

CAPITOL CAMPUS DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Remote Access Meeting
Olympia, Washington 98504
December 1, 2023
9:30 a.m.

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dan Miles, (Chair) Architect 2
Representative Beth Doglio
Senator Sam Hunt
Representative Joel McEntire
Amanda Doyle (for Secretary of State)
Alex Rolluda, Architect 1

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Marc Daily (Vice Chair), Urban Planner
Senator Phil Fortunato
Kristin Glandon, Landscape Architect

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeannie Abbott, Recreation and Conservation Office
Sarah Bannister, Senate Office
Cynthia Barrett, Department of Enterprise Services
David Bremer, Office of Senate Democrats (SDC)
Paul Campos, Olympia Historical Society
George Carter, Department of Enterprise Services
Brent Chapman, Department of Enterprise Services
Brandon Corneliusen, Department of Enterprise Services
James Crandall, Citizen
Chris Ferguson, Department of Enterprise Services
Bill Frare, Department of Enterprise Services
Karen Fraser, Senator (Retired)
Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services

Lonnie Johns-Brown, Citizen
Linda Kent, Department of Enterprise Services
Nouk Leap, Department of Enterprise Services
Lupita Lopez, Citizen
John Lyons, Department of Enterprise Services
Jeff MacDonald, Department of Enterprise Services
Patrick McDonald, Secretary of State
Craig McKissick, Office of Legislative Support Services
Kailee Moulton, Department of Enterprise Services
Colleen Pehar, Senate
Miguel Pérez-Gibson, WA Conservation Action
Robert (no last name) via Telecon
James Troyer, Senate

Welcome and Introductions, Announcements & Approval of Agenda

Chair Dan Miles called the Capitol Campus Design Advisory Committee (CCDAC) virtual meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. A meeting quorum was attained.

Members and staff provided self-introduction.

Chair Miles welcomed and thanked members, staff, and the public for attending the meeting on such short notice. Chair Miles excused Marc Daily and Kristin Glandon who were unable to attend the meeting.

Chair Miles reviewed the agenda to consider the committee's previous postponement of a recommendation to name the Natural Resources Building. The agenda also includes time to receive public comments.

Public Comment – Information

Chris Ferguson, Government Relations Coordinator, Department of Enterprise Services (DES), reviewed the format for offering public comment during a hybrid meeting. Public comment is limited to two minutes.

Lonnie Johns-Brown reported on her support for the committee's consideration to name the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Building in honor of the late Jennifer Belcher. She had the privilege of working with past legislators, such as (Irving) Newhouse and Helen Sommers. She does not believe anyone who has been considered for having a building named in their honor because of their distinguished career also did not encounter some controversy. Leaders by their very nature are visionary and move forward with

proposals knowing not everyone can reach agreement. Jennifer Belcher was one such visionary and leader and not every decision she made was welcomed by all nor was it possible. However, she provided great service to the state and to the Department of Natural Resources. She urged the committee to consider all the fine work completed by Ms. Belcher knowing that it also brings controversy. The committee should move forward with naming the building after Jennifer Belcher.

Miguel Pérez-Gibson advised that he submitted written comments. When Jennifer Belcher completed the first Habitat Conservation Plan during her first term, it reflected quite a change in Washington's forest management. She was overwhelming re-elected to a second term by the people of state of Washington given the good job she completed during her first term. He pointed out that by goggling Washington's Forest and Fish Act, the first reference is from Weyerhaeuser's Washington Forest Protection Association touting great forest practices in Washington State. Ms. Belcher was a change-maker and an entrepreneurial, as well as demanding and sometimes difficult to work with. However, those are important traits to model for future leaders. State government often moves in slow and incremental steps and every now and then a strong leader does the right thing making the state better. He acknowledged that there are those, especially in the small forest landowner community who believe they were slighted but she did provide mechanisms for them to be compensated. The fact that the Legislature did not follow through as quickly as it should have is not the fault of Ms. Belcher. He appreciates the opportunity to speak and for the thoughtfulness the commute has undertaken for considering such a major decision for the state of Washington.

Mr. Ferguson summarized written comments received following the committee's meeting on November 16, 2023. During the November meeting, 29 public written comments were received during the advance public comment period. Of those comments, seven supported the proposal to name the building for Jennifer Belcher and 22 would have preferred retaining the existing name or considering another name for the building. Following the meeting, DES received another 18 comments. Of those comments, 16 were in support of the proposal for naming the DNR Building and two preferred to retain the current name or name the building another name. During the advance public comment period for the December 1, 2023 meeting, 12 public comments were submitted to DES with seven supporting the proposal and five preferring to retain the name or name the building another name. One additional public comment received after the closure of the advance public comment period supported the proposal to name the building.

Chair Miles invited questions from the committee concerning the public comments DES received.

Senator Hunt advised of his desire to offer comments when appropriate.

Chair Miles conveyed appreciation for receiving the additional public comments as those comments served to shed additional light on the proposal and all the issues involved. He thanked DES staff for their willingness to pursue additional research and the opportunity to solicit additional public comments.

Natural Resources Building Naming Proposal – Action

Chair Miles reported the committee is reconsidering the postponed action to name the DNR Building as the Jennifer Belcher Building. The proposal was postponed at the committee's last meeting on November 16, 2023 to enable members to consider written public comments received following the close of the public comment deadline, as well as to provide the committee with additional information.

DES has verified the DNR Building was never officially named when constructed. Additionally, no records were identified that designated a name according to the predominant tenant. DES staff also contacted the Office of the Attorney General. He encouraged committee members to offer any questions as the issue was addressed during the November meeting. Committee members offered no questions.

Chair Miles invited comments from members.

Senator Hunt said the process represents the first time when public comment was received as to a building naming proposal. Previously, the Legislature acted and named buildings. Helen Sommers served as the long-time Chair of the Appropriations Committee and often was required to reject a budget proposal or idea. She was a leader who rendered bold stands funding state services, supporting state employees, women's right, and insisting women representatives be allowed to wear pants on the House Floor. She fought the "old boys club" where she was one of 12 women in the Legislature during her service. She helped depose a sitting Speaker of the House from her party and obviously she had pros and cons. Irv Newhouse was a long-time Republican legislator who opposed many democratic measures. He was once listed as the biggest receiver of free meals and goodies from lobbyists. There were many tough votes when he served in the majority and in the minority. John O'Brien was the longest serving representative who was a devout Roman Catholic who opposed abortion legislation. He was a leader of the public versus private power lawsuit that helped lead to his defeat as Speaker of House. He lost several primaries and finally lost his seat to a Democrat. John Cherberg was Lieutenant Governor of Washington and a former University of Washington football coach. He was fired as a UW coach and one of the unspoken reasons was because he moved to integrate the football team, as well as a pay-off scandal, and a 10-win and 18 loss and two tie records. He served as the Chair of the Democratic State Convention in 1968 and angered many people that led to a walkout by a number of people. Yet, the building is named after him. Joel Pritchard is likely the only one with the least amount of controversy. He served as a member of Congress, as a State Representative, a State Senator, and as Lieutenant Governor and was strongly pro-choice and opposed to President Nixon, which bothered many Republican colleagues. He was also the inventor of pickleball. Any of those individuals subject today to public comments would receive negative reactions from one side or the other. In order to lead, it is often necessary to make difficult decisions. All those individuals made tough decisions and Jennifer Belcher made difficult decisions. For that reason, it is only fitting to name the building in her honor. It is also important to consider that her leadership went far beyond natural resources because it encompassed women's rights, bold stands, and a willingness to speak, vote, and take the lead for the people of the state of Washington. He recommends approval of the recommendation.

Representative McEntire noted that as Senator Hunt surmised, the state has had no shortage of flawed individuals with buildings named in their honor. However, the difference in this particular proposal is the thousands of family-wage jobs lost, as well as small foresters because of the decisions under Jennifer Belcher's tenure. As the first commenter made clear, there will never be universality as there will always be naysayers for any proposed name. Despite that, all people can have negative attributes, especially for those with buildings named in their honor. However, based on the negative comments recited by Senator Hunt, none were attributed to the loss of an entire economy in a section of the state. Thousands of families lost their family-wage jobs and the issue is still very sensitive to his constituents who remember and were affected by those decisions. He continues to receive feedback reflecting that many believed they were not included in the decisions and that their economy and their jobs were never weighed as important in the decisions that were rendered. He understands that in the business of leading, there are many trade-offs and often to achieve good results, it is sometimes at the expense of others. However, he would not be performing his job as a representative of southwest Washington if he did not speak for the serious concerns, loss of jobs, and the economic downturn that has plagued the southwest section of the state because of the loss of forestry lands. That should be considered when considering a name because although it would be somebody who is flawed, he believes the committee can do much better.

Representative Doglio spoke from a personal perspective. She can also speak for many women she knows who believe Jennifer Belcher was a trailblazer as the first woman to head a department that had always

been led by men in a tough, male dominated sector of the economy. She was personally an inspiration to her in many ways. In many respects, she believes the path she chose was influenced by her and she likely could convey that on behalf of number of other women, particularly in the local community, as well as across the state because she was such a trailblazer and a supporter of bringing people to the table and hearing everyone's voice. Although there is some dispute based on some testimony, she brought voices to the table that had never been at the table previously in many ways and was an incredible role model for her and other women not just on forestry issues but on many issues, such as women's rights and growth management. She supports naming the building in her honor.

Senator Hunt added that Ms. Belcher did not create the spotted owl crisis, issues surrounding log exports and log imports, and the myriad of other issues she had to contend with involving public lands she and everyone else had to address. To indicate that Ms. Belcher was responsible for all those issues overlooks the external factors that impacted the department and the entire state.

Alex Rolluda remarked that never having personally met Jennifer Belcher but listening to the many of the testimonies and the written comments, he feels as if he does know her. He believes that a leader is somebody who inspires others to follow and it might not be apparent at the time change is occurring and that person could be perceived as being disruptive and dispassionate, but it is often later when the results are apparent and that change if often for the greater good. Based on the comments, he believes he can support naming the building to the Jennifer Belcher Building.

Chairs Miles reemphasized his appreciation to DES staff for completing additional research as it assisted in clarifying for him, especially not having met Jennifer Belcher or being familiar with her work, to understand the impact she had on not only on state government but across large swaths across the state. The information was helpful for him to understand all sides of the issue.

Chair Miles invited a motion for a recommendation to the State Capitol Committee to approve the proposal to name the Natural Resources Building as the Jennifer Belcher Building to consider at its next regular meeting on December 7, 2023.

Representative Beth Doglio moved, seconded by Senator Sam Hunt, to approve the proposal to name the Natural Resources Building as the Jennifer Belcher Building to consider at its next regular meeting on December 7, 2023. A voice vote approved the motion. Representative McEntire opposed.

Future Announcements and Adjournment of Meeting – Action

Chair Miles advised that for information on future meetings, the SCC and CCDAC websites include information on meeting dates, minutes, and meeting agendas as they become available. The next meeting of the SCC is scheduled on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 10 a.m. All future meetings are scheduled as remote/hybrid meetings.

With there being no further business, Chair Miles adjourned the meeting at 9:58 a.m.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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