

Possible Sequence for Deliberation Regarding Emergency Ordinance 6820
Olympia Planning Commission – 11/18/13 Meeting

The following outline of issues and related decisions regarding Emergency Ordinance 6820 is intended to allow the Commission to move deliberations from the general to the specific in an ordered manner.

1. Basic Perspective and Objective

In review of Emergency Ordinance 6820 the Commission desires to promote the intended development in the existing High Density Corridor zones while protecting existing development adjacent to these zones from incompatible developments within the High Density Corridor zones.

The Commission's recommendations do not include review of the intent or policy reflected in the creation of the High Density Corridor zones.

2. Inconsistencies and Consequences of Emergency Ordinance 6820 Regarding Building Height

Provisions in Emergency Ordinance 6820 that limit buildings within the High Density Corridor zones to heights below those specified for these zones when the High Density Corridor zones were adopted in the Olympia Municipal Code have created a significant obstacle to development in these zones.

Under the Emergency Ordinance, buildings in the High Density Corridor zones that are within 100' of a lot with a single family home are limited to 35' in height. This is well below the intended height limit in these zones of either 60' or 70'.

Staff has identified 55 lots with single family homes within the four Density Corridor zones. The distribution of these lots is such that over significant portions of these zones, development is limited to heights well below those intended in these zones at the time the zones were adopted in the Municipal Code.

3. Inconsistencies and Consequences of Emergency Ordinance 6820 Regarding Step-back

Under the Emergency Ordinance, buildings in the High Density Corridor zones that are within 100' of a lot with a single family home must be stepped back 8' between the second and third stories and stepped back 8' for every two additional stories.

While possibly less limiting on development than the height limits imposed by Emergency Ordinance 6820, this requirement of step-back may impose additional costs on development in the High Density Corridor Zones.

However, the height limitations describe in Point 2 above suggest that this restriction would have limited application in that no building coming under this step-back provision could go above three stories.

Under the Emergency Ordinance, buildings in the High Density Corridor zones that are within 100' of a lot with a single family home to 35'.

4. Perceived Inconsistency Between Inferred Intent of Emergency Ordinance 6820 and Apparent Outcome of Emergency Ordinance 6820

Emergency Ordinance 6820 was adopted in response to a proposed multi-story residence within a High Density Corridor zone and a number of single family residences on or near Bing Street on the west side of Olympia.

These residences are within an RM 18 zone and NOT within a High Density Corridor zone. Given this fact, it is not clear why the Emergency Ordinance established restrictions above those existing in the Municipal Code prior to adoption of the Emergency Ordinance for development adjacent to single family residences within the High Density Corridor zones.

5. Recommendation of Planning Commission Regarding Emergency Ordinance 6820 Provisions Pertaining to Height

The following recommendation of the Planning Commission regarding the height provisions of Emergency Ordinance 6820 is intended to address this inconsistency between the intent of High Density Corridor zones and the consequences of Emergency Ordinance 6820 and, thereby, to both encourage development within the High Density Corridor zones and protect residences adjacent to these zones.

a. Changes to the Maximum Building Height section of Table 6.02 regarding development in High Density Corridor zones:

For zones HDC-1, 2, 3, and 4 in Table 6.02 (page 3 of 4; page 33 of 167 in OPC packet of November 4):

(1) Remove the words preceding "Up to 60'" for all four zones, e.g., remove the following for HDC-1: Up to 35', if any portion of the building is within 100' of R4, R4-8, or R6-12 district; or any lot with a single family home".

(2) Preceding the words "Up to 60'", insert the following language for each of the four High Density Corridor zones:

"Up to 35' if any portion of the building is within 100' of a residential zone with a maximum density of 14 units or less per acre. For buildings within 50' of an abutting residential or mixed use zone with maximum density exceeding 14 units per acre, up to the height allowed in the abutting district."

The text beginning with “Up to 60” for all four HDC zones remains the same.

6. Recommendation of Planning Commission Regarding Emergency Ordinance 6820 Pertaining to Step-backs in the “Additional District-Wide Development Standards” Section of Table 6.02 (page 4 of 4).

The words “or a lot that has a built single family home” are removed from each of the four HDC zones.