

**CITY OF OLYMPIA
SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
MINUTES
November 30, 2009
5:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Mayor Doug Mah, Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Kingsbury, Councilmembers Craig Ottavelli, Rhenda Iris Strub, Karen Messmer, Jeannine Roe, and Joe Hyer.

Sea Level Rise

Mr. Andy Haub provided an update on the sea level rise work accomplished through the 2008-2009 work plan. The work focused on evaluating the implications of potential sea rise to the downtown area.

Council discussion included the following topics:

Tidal connectedness to downtown groundwater

Staff responded that the groundwater was influenced by tides and that next year's work efforts would include some relatively straightforward groundwater monitoring. We will be able to assess the responsiveness of the groundwater to tide and thereby better understand the potential for associated flooding.

East Bay redevelopment incorporation of potential sea level rise modifications

Staff indicated that there are several appropriate responses to sea rise along East Bay. These included raising the shoreline at a low spot through landscaping. Staff was not sure if these design features were included in the current project.

Status of FEMA flood hazard updates

The 2003 flood map for downtown Olympia remains current. Talk of another round of updates has begun, but the work may still a number of years out.

Probabilities associated with sea level rise.

Staff discussed the lack of statistical analysis for the UW sea rise projections. Council discussed the public perception that the projections were grounded in statistics. The UW work could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

Potential to link sea level rise responses to other City goals (e.g., water quality improvements)

Staff will look for opportunities to incorporate sea rise response with other City needs.

2011 Comprehensive Plan revisions role in addressing potential sea rise responses.

Council discussed the appropriateness of providing a unique spot in the Comprehensive Plan for climate change and sea rise. Comparisons with the Green River flood response were made. The issue will be addressed further during the Comprehensive Plan scoping process.

In conclusion, Council supported the proposed next steps including Comprehensive Plan discussions and potential small-scale construction projects.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.