities and benefits it brings to cost savings with just that, the value of geographic dispersion. Her answer was interesting. She said something to the effect that when you put affordable housing in other areas that aren't linked to transit, we need to recognize that there are other amenities that can compensate for the fact that transit isn't there. She gave an example of how others -- one other city has dealt with that. That is in the twin cities. They acknowledge that concern they do it not by putting a restriction on how money will be spent. But by putting targets on how much money is spent on housing in transit areas versus nontransit rich areas. There they allocated 80% of the funds towards housing that's for transit and they allowed for 20%

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elsewhere. And so I'm totally understanding of our challenge here in terms of really wanting to make

sure that we attach housing to -- to housing and transit. And you know with the housing and transit jobs action team, we're asking folks to come back and help us understand how we can be very specific in doing that. But my concern is that there may be other ways to do it. I understand here we have a proposal that there would be a requirement but that there could be some exceptions. It initiates a code amendment. And it also -- the resolution also recommends coming back with alternatives and all of that. I personally think it's extremely premature for us to initiate a code amendment and I think that, you know, it -- it's a much more objective conversation if we ask staff to work with folks to come up with recommendations, one might be a code amendment. But it also might be just going with a targeted allocation, which I do note is also actually referenced here talking about how we are working currently with stake holders with how the city plans to invest its resource. So I much prefer to see a resolution that says something to the effect that we need to find a way to make sure that we're addressing the housing link but also acknowledges in a positive way the -- the value we have for geographic dispersion. And when I think of some of the arguments against that, when we have the project on the four points project, the question was, well, there's not going to be a real accessible transit out there. That was one of the 9% tax credits. We were recommending -- and the flip side of that was there's a

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lot of service jobs in that area. This could allow some folks that live out there -- that work out there to stop driving out there. The other thing that we need to be -- the fundamental issue here is we don't want to promote sprawl. If anybody ever came and said please approve an sos variance, so you can put it on affordable housing, I would not support that. But the bottom line is what we're doing is approving projects or supporting projects where housing is already going to go in. And we're just making sure that some of the housing serves some of the income folks in the neighborhood. So with all of that, I guess I would like to say that I would really like to see this back up a little bit. Plenty of time for doing a code amendment. Starting out on an even keel, it's important that we acknowledge all of the values and ask for an open book to ask staff to make a variety of recommendations. >> Councilmember riley? >> Riley: I appreciate councilmember morrison's thought about the conference last friday. It was a housing and transit conference at the lbj school. An excellent presentation. I'm a long-time fan of shelly baticha, she cease been here several times. I was struck by her -- one thing she addressed in her comments, she said, the bar has been raised at the federal level. She said affordable housing -- she said transit dollars are no longer going to places that do not include affordable housing and affordable housing dollars are no longer going to places not served by transit. She was emphatic about that.

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That's a long-term value for her. To co-locate housing and transit. I found that striking because our experience here locally has really been that the bar has been lowered with respect to the connection between housing and transit. We used to be more emphatic requiring affordable housing to be served by transit. In the last year or two, we've backed off of that. And supporting areas that are not served by transit. I asked her about the competing priorities of geographic dispersion. If she has seen this problem in other places. So just for context, I should note that when she was with the federal government, she

was with the housing and urban development league -- with hud. The standards applicable to taxpayer projects are not under hud. They're in the internal revenue code significant parts of which have not been changed since 1986. So I can understand why there would be some difference between her perspective and the tax credit. The standards applicable tax credit. They don't necessarily represent everything she wants to see. What she suggested, what I took from her answer is that she was suggesting looking for alternative measures of walkability. Looking to whether an area is actually 6 in co-dependent. Around the elevation. If the place is relatively walkable, it may be a good place for affordable housing, even without transit. If we have to achieve -- if we can't -- if we can't serve -- achieve geographic dispersion at the same time, we're requiring access to transit. We can aim for walkability. Because there are walkable places that are not served by transit. And I found that it is an

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interesting answer. Because part of my concern over this issue arose when I saw us recommending projects that not only were not served by transit, but were not walkable. Routinely, when ever the projects appeared on the agenda, I would go to walk score.Com, which serves exactly the same function she was describing, that looks to the proximity of shops and services around any new address and it will spit out a score to give you an assessment of how walkable that area is. What I saw when we were recommending for approval projects with a lower walk score than the city as a whole. The city as a whole is considered car dependent. Walk score of 35. The projects we were recommending had a lower score, even more car dependent than the city as a whole. If you apply that standard -- we care so much about geodispersion, we're not going to worry about transit, we want it to be walkable. We haven't been doing that. We've been directing it to places neither served by transit nor walkable. There is still an issue there that needs to be addressed and I think that it could be some -- valuable to have some discussions on how we do the address. Do we do alternative med like walk score? I think it would be a mistake to say, for 20% of the affordable housing projects, we're not going to care about transit or walkability. Because the risk that we run is that we leave people completely isolated unless they have the resources necessary to support the ownership, operation, and maintenance of an automobile which is a very significant expense, valued at well over \$10,000. That is a real challenge for folks at the lower end of the

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income spectrum. I think our affordable housing dollars would apply in places that it didn't have to occur. So I think they're -- I think there's a need for continued discussion on this. I think if the code amendment process provides the convenient mechanism for having those discussions if at the end of that process, we conclude that there are other ways of addressing this without code amendment. We have the freedom to say well, we're not going to amend the code, we're going to make these other changes. I'm not closing the door on that possibility. I think this has been an administrative process. And as of today is an administrative process that if we just -- if -- without -- without the initiation of a code amendment, we're essentially leaving the administrative process in place. I think there would be real value in having the discussions and leaving the door open to the possibility that we may want to amend

our code to make clear that we would like to see affordable housing going to places that are served by transit or at the least are walkable areas. >> Mayor? >> Cole: I think we're agreed on all of the points except for what the proper process is here. Absolutely. Looking at different kinds of answers and I completely agree with your point. I just think it is important that we start with an open book and don't waste the discussion in one way or the other. And initiating a code amendment does weight that discussion, if not technically, it does just in the political realm of things. And I don't think it's the right way to go. I think we need to take care in the way that we approach this. So I don't think you mentioned at this point it's an

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administrative process. But initiated code amendment doesn't change that. It's an administrative process. This is so tied up in the other work that the staff is doing right now on the consolidated plan I just can't support the code -- there's a much better way to put it forward. >> Mayor Leffingwell: Councilmember spelman? >> Spelman: A code amendment is a classic way this council has -- previous councils have had of solving a problem or directing the solution of a problem. What would you suggest instead? >> Morrison: I think that what we often do and more more often do is we ask staff to go off, work with stake holders, and ask for recommendationings. We can implement the recommendations all at once. I could foresee potentially a code amendment that we could foresee asking for different kinds of weighting in the housing -- and the assessments of housing proposals. I could see new measures being asked for in terms of the information that's evaluated. It's a matter of laying it all on the table instead of weighting the answer in one way. And I think if you look at the preponderance of actions that we have taken to kick something off, we often -- we more often we do it with sort of a blank slate of come back with some recommendations and then we work -- then we implement the recommendations that we choose. Its's their own recommendations. >> If you were directed to look at best practices in oh cities,

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review the work, whatever else, come up with recommendations for us. How long would it take to come up with the recommendations? >> So a couple of things I think about. I thought about it a great deal since this has come up. The home builders association made it clear that the smart housing ordinance the way it is is no longer an incentive. One of my concerns is making certain things that I greatly appreciate this has been watered down, the way we implemented it. Part of that was due, in fact, my understanding is we need to create additional incentives to encourage development. So in making parts of this more stringent, I'm concerned it's reduced the ability to incentivize. The single home builder association has indicated to us it's not there anymore. So it's given us an opportunity with multifamily and single family to encourage development not always just tied to the funding. And the tax credits, while they are a huge leverage, is not the only leverage that we have. And it's not the only way to finance stuff. It's a lot of different -- with affordable housing, it's a lot of opportunities. So that's why it concerns me when we tie it to any specific type of funding or opportunity, because you have to take the opportunities where you get it. I'm not answering your question yet, I'm sorry. We like the opportunity

to meet with for profit developers as well as the nonprofit developers we work with a great deal. To hear from the for profit developers of a multifamily, the homeowners association. What I offer to you is can we have the opportunity to look at additional incentives to achieve the increased walkability and

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connection to transit as opposed to eliminating and decreasing opportunities. Can we provide better incentives to achieve the results that everybody wants, which is the increased access to walkability, all of those things. Number one, feedback from the stake holders, the developers. And, two, it involves other departments. If we're looking at other incentives that could involve other departments. Fee waivers, parking requirements, things like that. So that's something I don't have a lot of control over. But I think that's an additional incentive in addition to the money that the department provides. But not everyone that -- everything that gets smart housing has money from the department. >> So what's your -- >> of course. >> But in answer to your question. >> And I'm going to take a stab at that. So recognizing the resolution was changed to september 1, I think it would not be prudent for betsy and I to sit here and say we will not come back with recommendations by september 1. >> Spelman: Coming up with better recommendations than on the spot. Just better on september 1. >> We could do that. Whether they're robust as you all are looking for is the question. Could we bring recommendations for stake holder processes by september 1? Yes. I was at the discussion with shelly and the stake holders. The big takeaway for me was the pressure point and the discussion and the expectations of the action team, thank you very much, that resolution has gone far and wide and now there's an action team. And what I'm hearing is the action team can do it. The action team can do it. I'm like, ah, we need an action team member 100% of the time. Which to the point that shelly made -- yes. We better be designating a full-time equivalent to this issue. That's something we need to take a look at.

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>> Spelman: Good. >> I do believe this is an ideal topic for the action team. But I recognize that the balance of trying to meet expectations around timelines are there as well. So I would say we can meet recommendations back to you all by september 1. There's a platform with that action team. I think if the action team does their job well, you could see recommendations around other code amendments. >> It seems to me that the great advantage of asking for a code amendment, asking for what the code amendment is going to do or say, we could get it back quickly. I think six weeks is the minimum time we were offered on a specific subject. If we're initiating the code amendment, we don't know what we want the code amendment to do or some alternative than we think we want, we're talking about a negotiation that betsy and rebecca might be talking about. It might just be more direct and not necessarily lose us any time to ask for what it is I think we know needs to happen. Which is to have that conversation with the action team, capital a, capital t, stake holders, other departments, have a phone call with shelly, whatever needs to happen so we can get a sense for what the tradeoffs look like. This is something we've heard rumors about. Why is it that smart housing is not always the same incentive it was a few years ago. That might be worthy on our part as well. Can you tell us about that? >> As a general rule, it doesn't provide enough financial incentives. The fee waivers isn't enough. It's not enough

for them to want to participate. >> Spelman: The way I understood it, the fee waivers were never the attraction, it was the speed, they could get something something through the

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mill a lot more quickly in the smart housing than otherwise. Is that no longer true? >> I couldn't speak to that. It is supposed to be an expedited review. >> I would say that's a big piece of the conversation that we would want to have in this process. One thing that I would want to reenforce is that we do believe the smart housing ordinance warrants attention. So the stake holder process that's being called on, it is necessary we need to take a look at that. And so part of that becomes the question for the nonprofit and private sector community >> Spelman: It seems to me, the team in smart housing has been weakened and needs to be strengthened. There are other things in smart housing that's amiss that needs to be fixed. Asking the staff what's the matter with smart housing, how to beef it up and improve the real estate community would be tremendously valuable. And may not lose us any time. If we have to have that conversation anyway before we get a code amendment or an alternative proposal back anyway, maybe we should directly ask for recommendations and we could move the recommendations through more quickly once we've decided on the right thing to do. >> Mayor Leffingwell: I agree with that. And I think the way I read this resolution as it's amended provides for that. It says bring the code amendment and any alternative recommendations to the council. Then further, it says, speaking to the september 1 deadline, september 1, 2014, and there's a lot of wiggle room in this. I agree -- I don't think smart housing has ever been successful. And never been utilized to the extent that people envisioned when they came up with the idea a decade ago at least and we need to find out why.

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I think there are a lot of things involved. Why it wasn't used. Incentives on the one end, incumberances on the other were perhaps a little too restrictive. We need to find out why. And I think this resolution as it's now written provides for that. Any other comments? Councilmember tovo? >> Tovo: Mayor pro tem? >> Cole: A quick comment. >> Mayor Leffingwell: Mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: I have questions and comments. >> Cole: I just have a quick comment. I saw the further be it resolved is the line in the capital improvement funding also. That's pretty broad to me. I don't think that y moving forward with this amendment that we preclude that bigger discussion. And I think the language has brought enough, I don't know if councilmember would like to add any broader language, but its's sufficient for me to think that we're moving forward with the broad discussion. >> Mayor Leffingwell: Councilmember tovo. >> Tovo: I had some other questions. But I'm not very clear on what -->> cole: I'm just pointing out that the second further be it resolved clause makes clear to me that the city manager is directed to consider the city's capital improvement funding which is broad, the total capital improvement funding as well as coordination with capital metro related to affordable housing projects and transit stops. When I first read that line, I was thinking we were only talking about dealing with capital metro. I read it again, I realized it was more expansive and I was pleased with that language >> Tovo: I see, thanks. I had some questions for staff, but I wanted to say that I appreciate the removal of the 9% tax cutted projects. I think that really would, as the mayor said last time, really

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foreclose some opportunities that we want to see pursued in the city. And there were some projects that came forward through the last tax credit process that I think are very important and I hope you'll have success at the state level and I would not want to do anything as a city that inhibits their success. You know, one of those as has been said within a mile of 400 jobs. So that certainly -- certainly if that development is built, it will cut down on car traffic, no doubt. People can live closer to where they work. They're working in some of the jobs that are nearby. I do like the discussion, the direction I thought the discussion was going to to consider ways of initiating this discussion rather than a code initiation discussion for me. I agree with councilmember morrison that it sets it on a path that's much too narrowly defined. Councilmember spelman, we don't exactly know what the alternatives and what the recommendationings would be. That sets it narrowly. I would support a process, I think I would, depending on what it looks like, I would be in favor of changes that shifts from a code amendment negotiation to a less definitive process. One example that was suggested is for projects that may not meet the criterion of being located near a bus stop with an accessible sidewalk that there be a public hearing at say the community development commission. So I think there are -- I think there are steps in between what is now an administrative process and what is proposed to be a code amendment, there are steps in between that would allow for a full and fair airing of this situation. You know, with the -- I think we all heard a slightly different answer from -- from the question that councilmember riley posed to the keynote speaker the other

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day. My hearing of it was closely aligned with councilmember morrison's than I had written down in my notes. I went back to see if she answered and talked about the need to consider other amenities in the area like the quality of the schools, like the proximity of libraries. I don't believe she called out jobs. But that was certainly something that walter moreau at foundation communities talked about when he talked about that project at cardinal lane, he talked about the proximity of jobs. These are all considerations that I think should be factored into discussions. And I would like to see some kind of process in between an administrative process and a code amendment that allows for a more careful evaluation among our board that is tasked with focusing on affordable housing issues so they can see whether the balance is going to fulfill our goal of reducing dependence on cars and also reducing -- reducing house holds' overall costs. I will say one other thing -- I was talking with -- I have a few more things, but one other thing on this point. In talking to walter moreau, the families who rent in the more family oriented developments, many of them have cars because they rely on them to drive to jobs, schools, child care, and so I completely support the goal of locating the affordable housing investments in transit-rich areas, but the reality is for some of the families living in affordable housing developments, they will have cars. And he estimates that in certain of the -- and certain of the family oriented developments, 99%, 100% of the house holds have a car in more transit rich areas. It's like 90%. So certainly, again, I completely support the goal of affordable housing and transit

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rich areas. There's a vast benefit in locating affordable housing in areas in town where we don't have a lot of affordable housing that are located in areas in great schools with close proximity to service industry jobs. There are -- there are traffic benefits to that. There are environmental benefits to that. There are affordability benefits to the families that live there. We need to have these in a comprehensive fashion and not with a hard and fast requirement. I don't have a clear understanding, really, of our smart housing investments. And whether it's accurate to say that transportation has been a diminished requirement. I have heard anecdotally also that in the geo banded funding, most if not all of those projects funded through geo bonds were located in proximity to a bus stop. These are some of the questions that I'd asked on the last q&a. I would appreciate more information from staff. If we are -- before we acknowledge that we need a solution for the problem, I would like to have a -- I would like to understand if there really is a problem. It seems to me in our conversations that you value transportation and transit and these are -- this is a consideration. In terms of the staff recommendations to us. How is that played out in terms of our geo bond investments and in terms of our smart housing development ms. How has transit, how many of those developments have -- have been in close proximity to public transit. If you don't have an answer for me now, I think that needs to be a part of the conversation. Before we craft a solution to the problem, let's understand whether there is a problem. And I appreciate that while there may be an interest among council to have more to further

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enhance this goal, we can do it in a way that does not -- does not run the risk of decreasing opportunity for housing in all parts of town, not just in the areas that are the closest. And I would just say too that our cap metro board members, I really am glad to see us further be it resolved directing our city manager to improve coordination, to look for ways to improve coordination with capital metro. And I would hope you are too making this a priority on the cap metro board. When there are -- when there's housing going in in parts of town, that may not be on a bus route that you're advocating for those developments to be better served. >> Mayor Leffingwell: Further comments? Council member Riley? >> Riley: A last note. I want to applaud city staff and metro staff for having achieved a great level of coordination than we've ever seen between the city and cap metro. We are setting the city and cap metro are collaboratively working to install sidewalks at a record pace. And within the next few years, we will actually see cap metro -- see a milestone for cap metro in that almost all of our transit stops will actually be accessible. Which is difficult for any transit agency. And it's long been an issue for capital metro. And it's only been possible for the collaboration of the city and cap metro which has reached a level that we've never seen before. We appreciate the efforts of the staff, the staff that has been working hard on that. And I certainly recognize that we can always do better and especially looking towards the future. When ever an affordable housing project is on the horizon, I

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fully support a continued conversations with cap metro to see whether we will be able to serve those

projects effectively with transit if they -- once they come in and take shape. A couple of the points I wanted to mention. I appreciate councilmember spelman's recognition for the need for taking a look at how much of an incentive the smart housing program is today as with times in the past. I have heard from providers that the concern relates to the expedited review. There was a time that getting expedited review that the smart housing program was a significant benefit. I heard that review today is no longer as expedited as it once was. And that -- and I think it's worth talking about this and other incentives and I'd be happy to add language to the resolution emphasizing the need to address that and work with stake holders figure out exactly how to make the smart housing program more of an incentive. In the meantime, I am concerned about continuing to simply fund affordable housing in -- through opportunities, wherever we can get them. Yes, there will be opportunities to do affordable housing in completely car dependent places. But I think that's a mistake. I think there's a growing recognition nationally that that is not the best way to invest the affordable housing dollars. There are certainly instances where we have housing located and yes, in those locations by necessity, the people living there typically have cars. Even in places that serve transit, some people will have cars. There's no requirement that people will give up their cars. The whole idea is that as we look towards austin becoming a more compact and connected city, we have a -- have a very

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important interest in making opportunities available for everyone in austin, and particularly those at the lower end of the economic spectrum to be able to reduce their dependence on cars if they choose to do so. And so the great challenge is, how do we make those opportunities available to those who either want to be dependent on cars or by economic necessity are required to get by without a car. Walter moreau rk's name has come up. If you talk to walter, the cherish projects who serve the lower folks, those residents don't b have cars. The folks at the lowest end of the spectrum, they don't have cars. He reminded us of that in the recent discussions about parking requirements. He said when you're talking about the lower end, no, they don't have cars. More mixed in income projects and places that are better serve transit, well, that are not so well served with transit, you're not going to see more and more folks that do have cars and other housing -- there are other housing providers, especially those not focused on the lowest end will tell you all of the residents have cars. That's the case. No doubt there are many, many people who could use affordable housing who have cars and will always have cars and that lulls a be the case. There's no question about that. But the great challenge going forward is to create opportunities where for people who -- for those who don't have cars or really would be -- would prefer to not have to incur the very significant expense of car ownership and maintenance. That -- I believe in advancing that goal and making those opportunities available would be in the interest of our -- of our goals of our comprehensive plan.

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And would really provide the best expenditure of the scarce affordable housing dollars. The strong council action is warranted to emphasize that we do take transit seriously. This is not a some more housing programs. We believe t should remain part of the picture. Transit is important going forward.

We want to have discussions to see how we can get there. >> I would just add to that. I don't want this to become about an argument of having cars or not having cars. So the significant can't be impact and advantage of being able to get by with one car. For example, a lot of families without the availability for transit have a need for two cars. So you can reduce that dependency, one. That would be significant. We don't want people to completely get rid of their cars. Speaking for myself, I don't plan to. Even when I'm impoverished in about a year here. We'll let that go. So that's all of the items that we had specifically pulled. If there's no objection, we can go to our briefing and come back to additional items and councilmembers might want to discuss with the board and commission transmission task force. >> Good morning. >> First time here.

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Victor Martinez. The chair of the task force. It's created. I'm joined by Angela, my co-chair. Dave Anderson, and Dale Great. We'll go over our agenda first. We'll talk about the task and scope that we're doing, the work group recommendations, and some stuff that we're still figuring out. They selected 15 members of board and commission members. The length of service is eight years. Combined, we have 130 years of experience serving on boards and commissions. I'm excited to serve with such an experience group of people. We were asked to provide recommendations on city council for the transition plans for employments. We have over 60 boards and commissions. So the first thing we did was create a survey for chairs and vice chairs to get the input, to see what they think on certain key questions, what's the value they have on the city, reek member depredation for the merger for other boards and commissions, and also membership size. Most have seven members as you all know. We all get to a .1 we have different sizes as well. Other requirements on state and federal and local law. The skills and expertise they need in each of the boards and commissions.

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Diversity recruitment and forum issues if they have any. They can get an idea of whether they can be merged with similar mission. And staff support, they get the right support from staff. 22 out of 64 commissions responded to the survey. We think a response was good. We created five work groups to enable us to accomplish all of the things that you guys asked for us in the limited amount of time we had. One work group focused on the transition plan. The other on planning the development review. One looked up from the answers on the survey that we sent out. The fourth one on diversity and recruitment. We asked the city clerk to look at cities that had gone from a similar transformation from large to district representatives. They looked at San Antonio, Chicago, Portland, and Dallas. We discussed those results in our considerations. We had Greg Kersey from PDR to give us a presentation on Imagine Austin. That's the overall plan, the mission for where the city was going. With a -- we wanted to make sure that we were staying there. Give it to Dale. >> I'm Dale Graham, the chair of the water and waste water commission. Dr. Mary Gaye Maxwell and I headed up a transition work group and really what we focused on was whether you go from seven members on a board to 11 members or whatever combination that is, there will be a transition period in there that we wanted to minimize the disruption of the work of the current boards and commissions while affording a new mayor and a new council, the

best opportunity to find, interview, nominate, and train new members of the boards and

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commissions. So our first -- our first task here was to create the transition plan. What we're considering is establishing what we're calling a board transition period for approximately six months that would begin in january and end on june 30 of 2015. In which the current board's commissions, any joint committees or task force could remain in the current configurations as described in chapter 21, that is the seven-member board would remain the seven-member board, etc., etc. All current members, officers, committees, working groups, would remain through this transition period. However, with the goal of continuing to have the boards and commissions work in this period, the quorum and action would be a majority of the appointed members rather than the majority of the total membership of that board as it is now. In addition, any vacancies during this transition period we're considering to allow the mayor or the new mayor to make nominations with the approval of the majority of council to fill those vacancies. And in the midst of a time constraint, you have in there the boards and commissions. The members filling vacancies might consider a waiver from the city clerk's office for certain train requirements, other train requirements are required by law. But it has to have it regardless. But they smooth the process a bit. So the transition process as we're considering it now would be to notify the existing boards and existing boards as possible

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and the city clerks office and councilmembers and mayor ask for a commitment for their appointees through june 30. All of the existing members know when the terms would end. The application process for new boards and commission members would begin in the january time frame. And through the six-month period, the new mayor and new council to nominate, approve, train new members during this time and hopefully some of those new members would observe existing borpd's and commissions and get up to speed with the work they're doing. The one complication with having it end in june 30 is that the budget process for a lot of the groups would be already started. So hopefully those members could get up to speed with that budget prosesz as soon as possible, they took over on july 1. New member terms would begin on july 1 and run concurrently with the councilmember that appointed them. With that -- >> mayor pro tem, can I ask a question. >> Yes, mike. >> Councilmember martinez. >> I want to ask a question. In your transition, I -- so does this mean that the new council would go ahead and make appointees as soon as they see fit? And let those appointees start indoctrinating themselves in the process, attending the meetings to the hard transition point when they become the ape point tees? >> Yes. >> Do you have some recommendations for the new council in terms of dates to get the appointees made so they can get up to speed? >> That's a good question. All we talked about thus far is starting the application process on january 6 date. But we haven't considered a recommendation of a date, maybe three months into it or four months into it. And that may vary on the different types of boards that

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you have as well. But we'll consider that. >> Thank you. >> Spelman: Mayor pro tem? >> Cole: Councilmember spelman? >> Spelman: We have seven members of a typical board now. On January 6, you're going to have seven. The first couple of meetings in January, a couple of the 11 new councilmembers decide to make appointments, they'll make appointments, the seven might go up to nine. Let me get through this. Help me understand that. No one is going to be removing the seven who are currently there. May be reappointed by then current members of the council to the same position. But if they're not reappointed by the other members of the council, they would stay in the commission until June 30, is that accurate? >> That's one item we considered or a method of doing it. But we thought for the consistency and simplicity, it would be better to have the existing boards remain in their current configuration with their memberships through that whole six months. During the six months, the new mayor and councilmembers could appoint, train, let those members get up to speed, but they wouldn't be on the board until July 1. >> Spelman: I guess I misunderstood that the quorum in action would be appointed by a majority of the members. All of the people appointed would somehow constitute a forum. They wouldn't take office until July 1. >> That's correct. The quorum in action -- we put that in there to be -- you could end up with a complication if you have a seven-member board, for example. If during that six months, two, three members decide that whatever they have other commitments, family issues, something they have to excuse themselves off of the board, you could have a difficulty in having that board and commission continue to work. >> Spelman: Right.

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>> So we thought we could reduce the quorum and action requirement to just the amount of members that are on the board at that time and then also allow the new mayor the opportunity to fill vacancies if they so chose to fill some vacancies. All in the hopes that you could keep the board and commission moving forward. >> Spelman: I understand moving forward. My concern here is if you have a councilmember who has a bunch of people who she knows she wants to appoint, and she starts making appointments in January and February, and her people are ready to go. They go through the training process. They're well educated. Here it is, it's March and they're ready to do stuff, they can't be on the board until July because the current board is already there. It seems to me like we're losing time that we don't necessarily need to lose. Is that something you talked about? >> It is something we talked about it. It's an understanding that a new mayor and council could select the board and commission and pull it forward, if you will. With the your guys' ability to do what you want to do. So if the -- if the new mayor and council got together and said, look, we all have members, take a planning commission, we all have members that are ready to go, let's pull the planning commission forward, excuse the current membership, and seek the new membership in March, April, and May, wherever they would do it, it would still take, obviously, the group to do that. >> Spelman: Okay. >> But we thought it would be a better approach than to have, you know, changing membership along the way of different commissions. >> Spelman: Last question. If the past is any indication of the future, one of the council will ashtooty to the electric

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utility board. Will shooty's next term continue until july 1 and start again on july 1? Will she continue with the term she's got? There's going be a fair number of cases like that. >> We hope so. We looked across 60 boards and commissions, there are a lot of leadership members there. Hopefully that will be carried over. For example, again, we see it ending on june 30 and a new term would begin on july 1. >> Spelman: Got you, thank you. >> Morrison: Mayor, can as a follow-up to the question that councilmember spelman has, it's my understanding that you all might have talked a little bit about the phasing approach as opposed to all of the commissions start a reboot on july 1 that you could do it in groups and do some say in april, some in may, some in june. Which could allow the new councilmembers to focus on those earlier activated commission appointees first. Did you -- is that right? Did you talk about that? >> We did talk about that. That was brought forward by one of the members of the task forces, two of the members of the task force. We kept falling back to the position of clarity, simplicity, the clerk's office knows who's coming on when, leaving when. We thought it best just to have all of the commissions, the -- in their current configurations through the six-month period. We thought there might be an argument of which boards and commissions would be phased when. And to avoid that, it might be easier to have them all >> Morrison: I guess the only point that you made that the july 1 date is going to have the 36 current sitting commissions looking at the budget and not the new ones. And I wonder if -- nothing comes to mind, specifically.

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I wonder if there are a kpoer set of commissions where it's more important that they delve more deeply into the budget, that that could be some suggestion that those could get activated earlier. >> We can consider that. >> Cole: Mayor? >> Mayor Leffingwell: Yes? >> Cole: I wanted to follow up on that line of reasoning with the july date as the phasing in of particular appointments. Because it seems like the problem that you were trying to solve is ease of transition. But we just moved it from june 30 to july 1. And if everybody waits to july 1, then we haven't really bothevered mixing in the new board and commission members with the people -- with the experience. So I wonder if you have any discussions about nonvoting members or particular time periods where they would attend the existing meetings or that would be a requirement of three meetings, six meetings, all meetings they are invited and maybe the new council could start appointing immediately but they wouldn't be voting until june -- until the july 1 date. >> We did not consider that, but I think that's an excellent idea for us to look into. And I think it would help accomplish that goal of encouraging the new mayor and council to get those appointments as soon as possible and get the new folks up to speed. I think that's something we should consider. >>>> Cole: Because we could have a situation for someone like shooty who served forever and will be reappoint and a councilmember who wants to appoint someone who was very eager but would appreciate the training time with the existing -- like the planning commissions. The time with the existing board of commissions? >> I agree. >> Cole: Okay.

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>> Hope that's somewhat legible. >> Mayor, mayor pro tem, councilmembers, city manager, I'm dave anderson, I chair the planning commission. I want to talk briefly about what we call the planning and

development review working group. This -- there's four of us on this working group. And we looked at kind of the higher profile boards and commissions that were related to planning and development review. Myself, jeff jack, whose board of adjustment chair, gabe rojas, the planning commission, and the ever present dave sullivan who's been around here for a long time. We come prized the working group. We've met almost weekly for a while. And with our task being -- is there a different way to organize the boards? Is there a different way to -- to find how the boards interact with each other. To accomplish the same things, but to streamline the process a little bit. To provide the same amount of protections but more certainty in how the process happens? We thought it was a good time to do that. And so here briefly, are the boards and commissions that we analyzed. Board of adjustments, bond oversight, board of appeals. Buildings and standards commissions. The construction advisory. Designed commission, downtown commission. Electric board, mechanical plumbing and solar board, historic landmark commission, planning commission, residential signing and advisory commission. Sign review board, waterfront planning advisory board. And zoning and planning

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commission. Those are the entities in the mixture and wanted to discuss. I thought I could read that. I can't. This is displayed by my handwriting on the panel in front of you if you can read that. But essentially, you're looking at the board of adjustment, we -- -- jeff jack and others thought it was reasonable to absorb the sign review board up into what the board of adjustment does, you know, every time they meet. So that was one place we ended up very quickly. The first slide we saw in front of you, decided -- not decided. A long way away on the discussion in the first few meetings. There is a building and fire code board of appeals, electric board of appeals, and mechanical plumbing and solar board board of appeals. And it seemed to us that it might make sense to combine those three into one with the caveat that you have the right expertise on that one. Call it a life safety board of appeals, easier on staff, one stop instead of potentially multiple stops, etc. The next line item here, design commission, we had discussions early on about the workload of the residential design compatibility mission and discussions about potentially rolling up those duties under the design commission. We are having ongoing discussions on the rdcc. There is some interest from the community on seeing that commission going a different direction and have a different set of rules. But so we're still kind of discussing that. But right now, we are thinking that it makes some sense to

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combine rdcc and design commission. Construction advisory, this slide is a little old. The construction -- the construction advisory commission is something that we thought because the primary focus of what they do is disadvantaged small minority business contract kind of stuff, it seems like there was a lot of duplication with what the -- what our commission going to be -- not going to get it right. But they seem to be doing a lot of the same things. So we're actually now, we yo can you strike through on there and thinking to suggest those two ies merge. The buildings and standards commission would stay. The next slide gets more interesting. We could talk through the thing that we see in front of you. When we sat down, councilmembers, when we sat down and thought about what the planning commission does,

what the d.A.P. Does, our workloads, what we could be doing better. It became pretty apparent that redistributing the kinds of work that each commission does might make some sense. And so where we ended up to cut to the chase is that perhaps it made sense to have a planning commission that looked forward, and really planned. And a zoning and platting commission that focused on the transactional nature of zoning changes, conditional overlays, etc., Etc. So what you see in front of you and what's described in words on the slides is the following idea. Planning commission made up of 11 folks plus the two that are

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required -- or that are listed required by charter. Zoning and planning commission with 11 folks. And then four sub committees that are of consequence. There are subcommittees that have reasonable workloads that cover four issues. Or four main issues. Code and ordinances, there would nt-- wouldn't be a change between what we're going to do today and whatever that group does in the future. Second, the area planning sub committee. That gets at what we do currently, which is neighborhood plans. But it would also potentially add in other area plans like corridor plans. Downtown plans. Maybe the downtown commission would roll up under this group. T.O.D.s, WATERFRONT PLAN. So the waterfront planning advisory board might come up with this group which, again, streamlines the process but you have multiple steps to get in the right eyes of the topics. So that's the -- that's the area of planning subcommittee. The area subcommittee meeting will be the right names in some point. Something like the economics in technical planning. It would give us the discussion of afford about and economics of afford about. At the subcommittee level, the other charges would be to review the capital improvement program which is required by -- required of the planning commission by charter. We would recommend rolling the bond oversight committee in this. That's planning. They only meet quarterly. That's another way to merge two commissions. So those -- then the long-range

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strategic plan, which is obviously the new plan rolled out by the capital planning office. The last four subcommittees would be the comprehensive plans and there wouldn't be any changing that. So what else? What you see down on the figure to my left and to my right, if I can remember, I couldn't see it. There have been discussions about the historic landmark conditions. Whether it could be a fifth subcommittee and whether it needs to stand on its own and where we are right now, it needs to continue to be on its own, on its own commission. Board of adjustment would have its own with the review board rolling up on that. >> Mayor Leffingwell: We can help you if -- >> I think we talked about all of this. So that's -- that's where we are right now. So a combination as descrd of zoning and platting. Board of apiece on its own, landmark on its own. Life safety board of appeals becoming a new entity. Rtdc rolling up under that. The results would be -- we went from two slides -- here's the board and commissions that we analyzed. And where we're headed now is just that. One of the things that I would like to understand -- or the committee has talked about trying to understand going forward is what is the economic impact of that.

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It's more about providing protection and certainty in the process while still, you know, performing the duties that we need to do. The remaining items that we're -- that we continue to talk about, how the planning commission and zoning and planning commission balance the workload. Fortunately in our work group, the work group is come prized with zoning and planning commissioners and planning commissioners who have a healthy history of understanding what the workloads are. How do we if we're really going to go forward with this idea, how do we make sure that the zoning decisions that z.A.P. Makes jive with the planning decisions that the planning commission is recommending. So we need to have checks and balances. The joint subcommittee idea is one way to do that. But we continue to talk about that. We open joint committee membership to the community at large. I.E. Outside of either planning commissioners or zoning and planning commissioners talking about that. How do you handle historic landmark. Does it make sense to put downtown waterfront and planning advisory board to a robust committee structure where they are considered areas just like different areas around town? How do we -- does it make sense for planning commission to deem differently with urban transportation. Some relationship they are now. There is. With that, I'll turn it over to -- >> Mayor Leffingwell: Let me make a comment. First, I want to say this looks like really good work. You've made substantial progress towards kind of reforming the boards and commissions process with the number of boards and the number of people involved have sort of gotten out of hand over the years. This makes a lot of sense to me

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combining the functions of several boards and commits and establishing joint subcommittees to deal with specific problems such as you have. And one question about, you know, we used to just have the planning commission and not the zoning and planning commission. >> Mm-hmm. >> The zoning and planning commission, as I understand it, if my history is correct, came about with the advent of neighborhood plans. And so the idea was that the planning commission would address any issue that came up with regard to zoning or other for a property that was inside a neighborhood plan and that the zap would deal with the land development code issues outside of neighborhood plans. At that time, it was established for five years, it was envisioned that it would go away. And since then, we extended, I guess, the neighborhood planning process didn't go quite as fast as everybody thought it would. But how about that. Is workload just too much to have one planning commission as we used to have back in the old days. I think that ought to be -- I know you probably looked at that. What is your comment on that? >> Mr. Mayor, that's the place we started definitely. We just do one commission? It helps from a consistency perspective. But we ended up in a place where we didn't think -- I mean, the workload is too big. It's too big. We went back and investigated. Why was there a split and what were some of the thoughts hand discussions that happened back then. And jerry resthoechb was kind enough to help us understand the very beginnings of the discussions of the zoning and

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planning and platting commission were split and focused on this idea to have an entity that does planning and having an entity that does the transitional nature. We did start with one commission, we all four of us and then the larger committee, the larger commission on commissions, we all ended up with reluctantly saying, it's too much, it's too much. >> You didn't consider starting your meetings at 10:00 in the morning? I guess that would be out of the question. I figured that would probably be your answer. But I still think what you've shown on that diagram there is a big step forward towards potentially eliminating other boards and commissions and combining their functions with other existing committees. That's a good step. >> Thank you. >> I will say one other thing. Right now, I think, we went back and annualized how long the meetings go. Planning commission on average think 3, 3 1/2 hours. Z.A.P. Is probably an hour to an hour and a half. I think this is probably over the last couple of years. Don't quote me on that. I see councilmember morrison writing down notes. But it's somewhere around that. Then you add on subcommittees, I mean, it's substantial, so -- >> mayor? >> Mayor Leffingwell: Councilmember martinez? >> Martinez: Thank you all so much. I agree -- I don't think I agree, I agree with the mayor. This is really good work. Just by looking at this chart, and looking at these respective commissions, it's about 14 to 15 going down to seven. Have we -- have we done the numbers on individual appointees and what the number looks like with this as a potential change? >> So, I think we're going to get in a little bit to those

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changes just throughout the rest of the boards and the commissions. I haven't done the numbers on straight numbers of appointments. I could do it real quick. >> I appreciate the comment you made about the enfish ensis that it could potentially create from staff time to law department to citizens commitment in terms of time. I think there's a lot of efficiencies to be had here. I look forward to your final recommendations. One of the things that I serbly want to be cautious about is using terms like eliminating boards and commissions. We really are -- we're innovative. We're not eliminating. And I think this is a tremendous opportunity right now in the history of our city to do some innovative stuff. And I think that's exactly what you all have done is taken a very challenging chor and not even -- I want's not just creativity. You thought this through from the standpoint of the roles and responsibilities of each of the commissions, where they could potentially seamlessly fit in to one another. So I just want to thank you all and the rest of the appointees as well for your work and the recommendations moving forward. >> Councilmember morrison? >> Yeah, I agree. I appreciate the perspective everybody has brought and we certainly have the right people looking at the very specific issue. So thanks to you and your cohorts, probably between the -- is it four -- you probably have 100 of those 130 years. Okay. So here's my question. I'm a little confused about -- I like the idea of doing the joint subcommittees, though. We can get a lot of good stuff out of joint subcommittees recently, you know, like with the environmental board and the parks board working on barton springs and things. What I'm not clear about is I think I heard you say that you're considering and set up that all of the transactional things like zoning cases and subdivisions would all go to

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z.A.P. Then the planning commission does the planning. When you looked at your three-hour average, isn't the vast majority of that zoning occasions? >> We haven't gone back and said, okay, two-thirds of this meeting is usually zoning, but it's the four of us who sit down and do this every week and have for a long time, the scale is going to tip to zap having a little bit larger workload, but not to the extent that it's one-sided now. So it would be -- the feeling amongst the four of us and what we've communicated to the larger commission is that it is a little bit more equitable. Also, remember that planning commission has subcommittees that meet every month, and zap has very few subcommittee meetings. So on the whole we felt it was more balanced. I think your point is right. I mean, we could talk about who's got the majority of the work. What we tried to do was break it down to what the functions were and figure out a way that we could be

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more efficient -- not only efficient but effective and consistent in -- in applying our knowledge to those cases but still have a workable model. It's not perfect. It's not perfectly equal, but it's -- I think our goal is that it's more workable than it is now. >> Morrison: And I think it's great that zap will be involved in those subcommittees, because absolutely they need to be involved. If you think about the model of dividing up the zoning cases that there is now, absolutely zap needs to be involved in all the planning and ordinances and -- because the way it is now they generally look at the zoning cases that are farther out that often have different considerations. You know, they're the ones that deal with sos most of the time and things like that. So -- but now you're adding those subcommittees to zap too. So now we're going to have someone doing all of the zoning transactional work and all the subcommittee, so anyway, I would just urge you to continue to think about are there -- >> balancing. >> Morrison: About balancing it. And frankly, there's something very attractive to me about anybody that's going to be on those subcommittees having ongoing working interaction with zoning cases so they know how things are working on the ground. So I just throw that out there for consideration. And one other question. Is there anything in the charter about planning commissions and zoning cases and making recommendations on zoning cases? >> So we -- john can refresh my memory. I believe the way that it's written, it says the city must have a commission that does zoning, and the planning commission must

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deliver the comprehensive plan and deliver the cip and all those things. >> Morrison: They could be different? >> They could be different. >> Morrison: If we were to move all the transaction stuff to zap, there might be some other changes in the code about hud recommendations and things like that? Because there are some special considerations when planning commission doesn't -- >> I'll look at that. That's good. Okay. That's good. >> Morrison: Thank you. >> Riley: I want to join my colleagues and thank the committee for all their hard work on this. I'm very impressed with what we're seeing today. I do want to ask a few more questions about the concepts in regard to the planning and zoning commission. And just by way of the little context, I was first appointed to the planning commission in 2001 when the planning commission was separated out from zoning and planning, so there was a lot of discussion at that time about the relative roles of the two commissions. But we did not write the decision in stone,

and, in fact, there were significant adjustments after the board was first hatched, the -- and in particular much of the changes centered on the very distinction that we're talking about now, the distinction between transactional work and planning work, because that was an evolving discussion in the years after the zoning and planning commission was first broken up from planning. And particularly related to how we address neighborhood plan. What we found is at first you bring a neighborhood plan forward and approve a neighborhood plan and then sometime later there would be a set of zoning cases coming forward to -- and the idea was that the zoning cases would implement the neighborhood plan. What we found was when we got to those zoning cases we had to go back -- there was need to go back and look at the neighborhood plan. So ultimately we decided we really had to try to tie all this together and put them all with one commission, and

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as a practical matter the decision was made -- at some point after the first time to just keep all of the zoning cases in those neighborhood planning areas with the planning commission. That was not the idea at the outset, but it sort of fell into place over time. And one benefit to that is that the same commissioners who are doing the planning are also seeing how that planning plays out over time and are involved in discussions about potential changes to those zoning changes. And so I just wanted -- I think it's worth remembering that because the distinction between transactional work and planning work has not been so easy to apply in practice, and so -- and that brings me to a question about the direction we're going now. I like the idea of joint subcommittees. First, I understand the need to break out the workload somehow because it would be overwhelming to pile on to one commission that meets twice a month. The idea of joint subcommittees has a lot of people, but I would also note that in the past there have been efforts to have joint subcommittees between a planning and zoning and planning commissions and that hasn't worked out very well. The commissions seemed to develop their own unique cultures partly because their areas of interest are somewhat different and we haven't ever been able to achieve that much coordination. I can recall maybe one or two meetings where they were actually supposed to be joint meetings and we had spotty attendance, and the subcommittee idea just never really worked out very well. That's not to say it couldn't work out in the future, but just I think it's worth noting that it hasn't in the past. And I wonder if there might be another possibility. We recently faced a decision point with respect to the building and standards commission, because they had a very heavy workload and we wanted to try to expedite

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their work, and so rather than trying to divide their work topically, we actually created an additional panel of the buildings and standards commission, so that you still have one commission but they would meet in panels, and I think the idea was there would actually be some overlap between the memberships -- the memberships of the two panels would shift over time so each member with work with members of the whole body even though they might fit in different panels. And I wonder a couple things. I wonder how that has been worked out with the building and standards commission, and if it has worked out well, would that provide another model that might have some application as we

consider how to address this problem of the heavy workload on the planning commission and the zoning and planning commission. So could I just ask this question? Have you all looked at what we've done with building and standards and considered whether that might provide a model for addressing this problem? >> Council member, we have not looked at how -- we haven't looked at that model at all. Certainly at this -- we're open to whatever works best. I think we'd be happy to take a look at how they're doing and talk to them. We did send out a survey asking different boards and commissions to answer a question, and I think we discussed that a little bit previously and didn't get a whole -- we got maybe a third of them that applied. But I don't remember if buildings and standards was one of those. So we'll have to go back and talk to them, but that model is interesting. >> Riley: Okay. And one other -- a smaller question I'd like to ask about relates to a board that did not come up in today's presentation, but I saw it discussed in a news report from one of our previous meetings, the airport boulevard advisory crew. The airport boulevard advisory group. I saw there was some suggestion about potentially

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doing away with that advisory group. Have you all -- is that -- is that among your recommendations or can somebody tell me where it stands? >> That board has not met since June of last year, and the city ordinance that created it expires, I believe, this next summer, or this 134-r. 134-r -- this summer. We're letting it expire. >> Riley: I would like to by the way of context, there are good reasons why it did not meet for some period of time, because they were set up -- they were working with a consultant, and the consultant went back and was working on the development of a code, and the idea was that once that code was ready, that it would be presented to the board and that their work would continue. It's not for lack of interest. It was simply a matter of the timing of the process. I have a timeline of the anticipated work for the airport boulevard advisory group going forward, and it does extend all the way through November of this year. I have spoken with staff, who are very concerned about the prospect of losing that board because it has been a very valuable board because it includes representatives from the surrounding neighborhoods who are well-versed in the history of efforts to work on that -- on airport boulevard and there is a great deal of interest in seeing that work through to fruition. And, in fact -- the fact that they haven't met really has been a help to staff. It's -- it would be more -- I could see more of a case for eliminating if they had been meeting without having anything to do. In fact, it hasn't been a drain on staff e they have not been meeting, but it would be a drain if you did away with the board and then had to figure out some new input as a way of getting -- from staff there's a great

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interest in keeping that board alive, and if any council action is necessary in order to extend that work, I'll be glad to help out with that. But I just wanted to provide some cautionary note about doing away with that board. It would not -- it would not represent cost savings. It would actually represent significantly increased costs and great difficulties with respect to seeing through -- continuing with the airport boulevard project. >> Spelman: Mayor? >> Mayor? >> Mayor Ieffingwell: Council member spelman, you're first. >> Spelman: He saw me first. Ha ha. I want to just point out two things. First, that for the -- the great benefit of what Mr. Anderson's committee has come up with is the first time in

decades we'll actually have a planning commission that has time to do planning. Planning is good. We need more planning than we've had, and I think that's a really good thing, so thank you for that. And I think even in the balancing issue, I think is going to be reset by the fact the planning commission has not had time to do any planning before because all the time has been zapped up by zoning cases. So you'll have an opportunity to fill in with what the planning commission was supposed to have done in the first place. The second thing is the task force hasn't finished its presentation yet, and it might be a good idea for us to let them finish the presentation before we finish our questions. >> Mayor leffingwell: It's fine by me. Do you want to hold your question? >> Tovo: I'd like to ask it, pin it to this chart. A couple quick ones. I think this is a very interesting scheme to finish. I appreciate it. It's not easy to figure out what to do with that bulk of work and this is a good option to consider. I would just suggest, as you look at the -- as you look at the different agendas and think about the time period, you know, how long those meetings would be if certain issues shift from one to another, I think it would be interesting, too, to trace some commissioners and what their likely commitments are going to be every month. It's not clear to me -- it's

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not clear to me how many meetings per month a commissioner who serves on a few committees could have, and so just evaluating that in light of what the current workload is I think would be important. >> So one of the things that we've talked -- and we don't know the answer to that yet, but one of the ideas or the advantages of having a joint subcommittee is you now have a bigger pool of folks from which to draw, and I think, again, don't hold me to this, but I think if you had seven members on a subcommittee, it's possible -- 28 members on a subcommittee, there's only four people that would serve on more than one, right? So you can get a lot done with seven folks. That's the size of our existing commissions, right, in their entirety, or the majority of those commissions. And then if you did it correctly, it might not be that big of a workload for the majority of those commissioners. So -- but we haven't figured out the specifics yet, how long zoning and platting commissioners, how many planning commissioners, we haven't done that yet. We're still in the planning stage. >> I appreciate that and I think the framework is very promising. I would just suggest making sure you have enough coverage on all of those and that commissioners don't go from -- you know, most commissioners, in my experience, served on -- as planning commissioner serve on two subcommittees, so you've got four meetings a month at least, and so -- and, you know, that can be a lot for certain people and you wouldn't want to go to, say, six a month. That would probably become really burdensome. So just tracking out -- I couldn't make all the numbers work to figure that out here on my own here today on the spot, but it would just be an interesting thing to consider. And just very quickly, I think I heard you say that

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the bond oversight commission meets quarterly and the current cip current subcommittee as a planning commission meets not terribly often either. >> Not terribly often either. So we would -- add to those things, there's a new long-range strategic plan that mike trimble does out of the capital planning office. So now, from what I understand, the cip sup committee of the planning -- subcommittee of the planning

commission does they have time with mike working through the long-range plan, then over to the budget process so we can get a budget to the city manager -- or comments on the budget to the city manager. So that's an additional workload. Then we'd add bond oversight to that, and we're getting close to a point where we have full coverage for that committee. One thing that's important to all four of us as -- on the working group is carving out some time to think of the economics of affordability. We haven't had -- because of the workload we haven't really had a time or space created where we could have discussions. I don't know what the specifics of those discussions are, but to have a group of citizens who kind of know what's going on and have a venue to have these discussions or what are we doing right that's positive economically, what are we not doing right, I think is going to be really valuable and this seems to be a decent place to have that conversation. >> Tovo: I think that's very interesting, and that's a very promising new direction, and perhaps there's a way to also have participation from the community development commission, which also deals with issues of affordability, so that again those conversations are enhanced by -- by the different commissions' work and not overlapping. And so I also wanted to say, I appreciate your acknowledgment that there has to be some more thought

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about how -- how to really make sure if these two areas of responsibility are separated out, that the transactional decisions are very well informed by the planning -- >> yep. >> Tovo: -- Process. So I'm glad - - that was a question I had for you and I'm glad you all are already aware that is a question that just needs more dialogue. And then lastly, I've had some discussion with some commissioners from the residential -- from the rdcc, and that's an interesting proposal to work it into the design commission. And I'd like to hear just a little bit about why -- why that configuration was appealing. My guess is that part of it is that you deal with one of the -- one of the concerns that has been heard, which is the rdcc has some people who are design professionals and some who are not, and I think the design commission is primarily design professionals. So that seems like an interesting match, and a reason to match them up. But I wasn't sure if that was the main reason that the rdcc was proposed to be folded into the design commission. >> Mayor Ieffingwell: So before you answer that, let's do go ahead and finish the presentation and limit our questions to those for clarification only and discussion questions after the end of the presentation, and that will be the first question for you, will be about the rdcc when we get to the end. >> Good morning, my name is mrs. Medina and I'm vice chair of the boards and commission task force and the commission on animal affairs. To wrap up today, what we wanted to do was provide you with a perspective of where we are moving forward. In the future we will be discussing board and commission mergers in order to improve communication by removing silos and identifying synergies that might exist between boards and commissions. We hope to make it easier for the community to participate and become engaged in their government. Optimize limited resources

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supporting the boards and commissions and align boards and commissions with imagine austin whenever possible. We're also hoping to recommend an annual board and commission conference. It would be held on a saturday beginning in september. Speakers would include the mayor, city manager,

leadership austin, various commission chairs and topics would involve leadership, parliamentary procedures, communication. Finally, we'd also like to, moving forward, incorporate your feedback into -- to these preliminary recommendations and to whatever we do moving forward, finalize the transition plan, finalize a list of proposed board and commission mergers, finalize recommendations for chapter 2.1 updates, submit recommendations to council, post recommendations to the boards and commissions information center and distribute this information to the boards and commissions. Thank you. Questions? >> Mayor leffingwell: Got to the end pretty quickly. [Laughter] first question. Rdcc. >> Tovo: I have a question for you about the design commission and the rdcc. >> So, thank you, council member. The initial thinking was exactly as you surmised, which was you have architectural landscape architects, design expertise on both. One has a commercial bent and one has a residential bent. It would seem possible or -- it would seem possible that you would combine the two. And especially if you're going to go to 11 appointments as opposed to seven, you could have the requisite expertise encompassed in those -- in that new commission for both residential and commercial. Further, I think the rdcc, although not called out specifically in the their bylaws or in their -- well, certainly they don't have

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their own charter, but there is a -- there is a sense that they oversee neighborhood protection? Is that a -- that's probably not the right word, but I think that because of how the rdcc was formed and the reasons why, which, you know, it was largely based on McMansions, there is a sense that they are the owners of this idea that they -- that someone has got to keep an eye on the fabric of the neighborhoods to make sure that, you know, they're not completely gutted by nefarious forces. What -- the structure that we've got -- we've had specific discussions about that, and the structure that we put in place with a more robust neighborhood or area planning subcommittee is that those concepts would be held at that subcommittee level, so not thrown away, not discarded, but that the design concepts would be moved up under the design commission. So again, it's taking different roles and moving them to different commissions. So does that answer your question? >> Tovo: It does, and you added a piece of information that was useful about kind of which subcommittee is going to be most responsible for residential neighborhood protection. So that's very good. And I would just suggest, again, I think this work is really interesting and I hope as you wrap up your recommendations, you'll also be -- if you've got suggestions for name changes, I think -- I think that it may be a really appropriate time. We've got a couple that are realtime -- real tongue twisters, like the board of fire code and building, board of appeals and zoning and platting for that matter is not -- is not probably as simple as it could be. So thanks.

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>> Mayor leffingwell: Mayor pro tem. >> Cole: I again want to echo what everyone has said about the wonderful work that you have done, and it made me think about how we have not really dealt with this issue with our own council committees. So I wonder if you all will do that too. [Laughter] but seriously, I did have a question about whether you could make some considerations about how the work of any of these commissions could have an interplay with the council committees, because we're going to have --

we're going to have so many more people and such a potentially longer council meeting and meeting recommendation -- needing recommendations from subcommittees to help get through the materials. And I was thinking particular examples like the comprehensive planning convention coming to the comprehensive planning subcommittee or, you know, the area plans, or maybe even some of the downtown renovations, waller creek, the medical school, that type of thing, so that a lot of those details get not only heard in the subcommittee but we can have some back and forth between the subcommittee and the council committees before it actually hits council. >> Sounds good. >> Mayor leffingwell: Council member riley. >> Riley: Just to follow up on the mayor pro tem's point, which I think is excellent, that I -- I wonder if you all have considered any potential involvement of the electric utility commission in the council's committee on austin energy, from the standpoint of ensuring appropriate oversight of the electric utility, there might well be some value in improving the coordination between our austin energy committee and the electric utility commission or whatever -- whatever

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committee it is that finally winds up oversight of that committee. I know that's been a subject of some discussion and I don't know where it will land but I could see some benefit to having some involvement or even participation from that committee in the -- in the council's committee on austin energy. >> Mayor leffingwell: Council member morrison? >> Morrison: Let's see. I do have one more question about the chart. I see on top of the planning commission it says 11 plus 2. And on top of zap, 11. So I presume the planning commission is one planning commission and the mayor each .1 and there are two, and there will also be ex-on ex officios. >> Yes, the charter is where the definition is defined, and so I don't believe this commission right now is leaning towards recommending charter amendment. >> Morrison: Good, but what exactly does the charter say? It says each council member shall nominate one and -- I think our city attorney actually is -- section 10. Okay. >> [Inaudible] >> steiner, law department. It says there shall be established a planning commission which shall consist of citizens of the city of austin who must be registered voters in the city, must be resided in the city for one year. Next, preceding their appointment the planning commission shall have a number of members equal to the number of members on the council plus two additional members. A minimum of two-thirds of the members who shall be lay members not directly or indirectly connected with real estate and land development. >> Morrison: Okay. >> The city manager, the chairperson of the zoning board of adjustment, the

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director of public works and the president of the board of trustees of the austin independent school district shall serve as ex officio members. >> So it references the number of council members and builds on that. >> Yes. >> Morrison: So then we'll also have -- so actually we're talking about 16 members of the planning commission, if you count them all up. Great. Well, that helps that. Let's see. With regard -- to go back to the merger recommendation, the one I want to do ask about a little -- understand a little better is the life safety board. As you mentioned, that one is going to merge building and fire code, electric, mechanical, plumbing and so on, which is really three, even though it sounds like more. And as

you mentioned, it really depends on expertise in each one. Have you gotten feedback -- and so I guess the question would be, are we -- do we feel like we're going to get coverage of the expertise that's really needed, cutting it down to 11, which may well be feasible. Have you gotten feedback from any of those board members? >> Do you know if we -- did we get any responses from any of those? I don't think we did. And we have yet to read -- we don't -- we have yet to reach out to those folks. >> Morrison: I think that will be an interesting piece of f explicitly to get with them. I can see it may be entirely feasible to cover the issue. >> I think as a engineering practice in that kind of world for a while, there's going to be individuals who have expertise in more than one of those codes, and that's why I think it's feasible, it may not be a slam dunk, but I think it's feasible, but we'll certainly go and discuss with them. >> Morrison: Okay, good. And I was glad to see the recommendation on the landmark commission. I think we probably all received a letter yesterday

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from preservation austin talking about some very specific requirements and roles that they fill, and I guess it's possible to consider them doing it as a -- as a sub-effort on another commission, but it really is very explicit expertise that's called for. So -- >> absolutely. >> Morrison: Great. Great. And then two more questions. One, I didn't hear you -- unless I missed it -- talk about where you are with the resource management commission and what kind of -- were you trying to avoid that, dave anderson? I see you smiling. [Laughter] >> since I'm the planning and development review working group, they're not really associated with the planning and development review department, so there's others that have -- we talked about this -- there's others that took that task on. >> Morrison: Okay. And we did have a sort of somewhat robust conversation and input at our austin energy subcommittee meeting last week so I wonder if you could give us a brief description of where you are thinking about that. >> Yeah, we have been discussing perhaps adding -- or dividing the responsibilities of that commission between the environmental board, the electric utility and water. And there's pros and cons. We haven't reached a decision. We're still fleshing it out. >> Council member morrison, left me add one item to that. >> There has been quite a bit of discussion on the success of joint committees or joint task force. The austin water utility water rates is a prime example. I think that was a fantastic -- and I understand it's recommissioned now here to look at it again. And so there was some -- there has been some discussion amongst those boards of maybe you could accomplish some of those goals with joint, but that's as far as we've gotten. >> Morrison: Yeah, and I think my take away from our discussion at the austin energy committee was that there was really -- no one felt certain one way or

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another about how it should be, but that it would be very important to be able to look at two models. One, if we keep them, how would -- keep the resource management commission, how would you divide it, would you add more functions to it or not. One of those suggestions was for consumer protection, and then the other model of what would it look like and how how would things divide up. And it seems to be one of those topics that's really on the line. So I for one would be happy to see two options, and a recommendation one way or another, because we really don't -- don't really know which way to go at

this point. And then the last question I have is, in terms of the survey responses that we got, were there any themes that emerged, was there anything really surprise surprising that came from that information or anything remarkable? >> The thing that really impacted us and we talked about it, is how passionate all the current members are about the work they do and how strongly they believe it's the right thing for austin to do to have the people who are governed have an input into their government. They will take it very seriously, even though we are unpaid volunteers, and, you know, some of us, you know, have a lot of meetings. My council meets -- I meet three times a month, so it's a lot of work, but we all do it because we think it's the right thing to do. That really stood out to me. >> Some other general trends that we garnered from the survey is that most people want the membership to move up to 11, and that there is -- although certain boards and commissions expressed that it would be good for appointments to be by district, in general expertise trumps geographic

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location. >> Morrison: Great. I appreciate that, and I certainly -- I agree that it's the right thing to do, for 11. To me it's been very important to be able to, you know, have sort of a one-on-one contact with the commissions, and I fully agree that it's the right thing to do to have these commissions, because this council, even when it goes to 11, you know, there's so much that goes on in this city and the boards allow us to not only have the residents' voice have a major role, but for us to capture the experience -- experience the expertise that everyone has and, you know, the role of the commissions is to advise the council, and so much of what we do really percolates up from the work that the commissions do. So I really appreciate your work, the commission -- the famous commission on commission, and everyone else's. >> Mayor leffingwell: You mentioned geographic diversity on the boards and commissions, which is something I've been interested in for a while, but my feeling is that this will sort of be naturally taken care of with the advent of districts, and I would be -- and always have been very hesitant to impose, with regard to council nominees, specific restrictions, because I guarantee you there will be instances where council members are going to say, here's the person I want to nominate. But I do think that's an important issue, but I think it will be taken care of. Any other questions? Okay. Thank you all very much. Great work. >> Thank you. >> Mayor leffingwell: Are there any other -- go back to agenda items. Are there any other agenda items that someone wants to discuss? Hearing none -- hearing none, we're adjourned

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11:05 a.M., Without objection.