



Planning Commission

Recommendation to City Council on LOTT Wastewater Treatment Plant Zoning

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Title

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Recommended Action

Move to recommend to City Council that Zoning Map be amended to change LOTT Alliance wastewater treatment plant area from Industrial to Urban Waterfront zoning.

Report

Issue:

Assuming the proposed Comprehensive Plan update is approved by City Council as recommended by the Planning Commission in December of 2013, should the zoning map of the City's development code be amended to change the LOTT wastewater plant from Industrial to Urban Waterfront land use zoning?

Staff Contact:

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Presenter:

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Background and Analysis:

Washington's Growth Management Act requires that development regulations must be "consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan." RCW 36.70A.040. An update to the City's Comprehensive Plan recommended by the Planning Commission is now being considered by the City Council. A Council decision on the Plan is expected in the next few months. To provide for timely consideration of associated changes in the City's development regulations, including the land use zoning map, the City staff has proposed consideration of a variety of development code amendments, including the zoning change (also known as a "rezone") as described above.

Olympia's pending update of its Comprehensive Plan and the proposed Future Land Use map in particular, now being reviewed by the City Council, would designate the long-term land use of the LOTT wastewater treatment plant site as "Urban Waterfront." The draft Plan describes Urban Waterfront as, "Consistent with the State's Shoreline Management Act, this designation provides for a

compatible mix of commercial, light industrial, limited heavy industrial, and multifamily residential uses along the waterfront.” For comparison, the City’s development code describes the Urban Waterfront District as “intended to: (a) Integrate multiple land uses in the waterfront area of downtown and the West Bay in a way that improves the City’s appeal and identity as the Capital City on Budd Inlet; (b) Encourage high-amenity recreation, tourist-oriented, and commercial development which will enhance public access and use of the shoreline; (c) Encourage development that protects views of Budd Inlet, the Olympics, Mt. Rainier, and the Capitol, and preserves a sense of openness on the waterfront; (d) Encourage water-dependent and water-related development (as defined in the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region) on shoreline properties and permit light manufacturing uses which support nearby industrial and marine related uses; [and] (e) Provide shoreline public access to significant numbers of the population, which is a major goal of the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region. It is also the intent of this district to integrate the policies of the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region into zoning designations applicable to waterfront properties. It is not the intent of this district, however, to make the restrictions of the Shoreline Master Program legally applicable outside the shoreline management zone.” OMC 18.06.020(B)(4). In contrast, the Industrial District “is intended to provide for the continuation and development of heavy manufacturing industries in locations where they will be compatible with other similar uses, and which do not negatively impact adjacent land uses.”

From early in the 1960s until 1981, generally all of the peninsula north of State Avenue between East and West Bays was in a ‘Heavy Industry’ zone. In 1981 the City created a new ‘Central Waterfront’ zone (now termed Urban Waterfront) and applied it to lands along East Bay and generally south of what is now Market Street. However, two blocks including the LOTT wastewater treatment plant remained in the Industrial category. In 1995 the City expanded the Urban Waterfront zone to the north beyond Market Street to include what is now the Farmer’s Market, Batdorf and Bronson coffee roasters, and adjoining land. As a result, the LOTT industrial zone is now surrounded on all sides by Urban Waterfront zoning and by light industrial, retail, marine services, the Hands-on-Children museum, and similar uses.

The nine-acre site in question is currently in the Industrial zoning category. Both the Industrial and Urban Waterfront zones provide for wastewater treatment plants as permitted uses. In fact, the existing facility - although probably originally located entirely within the Industrial zone in question - spans the zoning line and extends into the Urban Waterfront category. The attached summary provides more details for comparing the building size and land use limitations of the two zones.

In the staff’s opinion, the continuing designation of this remnant parcel as ‘Industrial’ could lead to a misimpression that in the near future it may be utilized for industrial purposes - such a misunderstanding could ‘chill’ development of neighboring properties for uses not compatible with heavy industry.

The criteria set forth in Olympia Municipal Code 18.59.050 should be used to evaluate any change in zoning: (A) The rezone is consistent with an approved amendment to the future land use map; (B) The rezone is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; (C) The rezone will maintain the public health, safety, or welfare; (D) The rezone is warranted in order to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, or because of a need for additional property in the proposed land use district classification, or because the proposed zoning classification is appropriate for reasonable development of the subject property; and (E) The rezone will not be materially detrimental to uses or property in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

To date, other than communications with the property owner, notice of this proposal has generated minimal public interest. On May 22, 2014, City staff hosted a combined public information meeting regarding the four pending zoning map changes. No one attending expressed an interest in this proposal.

Options:

1. Recommend to City Council that zoning of LOTT wastewater treatment plant site be changed from “Industrial” to “Urban Waterfront.”
2. Recommend that LOTT wastewater treatment plant site remain in the Industrial zone designation.

Financial Impact:

None. Consideration of this change is part of budget for Comprehensive Plan update.