



Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Urban Design Regulation Update

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Title

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Report

Issue:

Discussion on preliminary proposals regarding views and multifamily open space that are part of the design guideline update

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

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Background and Analysis:

One of the first recommended actions to implement Olympia's Downtown Strategy (DTS) is an update to the Downtown design guidelines. These are regulations that help ensure new development and significant rehabs achieve a level of design quality that is consistent with public objectives. PRAC has an expressed interest in two aspects of this work: protecting the view of Mt. Rainier from West Bay Park and requirements for multifamily open space.

This evening staff will provide an overview of the key proposals which have been of interest to PRAC. Discussion and questions are encouraged.

Update Process

Since last April, staff and consultants from MAKERS have been drafting and analyzing a new set of guidelines with help from a design technical work group (TWG). TWG, which has met six times, includes PRAC representative Maria Ruth

Following are the remaining steps in the process:

1. Outreach to neighborhoods, developers and advisory boards (March-April)
2. Final meeting of the TWG (March, TBD)
3. Public Open House (tentatively scheduled for April 18)
4. Planning Commission (OPC) briefing and Public Hearing (June, TBD)

5. Forward ordinance and OPC recommendation to City Council (August, TBD)

View Protection

The City's recently updated Comprehensive Plan guides the City to host a public process using graphic visualization software to identify important views to be protected from key public observation points. Part of the scope of work for the Downtown Strategy was to complete this for views related to downtown (a subsequent process will address additional views throughout the City.) The objective is to identify where the City might need to take steps to protect existing views (rather than create new views.)

During the Downtown Strategy, the City looked at over 50 views identified by the public and found the community has already taken steps to preserve 33 of these (i.e., through shoreline acquisitions or existing regulations.) 10 of the remaining views were selected for further study using 3-D visualization software. Ultimately, the Downtown Strategy, adopted in April 2017, calls for the City to explore steps to protect 3 additional views:

- West Bay Park to Mt. Rainier
- East Bay Overlook to the Capitol Dome (including Drum)
- Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier

Proposed steps have been identified that involve regulatory changes to both the design guidelines and zoning development standards. Staff will provide a graphic overview of the proposals.

Multifamily Open Space

The scope of the design guideline update includes consideration of new standards for requiring open space associated with multifamily developments. This refers to private open space or common open space intended for use by the residents of a building, not the public. PRAC has expressed interest in this from the perspective that public parks should not be relied on to provide all such spaces for downtown residents.

Private open space: area designed and intended for *private* residential use

Common open space: area within or related to a development that is designed and intended for the *common* use or enjoyment of the residents, not individually owned nor dedicated for public use.

Examples: rooftop decks and terraces, indoor recreation facilities, plazas, gardens, or balconies, landscaped courtyards, entrance plazas, children's play areas, pools, water features, accessible areas used for storm water retention or other multipurpose recreational and/or green spaces.

Currently the zoning code includes a provision which requires 15% of a residential project's area be "open space." However, this applies only in the Urban Residential (UR) zone which encompasses much of the SE Downtown Neighborhood area.

The proposal in the working draft of the design guidelines is a requirement that all new multifamily buildings throughout downtown provide onsite open space of at least 100 sf per dwelling or 10% of residential unit floor area, excluding hallways and common areas. This provision would not apply to remodeling of existing residential units or additions to existing residential structures. The type of open space provided may vary depending on the unique development. In addition, special design requirements would apply.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The scope of the design guideline update was guided by public input during the Downtown Strategy, a 2017 open house and meetings with various advisory boards. Public interest was identified for private open space and view protection for the 3 views.

Options:

Discussion only.

Financial Impact:

The City has entered into a \$50,000 contract for services with MAKERS architecture and urban design to help with updating the design guidelines.

Attachments:

Views Map