



Kaiser Harrison Opportunity Area

TO: Olympia Planning Commission (OPC)
FROM: Community Planning & Development Department
SUBJECT: Issues Raised During Public Hearing Public Comment Period
DATE: June 15, 2016

The Public Hearing for the Kaiser Harrison Opportunity Area was held on Monday, June 6, 2016. The comment period for written comments was open through Friday, June 10, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. Written comments were submitted by thirteen people; copies of which were attached to the OPC packets for the June 20, 2016 meeting. Of the comments received, eight were generally in support of the proposal and five were opposed.

Below are staff comments to some of the issues/concerns raised, for OPC consideration during deliberations. Staff will be available to respond to other issues, comments, or questions the Planning Commissioners may have at the meeting on June 20, 2016.

Issue Raised: Information used in the reports by ECONorthwest is outdated and should be updated.

Staff Comment: The information from the 2013 Investment Strategy was updated in late 2015 and early 2016. The submarket analysis and update, as well as the executive summary, are both dated February 16, 2016. While some people may not agree with the reports, the City believes the information is current and appropriate to use. While this information was used to frame the issues, the proposed preferred alternative and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations to implement it were also based on the public comments received regarding proposed development types and locations, as well as the three preliminary alternatives considered at public meetings. Staff does not believe the information needs to be updated further in order to proceed.

Issue Raised: The Highway 101 access ramps are not needed and will never be funded by the state.

Staff Comment: The US Highway 101 access improvements are a separate but related project. We informed those who attended the public meetings of that proposal in the event it affected their recommendations regarding the type(s) of development desired or where it should be located within the study area. We also noted that while the City is working on the access improvements with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), those improvements are not likely to be constructed for at least ten years. We also noted that the

updated market study shows there is demand for additional retail and housing in the study area with or without the access ramps.

Issue Raised: The proposal will result in a change in use from quiet, single family homes and a few modest businesses to a busy commercial shopping center.

Staff Comment: Staff agrees the proposal would allow for a greater variety and intensity of retail commercial uses; however it would continue to allow office and residential development as well. Very few parcels within the study area are currently in residential zoning districts; most are already in mixed use commercial zones.

The proposal includes several measures to address compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods. For example, zoning code changes are proposed to require additional setbacks and height limitations within 100 feet of properties zoned Residential Low Impact (e.g. the Bayhill and Grass Lake Village subdivisions); requiring Design Review for projects in the proposed High Density Corridor 4 zoning district; designation of Kaiser Road, McPhee Road, Harrison Avenue, 7th Avenue, and the future street as Pedestrian Oriented Streets; and requiring an approved Development Agreement for any single story, single use retail building over 60,000 square feet in size. Any such Development Agreement requires a public hearing and approval by City Council. At a minimum it would have to address:

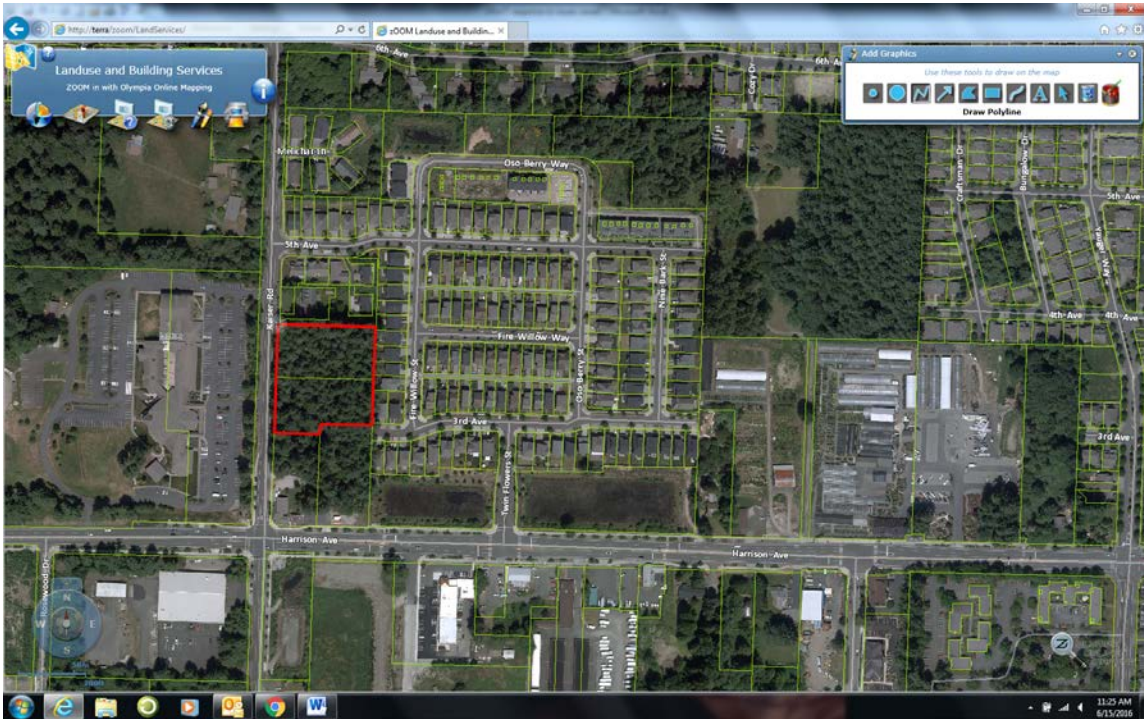
- 1) Building orientation, massing, and use of high quality materials
- 2) Parking is located to the rear or side of the building, or is separated from the street by additional retail buildings
- 3) Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation on site and connections to adjacent properties
- 4) Community assets, such as the multi-use trail identified in the Kaiser Harrison Opportunity Area Plan

Issue Raised: Concern that parking needs of new development will impact the existing neighborhood.

Staff Comment: Each project will be reviewed to ensure city development standards are met, including for onsite parking needs. Projects will also include neighborhood meetings and opportunities for public comment specific to each proposal. The Kaiser Harrison Opportunity Area is intended to accommodate those who arrive by car, but to also be highly pedestrian and bicycle friendly for those who arrive on foot, by bicycle, or by transit. Many people in nearby neighborhoods access the existing businesses on foot and that is anticipated to continue.

Issue Raised: The greenbelt in the northwest corner of the study area provides a nice buffer to the adjacent homes.

Staff Comment: There is not a designated greenbelt in this area. I believe the properties referred to are two vacant lots which are currently wooded and undeveloped (see aerial photo below).



Those properties are privately owned. They are currently zoned Residential 4-8 units per acre. The proposed zoning is Residential 6-12 units per acre, primarily because the R6-12 zones allows for a greater variety of housing types, such as cottage housing (which was a highly rated housing type in the public meetings for the study area). The properties around this site were not developed in a manner that provides for connectivity, with the exception of the potential to extend 3rd Avenue.

Issue Raised: Transportation impacts have not been addressed.

Staff Comment: Transportation impacts were considered during the environmental review of the proposal. Staff worked with the City's transportation engineers to look at potential impacts of the recommended changes. The existing and proposed zoning districts are primarily mixed use commercial zones. The main difference in development potential between existing and proposed zoning is the change from allowing primarily office and residential uses with limited retail to allowing a greater mix of housing, office and retail uses.

While subsequent development proposals will undergo specific analysis of transportation impacts (under either zoning scenario), for non-project assessments such as this one, a higher-level of analysis is conducted.

The overall transportation impacts are essentially the same, with subtle differences. The total number of Average Daily Trips (ADTs) estimated for the

proposed zoning is slightly higher than what is anticipated for the existing zoning. However, the proposed zoning has a lower number of PM Peak Hour trips than what is anticipated under current zoning because office uses are higher generators of traffic in the PM Peak Hour.

Provisions to increase opportunities for walking, bicycling, and transit are included in the Kaiser Harrison Opportunity Area Plan. Future projects will be required to identify transportation impacts and mitigate them in compliance with the City's adopted requirements and policies.

Issue Raised: The comprehensive plan identifies three high density neighborhoods. Intensive development should be focused on these areas and not other locations such as the Kaiser-Harrison area.

Staff Comment: The Land Use and Urban Design Chapter identifies three Focus Areas, including one in the Capital Mall Area, and notes additional Focus Areas will be considered. This proposal does not remove that designation nor does it directly affect the Capital Mall Area as a Focus Area.

The policy direction in the Comprehensive Plan for this proposal is located in the Economy Chapter of the plan. The Economy Chapter references the 2013 *Investment Strategy: Olympia's Opportunity Areas* report and refers to the Kaiser/Harrison area as having potential for neighborhood commercial, mixed-use, and retail. It calls for the city to make strategic infrastructure investments that encourage redevelopment in targeted areas (the downtown, opportunity areas, and in urban corridors). For this opportunity area, the report recommended the city:

- Remove barriers to mixed use development
- Make infrastructure improvements that would support redevelopment
- Consider changes to zoning that would allow for retail and residential uses, such as High Density Corridor