Good Governance Listening Session Comments

1. People have aspirations, but if you look at the 5 overriding principles in comp plan, and the city government should support them. For, instance, the special character of the island doesn't seem to be a priority.

2. Are the City's transparency efforts are increasing with the Community Engagement Specialist, working to get the message out about what the objective is? However whatever the choices are, I disagree is. As a taxpayer, wants frugality, and good decision making.

3. Why isn't the Comp Plan being implemented? Agenda favors development.

4. Has the impression that development is favored. To try to promote commerce, is a simpler to have things streamlined. Not sure if it is special interests that city panders to.

5. Why should compare us to other cities for performance measures?

6. The "no annex" nature of BI makes planning a little more simplistic. Regulations and codes shouldn't be drawn from different types of communities, because of BI special nature. Commerce is highly promoted.

7. Bias towards development, but don't like the terms special interests to refer to Chamber of Commerce, etc. Because special interests are citizens also. Old timers who want to preserve character lined up against newcomers wanting to make money. But growth doesn't pay for itself, taxes on existing residences will go up.

8. Is the City Council and Planning Commission getting the up-to-date information that they need to make decisions. USGS report was 5 years ago.

9. USGS report was expensive by reputable scientists, put doesn't put forward recommendations.

10. The USGS report was a good baseline.

11. City hall is working more efficient (anecdotally) than it used to be.

12. Someone suggested that government should have less staff.

13. What does sustainable mean? Applied in different ways depending on the topic.

14. Shouldn't everything the city do be sustainable? Infrastructure/services decision should be made to last i.e. for 50 years.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

15. Sociologist said that if there is a nice place, people will move there and screw it up. Sustainability needed to start in late 1800s. Restoration should be promoted. Instead trying to stop the flood to keep negative impacts at bay.

16. When I think about sustainable, I think 100 years in the future.

17. Does that require a big change in appetites? Even decisions that we evaluate at 5 years are important. Even though we keep the 100 years in the realm of consideration. State and federal government health impacts us.

18. Puget sound restoration is essential acknowledge our role.

19. Road runoff not as bad as sewer discharge. Bigger facilities (i.e. SR-520) I want government to ban the word sustainability.

20. Planning department has not felt empowered in the past to set policy, in relation to long range planning.

21. The community wants to go in 2 different directions.

22. Urban design, a more recent discipline than planning. The American West has been changing rapidly, the resources to support the population of the west are being used up. Ability to live in the west under threat (water availability) coal trains, etc.

23. People should be educated about how to be good stewards of the watershed that we live in.

24. We don't have a larger community of stewardship among the population.

25. For instance, Eagle Harbor is largest watershed, Superfund site, and sewer outfall breakage pipe, repeatedly failed. Need to better anticipate threats like that. Watershed education should be increased.

26. We are here today because of the Growth Management Act, and at the time, it was groundbreaking.

27. Any piece of legislation and law is only as good as the ability to implement it. As we are going through Update process, we need to know what the City actually has control over.

28. How do we govern, we have a comp plan. And what are the criteria for knowing that the policies are being implemented.

29. Sustainability also involves how it is all financed.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

2/9 Blue Table

1. Getting there - derailed in the last few years - getting better
2. Values of proposed government leaders important
3. Active community members - folks need to know that things they read or second guess decisions is not productive - distrust level needs to come down a bit.
4. Transparency is huge
5. Object to distrust of city staff.
6. Need good newspaper reporting.
7. Blogs have edge.
8. News media and internet may be polarizing.
9. How to get word out with transparency?
10. Neighborhoods not as cohesive - groups use to form to get together and get common interest out.
11. New website difficult to use - community voice doesn't work well - cannot find stuff on web site.
12. Possibly test drive new websites before purchasing - test drive by users and citizens.
13. Don't listen to vocal few - large community - does not always agree with minority squeaky wheel.
14. People don't get involved unless it effects them - how to reach everyone.
15. Working folks may not be able to get involved.
16. Sometimes reporting things - nothing happens - and no follow through.
17. Could enforcement officer be funding by fines - what are the numbers?
18. Are fines appropriate enough so offender will not offend again?
19. Enforce environmental impacts to new development - i.e., cutting down trees
20. Risk assessment is being done in Executive Session?
21. What happened to Ethics Committee?
22. IGWIG - Are conflicts resolved - Are reports made to City Council. How is it working?
23. Staff more than helpful in response and also with current Council
24. App for communication at city council meetings, i.e., voting etc. While in session.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

1. What does the City feel?

2. A Council member facilitator feels with not enough long vision. Not far enough out. We need to factor in the long term care/maintenance of buildings, etc.

3. Several feel they do not know anything about this question. They do not have enough information to have an opinion.

4. Ann said they spoke about a long-range plan at the last Council retreat. We need to look at long term projections for revenue and where is that going.

5. How does a long-range fiscal plan work with future needs and goals? Will that (comp plan) include all the things we are talking about now?

6. Sustainable in terms of operations day to day: is there a local rating system for businesses that would show they were meeting sustainability beyond a certain level with a long term environmental vision of impact.

7. The City does not right now have an overall policy of sustainability and environmental consciousness for the City to use.

8. Feels bar set in the past is very low, but has gotten better.

9. We really need to keep improving. Sustainability is common sense and we need to use common sense. People don't think because egos get involved.

10. You have to shift your focus from cash value to people and environmental consciousness.

11. Think we have improved but we need to keep improving.

12. City website is confusing and how long do we need to wait to see minutes from council meetings, etc. Even if things are on the website, they are not necessarily found easily or people do not know about them (See Click Fix, for example). We have such talented people here on the island, how do we integrate volunteers in a meaningful way if they can't serve on a committee but still want to help?

13. The website language is not conducive to communication and we can do better with it. Would like more opportunities to see what employees of the City do.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

14. Open house for all the different places in the City. Public works. Someone went on a storm drain walk downtown with Melva Hill and found it very informative.

15. Wouldn't it be cool to have each City employee (with coaching) able to say, "Hi, I'm so and so and here's what I do for the City." Make it more personal and connected.

16. City Manager Doug Schulze said Police Academy is very popular; would a City Academy be a good thing? Yes, maybe it would be.

17. For senior population, a lot do not drive at night so they cannot come to night meetings, so their only connection is the website or letters.

18. Have someone be a planner for a day to get an idea of what that entails.

19. Example of tree fines getting stronger, but communication about this information is hard to get. If there were simple fact sheets about different topics would be helpful.

20. Don't exclude people that have low incomes. Economics and race issues preventing new businesses.

21. Affordable apartments are needed to bring lower incomes.

22. There needs to be an overall vision or look at the island holistically and not just put affordable housing outside of core service areas.

22. Maybe provide incentives, tax breaks, etc. to include some affordable housing within a development so it is not just a rental situation so owners can feel a part of the community.

23. We need better bus service.

24. Older population but working longer.

25. Someone who moved here who rode her cargo bike with son all over Seattle and cannot do that here, so was very disappointed that she cannot do that anymore (third party story).

26. Is there a way to think about requiring every development to have some affordable housing?

27. Acknowledgment that Bainbridge is an expensive place to live.

28. Looking for intergenerational, diverse housing stock could be incentivized.

29. Question: whether the City could raise sales tax to pay for a downtown parking structure? Yes.

30. Need to look at island holistically and then you do not need a parking structure.

31. Need to keep a balance because Bainbridge does not have as compact a population as Seattle or Portland, so as the population gets older, they still need to get downtown and cannot walk there, etc.

32. Neighborhood centers growth? Use bus service from these areas to get to downtown, ferry, etc.

33. Neighborhood centers have not been developed or been part of the plan, but should be looked at in the future.

34. The comp plan can look at zoning to increase density around the neighborhood service centers.

35. Would caution that changing zoning can be self-serving to the City because it increases tax base.

36. Worry is that we do not want to look like Mercer Island with houses everywhere. It's a balancing Issue between still having green areas.

37. The city should look at all the neighborhood centers for growth and not just downtown.

38. There is no room for anymore development in downtown Winslow. The burden of the ferry system has to color development downtown.

39. It would be nice to make Winslow Way a pedestrian only street and have ferry traffic avoid it all together.

40. Growth in a smart way that gets people out of their cars will accommodate growth/development in downtown.

41. Question asked: Does the City have those in place?

42. Sarah feels the City does follow the code, but the community does not understand that the Planning department does not make the code, they just follow it, like the police do not make the laws, they enforce them.

43. Has heard that there are not enough police to enforce speeding on the island.

44. More consistent speeds on the island, but a lot of pushback from community about lowering speed limits. Would be great to have more consistent speeds so you are not caught wondering what speed that length of the road is? We need to look at this as how do we protect each other.

45. Encourage growth in community building; see the bigger picture, holistic look at island.

46. Hire more police with specialties in certain areas.

2/11 Yellow Table

1. The staff are usually helpful and charming, and that should be encouraged.

2. Don't want bi to end up like Mill Creek.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

3. Ever since stopped commuting, have begun volunteering, and interacting with staff, and has cultivated good relationships with staff, and they are a part of our community.

4. Own Rolling Bay Automotive, but live in Poulsbo. City has ups and down with its staffing over the years. Staff has a difficult job. Fine line between administrating law and code, and dealing with public, and dealing with civil matters. City has done a fairly good job at being empathetic, hopefully people can make that delineation in their own minds.

5. Some of the lawsuits seemed to be ridiculous. Some employees are better than others.

6. Haven't had to deal with any zoning or code things. But have been to a lot of council meetings. Good governance is about the community, not just about the city as an entity. Disagreement should be considered in a respectful way. Expect the city council to enforce respectful disagreement at dais. Same standard for counter work. As a public employee, need to respectfully disagree.

7. Members of community should be respectful as well.

8. The City Council or other boards, whoever has a skill set to manage difficult people should be chairing the meeting.

9. One thing that is frustrating about the public comment interface is that there is not a dialogue or councilpersons are not often taking notes. The Council or Planning Commission should acknowledge that they are hearing you.

10. How come the council not have follow up questions in the moment? Give and take.

11. For the future, could there be an online feedback forum about a Council presentation or discussion?

12. Could the approved notes have a place for feedback? Like a text box at the bottom?

13. When the City is looking at doing a project in a certain area, i.e. road project. There are so many engineers and consultants, and things can look really good on paper, but there might be a missing element that could improve the project. Should be direct contact with neighbors that are directly impacted, door knocking. Improvements but up to properties in close proximity.

14. Sometimes some actions move through process quickly.

15. For bigger projects, usually have a Public Information meeting. But not for smaller Project. Why didn't anyone knock on our doors? Should consider ideas for the

project local knowledge. Use common courtesy. Talking about small project at Rolling Bay.

16. This Island is full of incredibly skilled people, and would like to see the City give priority to residents for consultant work. Sometimes lots of money spent on projects and consultants that don't come to fruition. Whenever the city can purchase from local merchants, and should give priority in procurement processes. if consultants are local better chance that project will be enacted.

17. Need policies in the comp plan that move us towards our collective vision.

18. Clear laws that work, not feel good ineffective laws. Laws and regulations that are affordable to comply with. Sometimes we need guidance instead of restrictions, i.e. tree ordinance may backfire because people won't plant new trees because they can't cut them down.

19. Burn ban not logical 365 days a year. Have practical regulations, not blanket restrictions.

20. With all of the downed trees or diseased trees, why can't people do burning?

21. Regulations should integrate flexibility (especially with trees). Sometimes education and outreach are the right way forward, instead of regulation. If the staff can use discretion.

22. Public safety needs to come first with trees.

23. All the different areas of the comp plan overlap.

24. Zoning should integrate common sense, not be so prescriptive.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

1. But how do we constrain growth? What does that look like?

2. We have to accept state mandates and plan for growth but we should think about opting out of GMA, it's not relevant to an island. Clear land boundaries make us different from other cities.

3. Growth allocations are not set in stone. If we have a reason for contesting growth allocations, we can.

4. We have adequate zoning for current growth allocations. But then what? The pressure will be to rezone.

5. What does it mean that we have "adequate water"? What do we mean about sustainability? How do we feel about spending down that bank of water that belongs as much to future generations as it does to us? Have we thought about effects of climate change and sea level rise?

6. How many more developments like the Grow Community can we take?

7. Are we going to continue to build things like Grow before we understand the impacts?

8. We want a clear understanding of how much water and then a clear marker if or when "enough is enough."

9. Good governance is honoring Best Available Science and not succumbing to development pressure.   We should employ the "precautionary principle.

10. Science is not always exact. There are things we don't know. Do we err on the side of development or side on the caution? Leave some margin for error in science.

11. Need to think about growth pressure on the environment, like water availability.

12. Lack of distributed knowledge and communication.

13. Quality and distribution of potable water

14. Don't just measure water at its highest point, measure what comes out of the end of the pipe

15. Question: How do people feel they interact with the government? Do people feel heard? Is government accessible and responsive

16. Question: How do people know when it's good governance?

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

17. Government is accessible. Planning Commissioners and Council are here tonight. Problem is lack of citizen involvement. Good government has two parts--the elected officials and the community, in which citizens are actively engaged in their own government

18. Question: How can communication between government and citizens be increased and improved

19. Good leaders don't listen to "yes men" or people who always have their ear. Good leaders listen to the dissenting voice

20. People who are satisfied don't come to meetings and speak out. It's the people who are dissatisfied who speak out

21. To change government, you need to change the culture. There is a machine that wants to perpetuate the existing culture, it's about money and power

22. Need to get the word out better so that more people come to these meetings

23. Not everyone is on Facebook or social media.

24. Better outreach would bring people out who don't already have an issue, get them engaged.

25. We have little power groups on the island. Leadership is elected to represent The People, but who are the People? Non-profits have a direct line to their council persons, who then support special causes that don't maybe represent The People.

26. Who represents the people who are just staying at home?

27. Good governance – after we come up with a great comprehensive plan, but the plan is not codified adequately.   We need to review development regulations to make sure they are achieving what we want.

28. We need to look at our development regulations and ask, "Are they precautionary? Are they looking forward 100 years?"

29. We need to be a proactive community, not a reactive community.   Look ahead instead of waiting until there is a crisis.

30. Environmental review needs to look at things like air quality, and the impacts that development, including tree removal, has on air quality.

31. Need an outreach program that includes an educational awareness component. People will become more engaged if they understand the issues better.

Good Governance Listening Session Comments

32. Good governance comes with good input from the community, good information, good science and good data.   We need to know what the baseline is, and then have benchmarks for measuring success.

33. Parking is a big issue.   Deals have been cut over time and we are hurting from that now.

34. We need to support our elected officials and staff in their work.