



City of Olympia

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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, December 16, 2013

6:30 PM

Room 207

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Jerome Parker, Vice Chair Judy Bardin, Commissioner Kim Andresen, Commissioner Jessica Bateman, Commissioner Max Brown, Commissioner Roger Horn, and Commissioner Missy Watts

Excused: 2 - Commissioner Darrell Hoppe, and Commissioner Carole Richmond

OTHERS PRESENT

Staff:

Community Planning and Development Deputy Director Leonard Bauer, Associate Planner Amy Buckler

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Law, the former Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (CNA) mapping committee chair, spoke on behalf of CNA. The mapping committee refined the boundaries of the sub areas and the CNA wants those boundaries to be part of the Implementation Plan, rather than part of the Comprehensive Plan.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Buckler reminded the Commissioners whose terms are expiring on March 31, 2014 to reapply for reappointment if interested. She spoke about the potential for scheduling conflicts due to the holidays in the proposed 2014 meeting schedule. The next Planning Commission meeting on January 13, 2014 was confirmed.

5. INFORMATION REQUESTS

Chair Parker discussed the Council's plan to proceed with their review of the Comprehensive Plan update during the first half of 2014 even if the Commission does not complete their recommendation this evening. The Commissioners discussed the

timeline for tonight's meeting.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

[13-1043](#)

PL14.2

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to adopt the language of option 2 with the removal of the word "West". The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Adopted language:

High-density Neighborhoods concentrate housing into three designated sites: Downtown Olympia; Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall. Commercial uses serve high-density neighborhoods and allow people to meet their daily needs without traveling outside their neighborhood. High-density neighborhoods are highly walkable. At least one-quarter of the forecasted growth is planned for downtown Olympia.

Discussion:

- Capital Mall is the recognized name for the mall. Remove the word "West."
- Restore the original language of "primarily walk dependent" from the changed "highly walkable". Vice Chair moved to amend. There was no second.

PL14.3

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to adopt the language of option 2. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Adopted language:

Preserve and enhance the character of existing established Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

Discussion:

- Maintain the original language of "protect and preserve."
- Staff explained the recommended change was made because the original wording could indicate that no change was desirable and so establishes greater flexibility.
- Intention of the Planning Commission is for the neighborhood to be responsible in determining the look and direction of growth.

PL14.4

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Horn, to adopt the language of option 2 with the addition of the word "medium." The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Allow medium-density Neighborhood Centers in low- and medium-density neighborhoods to include both civic and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Neighborhood centers emerge from a neighborhood public process.

Discussion:

-Including the word "and medium" in addition to "low" density neighborhoods.

PL13.1

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Andresen, to adopt the language of option 2 with the removal of "(over 15 housing units per acre)". The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Establish urban corridors as shown on the [Future Land Use Map](#) with potential employment and residential density to support frequent transit service, encourage pedestrian traffic between businesses, provide a large customer base and minimize auto use for local trips.

PL13.5

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to keep the language of option 1, with the removal of "less intensive land." The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Ensure appropriate transitional land uses from high intensity land uses along the arterial streets of the urban corridors to the less intensive land uses adjacent to the corridors; corridor redevelopment should enhance both the corridor and quality of life in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Discussion:

-Ensuring that appropriate transitional land uses remain.

PL13.7

Commissioner Bateman moved, seconded by Chair Parker, to adopt the language of option 2. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Commissioner Watts moved, seconded by Commissioner Horn, to remove the language of "1/4 mile." The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Bateman moved, seconded by Chair Parker to replace the wording in option 2 of "three-story" with "35 feet." The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Areas nearest downtown along Harrison Avenue east of Division Street and the upper portions of the State Street/Fourth Avenue corridor to the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific Avenue should blend travel modes with priority for pedestrian, bicycle and transit systems. These areas should provide for a mix of low-intensity professional offices, commercial uses and multi-family buildings forming a continuous and pedestrian-oriented edge along the arterial streets. There shall be a 35 feet height limit if any portion of the building is within 100' from a single family residential zone, provided that the City may establish an additional height bonus for residential development.

The area along Harrison Avenue west from the vicinity of Division Street to Cooper Point Road -- and the portions of Martin Way and Pacific Avenues from Lilly Road to the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific Avenue - will transition away from cars being the primary transportation mode to a more walkable environment, where bicycling and transit are also encouraged. Redevelopment of the area will create more density and new buildings that gradually create a continuous street edge and more pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

The outer portions of the urban corridors west of the vicinity of the Capital Mall and east of Lilly Road will primarily be accessed by motor vehicles with provisions for pedestrian and bicycle travel; gradual transition from existing suburban character is to form continuous pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, but more regulatory flexibility will be provided to acknowledge the existing suburban nature of these areas.

Discussion:

- Removing the language for describing urban corridors of 1/4 mile.
- Referring the issue/definition of neighborhood centers as a work item in the future.
- Designate different categories of corridors generally as follows:

GT14

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Andresen, to adopt the language of option 2. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Adopted language:

The Urban Corridors of Martin Way, Pacific Avenue, east 4th and State Avenues, portions of Harrison Avenue, Black Lake Boulevard and Cooper Point Road are vibrant mixed-use areas where a large portion of trips are made by walking, biking and transit.

Points raised:

- "Capital Way/Boulevard" is part of the May addendum and clearly defines transportation corridors.
- A continuous wall of buildings that front the street is undesirable.
- The critical importance of planning for walkability.

PL14.1

DEFINITION OF GATEWAYS

Commissioner Horn moved, seconded by Commissioner Andresen, to amend the language of option 2 with "to establish eight civic boulevards with entry exit gateways to downtown Olympia and our state capital" and add "gateways are densely planted with understory trees and landscaping," and to retain the definition of gateways and boulevards. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed. Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Watts, to add the word "trees" to the maximum landscaping language. The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Establish eight gateways with civic boulevards that are entry/exit pathways along major streets to downtown Olympia and our State Capitol.

Discussion:

- Specific language for the "gateways to the Olympia City Center."
- Language is consistent with future growth because the city center will expand.
- Lack of clarity through removal of the word "green" and adding "landscaping".
- Postponing discussion of grand boulevards.
- Explanation why the landscaping language was removed.
- Gateways could include the landscaping language.
- Rights of ways are not necessarily owned by the city.

DEFINITION OF CIVIC BOULEVARDS

The word spatial is a typo and will be changed to special. Commissioner Andresen moved, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to adopt the language of option 2 with the addition of the language "trees and native understory". The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

Each civic boulevard will have a distinct, special environmental setting that is shaped by a public planning process that involves citizens, neighborhoods, and city officials. Civic Boulevards are densely planted with trees and native understories; consideration will be given to the maximum landscaping and amenities feasible.

Discussion:

- Existing language in policy that defines civic boulevards.
- A definition is not needed because it has been described.
- Qualifying language of "without necessity to purchase".
- Giving communities more freedom to determine the type of landscaping.
- Element of public input.
- Putting in the language of public process.
- Keeping separate definitions for gateways and boulevards.
- Add to gateways the definition native trees.
- Street trees are recommended for certain characteristics considering growth, maintenance, etc.

DEFINITION OF MEDIUM DENSITY

Commissioner Brown moved, seconded by Chair Parker, to adopt the language of option 2 with the replacement of "15 to 30" to "13 to 24" units. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Adopted language:

This designation provides for townhomes and multi-family residential densities ranging from 13 to 24 units per acre. Specific zoning is to be based on proximity to bus routes and major streets, land use compatibility, and environmental constraints. Specific zoning will include minimum and maximum densities to ensure efficient use of developable land and to ensure provision of an adequate variety of types of housing to serve the community. Higher densities should be located close to major employment or commercial areas. Clustering may be permitted.

Discussion:

- The definition of medium is not a mandate for a certain density.
- Mixed use residential was not changed by the addendum.
- Mixed use is a ratio of single family and apartments.
- Consistency with the residential development standard table.
- Staff recommends 15 to 24 or 30, and then 15 becomes the target.
- Difficulty of achieving 24 due to stormwater and parking, which also will keep the heights down.

DEFINITION OF LOW DENSITY

Commissioner Brown moved, seconded by Chair Parker, to retain the language of option 1. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Horn, to amend the language and substitute the number "12" for the number "14." The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

Adopted language:

This designation provides for low-density residential development, primarily single-family detached housing and low rise multi-family housing, in densities ranging from twelve units per acre to one unit per five acres depending on environmental sensitivity of the area. Where environmental constraints are significant, to achieve minimum densities extraordinary clustering may be allowed when combined with environmental protection. Barring environmental constraints, densities of at least four units per acre should be achieved. Supportive land uses and other types of housing, including accessory dwelling units, townhomes and small apartment buildings, may be permitted. Specific zoning and densities are to be based on the unique characteristics of each area with special attention to stormwater drainage and aquatic habitat. Medium Density Neighborhoods Centers are allowed within Low-Density Neighborhoods. Clustered development to provide future urbanization opportunities will be required where urban utilities are not readily available.

Discussion:

- Low Density Neighborhoods could be as high as 12 depending on stormwater parameters.
- Issues of grandfathering criteria for rezoning.
- Infrastructure is already in place and will not entail new building for density.
- Defining an environmental zone to reflect site concerns of units per acre.
- Concerns about adding small apartment buildings and townhouses.
- Creation of low density 1, low density 2, designations with different numbers.
- Determinations for existing properties with more than 2 units.
- Questions about conformity for old homes converted to multi unit.
- How land use designation will affect or not affect current zoning preferences.

DEFINITION OF HIGH DENSITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Andresen, to specify the intent in language of "single use residential, single use commercial or mixed use."

The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Brown moved, seconded by Chair Parker, to change the number "30" with "at least 25". The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted language:

High-density Neighborhoods are multi-family residential, commercial and mixed use neighborhoods with densities of at least 25 dwelling units per acre. Specific zoning may provide for densities higher than 25 units per acre. The height in these neighborhoods will be determined by zoning and based on the "Height and View Protection Goals and Policies."

Discussion:

- Concern about story height limits.
- Setting target numbers for upper limits (25 or more).
- Height and view protection.
- Projects outside protection/view height limits and how zoning determine maximum density numbers.
- Viewing 44, 51, and 37 unit examples.
- Specifying the intention so commercial developers do not find the barrier too great to create residential.
- Combining High Density Zones 1, 2, and 3.
- Changing the language "upper portion" to "West of Wilson".
- Remove the language "west of Harrison".
- Changing the word "avenue" to "road" after Cooper.
- Replacing the language "upper portion of State Street to the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific West of Lily Road" to "the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific".
- Equivalency of three stories to 35 feet.

The recommendations were approved as amended.

[13-1063](#) Recommendation on Olympia Sub-areas Planning Map

Chair Parker reviewed the reasons for the recommendation of the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations to remove the subarea map from the Comprehensive Plan Update and include it with the Implementation Strategy.

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Brown, that the sub area planning map, and all references in the text to that map, be removed from the Comprehensive Plan and made part of the Implementation Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Parker moved, seconded by Commissioner Andresen, to recommend to City Council the goals and policies referred to as "Urban Neighborhoods" as amended on December 9, 2013 and December 16, 2013. The Commissioner also directs staff to forward a final Future Land Use Map consistent with their recommendations, including a legend of civic boulevards and gateways, and approves staff to make any non-substantive changes to the plan for the purpose of consistency with the recommendations. The motion passed 6 to 1. Vice Chair Bardin opposed.

The recommendation was approved.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[13-1018](#) Approval of November 4, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Approval of the minutes was postponed.

[13-1019](#) Approval of November 18, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Approval of the minutes was postponed.

8. REPORTS

The Commission elected Commissioner Max Brown as 2014 Chair, Commissioner Kim Andresen as 2014 Vice Chair, and Commissioner Roger Horn as 2014 Finance Sub-committee Chair.

Chair Parker spoke about the need for enhanced effectiveness by the Commission and the potential for more creativity to achieve that in the future. He thanked staff, especially Ms. Buckler and Mr. Bauer.

Vice Chair Bardin commended Chair Parker for his leadership, letting all voices of the OPC be heard, and reiterated the need to address climate change.

Commissioner Horn spoke about the credibility the Commission has engendered with the Council this year and encouraged the Commissioners to get involved in the

Olympia Planning Commission Finance Sub-committee. He also expressed appreciation for staff and their hard work.

Chair designate Brown thanked the entire Commission for the cooperative atmosphere and the opportunity to work together for the common good. He believes that momentum has been established and will work to maintain that.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Parker adjourned the meeting at 10:07 p.m.