



Planning Commission

Rezone Application Consolidation Amendment Briefing

Agenda Date: 1/5/2015
Agenda Item Number: 6.C
File Number: 15-0028

Type: report **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

Rezone Application Consolidation Amendment Briefing

Recommended Action

Briefing only; no action required. Commission members may elect to provide direction to staff as described below.

Report

Issue:

The Growth Management Act requires that development regulations be consistent with a city's Comprehensive Plan. The updated Comprehensive Plan recently approved by City Council has a less specific Future Land Use map and as a result there is now a greater possibility of amending the implementing zoning without needing to amend the Plan. Comprehensive Plan amendments can only occur once each year. During the City Council's public hearings on the Plan some members of public suggested that if Council approved the new Plan as proposed, a similar once-per-year limit should be imposed on zoning map amendments (also known as "rezones") that are independent of Plan amendments. On October 7, 2014, the Council referred this 'periodic rezone process' issue (sometimes referred to as "batching") to the Commission for consideration.

Staff Contact:

Todd Stamm, Principal Planner, Community Planning and Development Department, 360.753.8597

Presenter:

Todd Stamm, Principal Planner

Background and Analysis:

In 2011 the staff and Commission discussed the possibility of adopting a less specific Future Land Use map in the new Comprehensive Plan. A 'white paper' prepared for that discussion is attached. Ultimately the Commission recommended and the City Council approved this approach. In addition the Commission has recommended that the development code be amended to provide that all rezones are reviewed by the Commission (current code provides that some are directed to Hearing Examiner for review prior to a City Council decision) and that new more specific rezone criteria be added to the development code. These recommended code amendments will soon be considered by the City Council -- probably in February.

Because the issue of consolidating all rezone applications into ‘batches’ is new to the Commission’s work plan, the City staff seeks guidance on how the Commission would prefer to address this issue. The staff’s preliminary proposal is to schedule a public hearing regarding a code amendment to establish an annual process for rezone application review comparable to that for Comprehensive Plan amendment review. Such a provision would authorize the Council to adopt an annual schedule including a deadline for applications.

For the hearing, the staff would provide analysis of this proposal including the number of applications expected each year, pros and cons of consolidation versus ‘at any time’ review of rezone applications, and other aspects of the issue. At minimum, a ‘twice each year’ alternative would be provided.

Notice of the hearing would be published in the Olympian, and emailed to all recognized neighborhood associations and the news media. Notice of the hearing could also be provided to individuals who commented on this topic during ‘Imagine Olympia,’ but no assurance can be provided that a complete list could be compiled.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

A few members of public commented on this issue during the “Imagine Olympia” Comprehensive Plan update process. Comments were sometimes specific and sometimes in relation to other issues.

Options:

Commission members may elect to provide direction or suggestions to staff collectively or individually, on topics such as:

- Pre-hearing process and date of public hearing
- The specific proposal to be presented at the public hearing
- Scope of analysis to be provided by staff, including any specific questions to be addressed
- Range of options to be analyzed, such as once each year, twice each year, and concurrent or intentionally ‘out of synch’ with annual Comprehensive Plan amendments
- Any additional hearing notice to be provided in addition to standard public notice

Financial Impact:

None; within standard budget