

# CITY OF SHORELINE

## SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

May 17, 2012  
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline City Hall  
Council Chamber

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### **Commissioners Present**

Chair Moss  
Vice Chair Esselman  
Commissioner Craft  
Commissioner Maul  
Commissioner Montero  
Commissioner Scully  
Commissioner Wagner

### **Staff Present**

Rachael Markle, Director, Planning & Community Development  
Steve Szafran, Associate Planner, Planning & Community Development  
Miranda Redinger, Associate Planner, Planning & Community Development  
George Smith, Associate Planner, Human Services  
Jonathon Morrison Winters, University of Washington Graduate Student  
Jessica Simulcik Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Moss called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call by the Commission Clerk the following Commissioners were present: Chair Moss, Vice Chair Esselman and Commissioners Craft, Maul, Montero, Scully, and Wagner

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

### **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Ms. Markle reported that outgoing and former Planning Commissioners were honored at the May 14<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting. She further reported that the City Council completed their review of and approved the Light Rail Framework Policies. They have been forwarded to Sound Transit, and will also be incorporated into the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Markle announced that at their May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the City Council will consider the Planning Commission's recommendation for Tree Code amendments and the small Development Code amendment regarding Transportation Impact Studies. The Shoreline Master Program will be included on the City Council's consent agenda for approval on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Markle advised that Paul Cohen has been promoted to be the City's new Planning Manager. He has been a senior planner with the City for the past 16 years.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of April 19, 2012 were approved as amended.

### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Sinan Demirel, Shoreline**, asked to provide his comments regarding the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan (next item on the agenda) now because he was unable to stay for the entire meeting. He said he has spent most of his career in the capacity of executive director with small organizations providing services to homeless people. Before that he was the director for the Homeless Families Study for the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). He said that, as a Shoreline resident for the past seven years, he has been struck by the significant increase in the number of people in the community who are precariously housed or homeless. When completing the Comprehensive Plan housing inventory, he strongly encouraged the Commission to pay special attention to these individuals. He also encouraged the City staff to consider and extrapolate information from the research done by other communities since counts were not taken in Shoreline until recently and only in selected areas.

Mr. Demirel suggested that when developing an investment plan for housing, special attention should be paid to those making less than 50% and 30% of median income. He said one tragedy in the development of subsidized housing in other communities as been the moving bar for applying both private and public investment dollars to higher and higher levels of median income, and in some cases to those making above 100% of median income. Given the emergency crisis situation they are currently in, he strongly encouraged the City to pay special attention to those making less than 50% of median.

### **STUDY SESSION ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAJOR UPDATE – HOUSING ELEMENT**

#### **Staff Presentation**

Jonathon Morrison Winters, University of Washington Graduate Student, said he has spent the past few months reviewing the existing supporting analysis for the Economic Development and Housing Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and updating them with new information. He reviewed the updated analysis as follows:

- The Background and Context Section includes information about the growth targets that come from the countywide planning policies. The current goal is 5,000 new housing units over the planning period, but these numbers may be updated in June. The section talks about how the analysis supports the Housing Element, but also complements past planning efforts.
- The Existing Conditions Section contains a housing inventory that talks about the existing types and sizes of housing in the City, including special needs housing. It also addresses housing tenure and vacancies. The section notes that the demand driver for housing includes population growth and the changing characteristics in the City.

- Many of the housing issues were already identified in the existing analysis, but the analysis was updated to include a discussion of affordable housing, segmentation of the housing market by neighborhood area, rising rents in the City, and neighborhood quality. One new housing issue relates to falling home values.
- The data throughout the analysis was updated to incorporate information from the 2010 Census and the 2008 to 2010 American Community Survey. Some tables were expanded to give more information and data on the housing inventory, housing tenure, and household characteristics in the City.

Mr. Morrison Winters briefly reviewed the additional data and information contained in the proposed Housing Element as follows:

- While the population of the City has remained relatively stable over the past decade, the City has seen an increase in the number of households (See Table H-6). This indicates that the size of households is declining. For example, single-person households increased by 951 over the ten-year period, and the number of households with children decreased. Household growth is expected to continue, and much of the growth is projected to come from seniors and singles.
- Table H-4 shows a large increase in the number of vacant units. However, it is important to note this number is just a snap shot of what the vacancy rate was during the census count. While his research was inconclusive, he speculated that the increase could have been due to new apartments that were in lease up during the counting period or household displacement due to the mortgage crisis.
- More information was provided in the analysis related to affordable housing. The affordability targets found in Table H-7 were taken from the King County Countywide Planning Policies. Shoreline's affordability target is 16% of new units affordable to moderate-income households and 22.5% affordable to low-income households. He noted that the area median income (AMI) is based on the median income for King County.
- Using the affordability targets as a benchmark, 30% of the current housing stock is affordable to moderate income households and 13.9% is affordable to low-income households. Moderate-income availability is above the affordability target, but low-income availability is below.
- An affordability gap is the difference between the percentage of the City's residents at a particular income level and the percentage of the City's housing stock that is affordable to households at that income level. To be affordable, no more than 30% of a household's income could go to housing costs. Affordability gaps lead to households being cost burdened because they pay more than 30% of their income for housing. Based on current data, 38.6% of homeowners and 47.9% of renters in Shoreline pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Some people may choose to live in housing that is above that threshold, but it becomes an issue for very low-income households who are at the greatest risk of homelessness and may be unable to afford other basic necessities.
- Compared to King County as a whole, Shoreline has a higher percentage of moderate-income, low-income and very low-income households. When comparing the current income levels for households in Shoreline to the existing housing stock (see Table H-8), there is no gap for households at 80% to 120% AMI or 50% to 80% AMI. This indicates that available housing is higher than the percentage of households at these levels of income. However, there is a 2.1% difference between available housing and the number of households at the low-income level of 30% to 50% AMI. The

gap increases to 10.9% for the very low-income under 30% AMI. Only 3.9% of Shoreline's housing is affordable to the 14.8% of residents who are at the lowest income level.

- Chart H-2 illustrates the year-over-year change in median sale price for housing in Shoreline, which has fallen over the past several years. While lower home values reduce the affordability gaps for perspective buyers, they increase the risk of deferred maintenance, vacancies and abandonment of homes.

Commissioner Maul asked how many people would be included in the 10.9% affordability gap for very low-income. Mr. Morrison Winters answered that the analysis does not include the absolute numbers of households at each income level, but these numbers could be added to provide additional context.

Commissioner Wagner observed that Table H-7 shows that the City of Shoreline has more low and very low-income households than King County as a whole. However, Table H-8 does not compare the City's affordability gap with King County as a whole. She suggested that this additional information would help put the City's affordability gaps into perspective. Ms. Redinger suggested that rather than comparing to King County as a whole, perhaps it would be more helpful to break out comparable cities. The Commissioners agreed it would be helpful to compare Shoreline's numbers with King County as a whole and with some comparable cities.

Chair Moss asked if the number of single-person households includes individuals over 65 years old. Mr. Morrison Winters answered that this number identifies all single-person households, including those over 65. Chair Moss asked if there is a target for the very low-income group. Ms. Redinger answered that the original intent of the countywide planning policies (CPPs) was to provide a target of 24% of new units being affordable. However, over the past several months, a group of planning directors has met to discuss the issue further because some cities already have sufficient housing stock and want to receive credit for existing development. Rather than an absolute target number, they have mandated that each city perform a gap analyses and adopt policies that are tailored to meet their individual circumstances. Cities are required to place emphasis on the very low-income group, which is a countywide need.

Commissioner Scully requested more information about area median income (AMI). Mr. Morrison Winters explained that the countywide median household income is \$67,711, and it is \$66,476 in Shoreline. The AMI used in the analysis represents the countywide numbers.

Ms. Redinger said much of Mr. Morrison Winters work was focused on affordability issues based on the countywide planning policies. Other issues could also be addressed in the Housing Element, including housing choices, housing styles, universal design, aging in place, and transit-oriented housing.

### **Public Comment**

**Kelly Rider, Seattle, Housing Director for the Housing Development Consortium (HDC) of King County.** On behalf of the HDC's more than 100 organizational members, she thanked the Commission for the opportunity to comment on the proposed update to the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. She explained that HDC is a non-profit membership organization, which represents private businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies, who are all working to develop

affordable housing in King County. They are dedicated to the vision that all people should have a safe, healthy and affordable home.

Ms. Rider referred to her written comments, and specifically emphasized that from late 2006 to early 2008, a group of dedicated Shoreline citizens worked hard to develop the Shoreline Comprehensive Housing Strategy. The work done by this group of citizens is commendable and it is unfortunate that so little of the strategy has been implemented thus far. She said that while the housing market has changed drastically since the group started their work, their recommendations are no less applicable. She noted that although many homeowners have seen reductions in their home values since the recession began, rents are actually increasing across the region as higher-income households hesitate to purchase a home and vacancy rates decrease. She further noted that low-income families continue to struggle to find an affordable place to live as much now as ever before.

Ms. Rider said the HDC urges the City to make an explicit commitment in the Comprehensive Plan to implementing the housing strategy. In particular, she urged the City to continue their commitment to identify and develop relationships with owners of privately owned multi-family housing. She explained that local organizations, such as the YWCA and the Community Psychiatric Clinic, have been working in Shoreline to partner with private landlords to provide housing opportunities at low cost to the public. However, they have been struggling to gain participation from local landlords. While Shoreline's staff has been working with the HDC to improve these relationships, they are asking that an explicit commitment to these activities be included in the housing element.

Ms. Rider said the HDC supports the Housing Strategy's recommendation to use the property tax exemption (PTE) to encourage development of affordable housing units. She advised that, last fall, when the City expanded their PTE program to additional neighborhoods, the HDC advocated for focusing the incentive on creating affordable housing for households earning less than 50% of AMI. She urged the City to establish a policy to explore the use of the PTE incentive for this purpose. She also urged them to include a policy to provide incentives to encourage the development of affordable housing and to review and expand existing incentives such as density bonuses, fee waivers, PTE, etc. She concluded that appropriately-crafted incentives are an ideal way to meet the housing needs of households earning less than 50% AMI without direct public subsidy and to ensure all households, regardless of income, can afford to live in communities of opportunity. In other words, safe neighborhoods, with good schools, many jobs, strong access to transit, and plenty of parks and open space. The HDC encourages the City to define long-term affordability for these incentives of at least 50 years, which is a standard length of affordability for many public funding sources across King County and the State.

Ms. Rider announced that, in partnership with United Way of King County, the HDC is proud to facilitate the North King County Affordable Housing and Homelessness Work Group, which is a coalition of faith communities, non-profit organizations, and Shoreline City staff. She noted that many of the work group members are present at the meeting, and the Commission would hear from several of them. She asked the members to raise their hand to identify themselves. She also asked those who live in Shoreline to keep their hand up. She said the work group has been exploring innovative ways to create more affordable housing in Shoreline, including building permanent affordable housing on property owned by faith communities. She noted that last November, nearly 80 people crowded into the

Council Chamber to share successes and hear about creative models that help meet the needs of homeless individuals in the community as part of the work group's second annual forum.

Ms. Rider concluded by emphasizing that homelessness is very real in north King County. Unfortunately, the needs of homeless individuals are hardly addressed in the proposed Housing Element. She urged the Commission to recognize the needs of homeless individuals and families in the housing inventory and truly demonstrate that the housing needs of homeless individuals are just as important as the needs of other segments of Shoreline's population. She said HDC looks forward to continuing a strong partnership with the City, and they would be happy to work with the Commission and staff to craft new language to address any of their expressed concerns.

**Meghan Altimore, Housing Director for Hopelink**, a non-profit that has served the City of Shoreline for many years. She advised that Hopelink provides transportation, food, emergency assistance, education, and case management to community members who are very low income in Shoreline and throughout north and east King County. She encouraged the City to develop more affordable housing, especially for the lowest income of the community.

Ms. Altimore announced that Hopelink was recently invited to strengthen their commitment in Shoreline by working with the Richmond Beach Congregational Church to offer permanent, affordable housing to homeless families in the community. This opportunity includes the development of housing design to serve homeless families with critical shelter and the services that are needed to allow them to permanently exit homelessness and have substantial progress on their journey out of poverty to permanent self-sufficiency. She said the need for this type of housing is paramount. She noted that in 2011, Hopelink had to turn away 1,433 families throughout King County who were verified to be homeless and had nowhere to go. Many of these families were in north and east King County.

Ms. Altimore explained that affordable housing meets many key goals. It allows for a diverse socio-economic population that welcomes households of all incomes; not just the very poor that Hopelink represents, but all those who serve in the community. She pointed out that every city struggles with congestion. Hopelink is a transportation agency, and they are very aware of the issues that are affecting the City. Opportunities to live where you work make all the difference in reducing unnecessary traffic, and it is critical to allow low-income families to have stable housing that encourages better outcomes for their children.

Ms. Altimore summarized that families are becoming homeless in the City each week, with fewer and fewer opportunities to access resources for affordable housing. Projects such as the one that Hopelink and the Richmond Beach Congregational Church are envisioning will provide a critical resource to homeless families while preserving the character of the neighborhoods. She said affordable housing providers are dedicated to providing high-quality housing that enriches the neighborhoods and blends seamlessly. She said that during the eight years she has worked in the Shoreline, she has been inspired by the community's commitment to those who are most in need. When the call was put out for affordable housing throughout King County, it was Shoreline congregations that came to the table. She encouraged the City to support this work, as well.

**Marcia McLaughlin, Shoreline,** said she has been a resident of the City for 41 years and a member of the Richmond Beach Congregational Church, which has been part of the City for more than 100 years. She said the church feels strongly that the City's housing plan needs to include housing for those who are homeless, and not simply affordable housing. She specifically expressed concern about the section of the plan that mentions the respect and sensitivity to the neighborhood quality. She said that in the church's early stages of planning with Hopelink to build housing for homeless families, neighbors stated concern that homeless housing would be out of character and would be better placed along the Aurora Corridor. She expressed her belief that it is possible to build housing for homeless in the City that is compatible with the quality and character of the existing neighborhoods. She observed that part of the problem comes from people's misperceptions, and she suggested that the Housing Element should include education and outreach to help the community understand who the homeless people are and what they need. By emphasizing education, people will see the possibilities and potential of neighborhoods that are diverse and balanced.

**Paula McCutchen, Ronald United Methodist Church,** said she is a resident of Bothell, but she works in Shoreline. She pointed out that Ronald United Methodist Church wants to partner with the City in creating a vibrant and healthy community. They believe that a very important part of moving the City in the best direction is responding to the needs of homeless people in the community by creating affordable housing. She explained that Ronald United Methodist Church overlaps commercial and residential areas, and every week on average they see three people during the winter and two people during the summer who are living without housing. Also on occasion, people who come to them have spent the evening under their trees or the eaves of their building awaiting their business hours or worship times. She shared the following stories:

- Jeff is a regular visitor who rides his bike and is in need of food and shoes.
- Ron longs for shelter but cannot find a safe place.
- June lives in a shed not far from the church. She works hard at staying sober and on her medications for her mental health. Every day she does this so she can search for a job and home without being afraid that demons are coming out of the computer to take her soul.
- Claire needs a bus ticket and food until food bank day.
- Pauline, a grandmother, lives in her car with her little dog.
- Several people have jobs in Shoreline, but need to go elsewhere for shelter because there is none in the City.

Ms. McLaughlin summarized that although individuals express very individual needs, the most common requests are for vouchers for food, gas, lodging and transportation. They are also asked for toiletries, help to cover medication costs, and shower and laundry facilities. The church is trying to adapt their responses to fit the ever-changing needs they see and hear about each week. They provide emergency food banks in partnership with Hopelink, and they have on-sight food, as well as bottled water. They have a small clothing bank, and they work with Deseret Industries. They have allotted two bus tickets per person, and they provide grocery bags or something similar for carrying belongings. Beyond the physical items, people need compassionate care and attention. Unfortunately, the Church does not see the reality of homelessness going away. It is very real and in the City's midst. They see more people week by week, and many are losing their homes and jobs and continue to do so. The congregation truly believes that the solution to homelessness is providing affordable housing so that families and

individuals can have sustainable living and lives. The church congregation is working diligently to do their part, and they would like to partner with the City in meeting this need. She recommended that the Housing Element recognize that too many people in the local community are experiencing homelessness. She also recommended the Housing Element include a comprehensive strategy that encourages and supports the construction of affordable housing throughout Shoreline. Ms. McLaughlin said she has enjoyed working with the North King County Affordable Housing and Homelessness Work Group. The church is excited about the continued journey of trying to provide affordable housing.

**Pam Russell, Pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**, which is located on the Shoreline side of 145<sup>th</sup> Street. She said she also represents Bethel Lutheran Church and the First Lutheran Church of Richmond Beach, which are all part of the same Northwest Washington Senate of Lutheran Churches. She also represents the Compass Housing Alliance, which is affiliated with the Lutheran Church and which operates the Shoreline Veterans Center across from Costco. She said that addressing homelessness is very important to the members of these congregations, and they have been active and will continue to be active in developing and financing housing for people at the lowest levels of the income scale. Part of the church's mission is to make room for those who are most burdened with low income or absence of income, and they have every intention of working with the City of Shoreline to continue to make affordable housing available. In turn, they would like for the City's Housing Element to be aggressive in developing strategies for incentivizing people who will develop low-income housing and for educating the community about the need for this housing and the vibrancy it brings to the City to house people of every economic level.

Pastor Russell said the churches she represents are very much interested in the development of affordable housing. In the 11 years she has been pastor of a church on edge of Shoreline, she has seen many people who were struggling reach the verge of losing their housing for various reasons. These people are members of her congregation and people who come to her asking for help. This is a very real problem.

**Lois Harrison, Shoreline**, said she has lived in Shoreline more than 50 years and is a member of the Richmond Beach Congregational Church. She said her heart goes out to those individuals and families who are homeless, particularly those with little children. The number of homeless in Shoreline is rising, and there is insufficient affordable housing. She explained that the reasons for homelessness are complex and many. She feels strongly that the City must do whatever they can to create a community where everyone, especially children, has a place to live and stability. She commented that the design of Richmond Beach Congregational Church's proposed project would fit well into an established single-family neighborhood. She said she has heard comments about traffic concerns. However, most of the people who will live in the units will be single-parent families, and many will not be able to afford a car. The project's location on the bus route would be an advantage to those who are looking for jobs and to establish their place in the community and society at large. She urged the Commission to consider the project very favorably.

**Michael Pallowitz, Shoreline**, said he has lived in the City for more than 25 years and he is a development consultant for non-profits interested in developing affordable housing for people with disabilities. He pointed out that an individual who earns 50% of the AMI makes approximately \$33,000 per year. By comparison, someone on a standard social security income receives \$672 per month. He



said this information causes him to look at the charts in the analysis differently. He suggested that AMI should be broken into segments of the population to show the difference between who can and cannot compete for housing.

Mr. Pallowitz noted that the Housing Element does not use “people first” language. For example, the term “developmentally disabled citizens,” is antiquated. He suggested the language should be updated to be consistent with recent State legislation that uses “people first” terms such as “citizens with a disability” or “person with a developmental disability.”

Mr. Pallowitz referred to the property tax exemption (PTE) program (Ordinance 520), which attempts to promote affordable housing by giving developers an exemption to lower the rents based on AMI and size of units. He said the reality is there is no affordable housing in a 12-year period for any of the units in any of the geographical locations. Setting rent for a studio apartment at \$1,300 per month is not affordable when fair market rent is closer to \$917. He offered to share his calculations with the Commission and/or staff. If the City puts down \$200,000 to buy down a unit, there should be a return on the investment.

Mr. Pallowitz commented that the proposed Housing Element does not provide any meaningful goals for home ownership. He noted that the Washington Home Ownership Center is located in Shoreline, as is the largest home ownership program for people with disabilities. However, the Housing Element does not include any policies related to foreclosure counseling, down payment assistance, etc.

**Anna Straham, Shoreline**, said she works for King County Housing and Community Development, and she has worked with homeless families and individuals in multiple capacities for over 10 years. She said she has been a resident of Shoreline since 2003, and she has seen many houses on her street become vacant over the years. The vacancy rates in the supporting analysis show 665, and she would be curious to see the number segregated between multiple and single-housing units. She expressed her belief that there are not enough multi-housing units in the City. The City’s higher affordability gap than King County as a whole points to the need of more affordable housing for AMI earners under 50%.

Ms. Straham said a bingo hall close to her neighborhood has been vacant since 2006, and this space could be redeveloped into approximately 80 units to meet the needs of lower-income residents, incorporating some of the incentives recommended by the HDC. This type of development could benefit existing businesses and take advantage of the transportation opportunities that will be constructed between the hubs of 145<sup>th</sup> and 185<sup>th</sup>. She commented that as they build up transportation and bring in more people, more affordable housing will be needed.

**Brock Howell, King County Program Director for Futurewise, Seattle**, explained that Futurewise works with Washington communities to save farms and forests, protect rivers and lakes, and build strong towns and cities for all people. He said that affordability is critical to allow people to live near where they work and go to school and to allow people to age in place. He said it is estimated the region will grow by 1.5 million people over the next 30 years, which is an incredible opportunity. He noted that the Housing Element is a 20-year plan; and it is hoped that light rail will come to the City of Shoreline within that time frame. There will be great opportunities to build around the light rail stations to ensure that affordable housing is part of the mix. Locating affordable housing near affordable transportation

increases affordability by saving households money, reducing sprawl, and reducing impacts for climate change.

Mr. Howell suggested the supporting analysis should pay special attention to two demographic shifts. One is that the baby boom is quickly becoming the senior boom and must be addressed over the next 20 years. At the same time, they must mix up the work force in the community and be aggressive with the population and affordability growth. Most of the 1.5 million additional people will be immigrants into the region from elsewhere in the state, from other states, and from other countries. This special demographic must be considered. He suggested the City include two additional data sources into their Housing Element. First, the Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index done by the Center of Neighborhood Technology analyses affordability in all major metropolitan regions based on housing and transportation and contains data specific to the City. The Brookings Institution in Washington D.C. also has data related to job access via transit for the top 100 metropolitan regions in the United States.

Mr. Howell emphasized that homelessness is a regional economic problem that must be addressed in each community, with particular emphasis on those who are below 30% AMI. They need to consider the size and type of housing as they address the new work force coming in. The family sizes could potentially be different. He referred to the earlier discussion about how the City's AMI compares to the rest of the County and region. He suggested that one way to make this comparison is to consider the AMI for Shoreline, the County and the region. The goal should be to make sure there is adequate housing and transportation near where people work and go to school.

**State Representative Cindy Ryu, Shoreline**, said she is also a former Shoreline Council Member and Mayor. She said she currently serves on the Community and Economic Development/Housing Committee in the State Legislature, and she has supported the filing fee extension and increase to combat homelessness. Representative Ryu agreed with Mr. Pallowitz that they must link the affordability targets with tax incentives. She said that at one point, PTE was 100% for the North City area, and the City Council voted to lower it to 80%.

Representative Ryu said there are many seniors in Shoreline, and the proposed Housing Element offers the concept of "cottage housing" as one option for addressing their future housing needs. She reminded the Commission of the history in Shoreline of viewing cottage housing as "milk carton houses." She suggested that rather than using the term "cottage housing," the language could use "efficient, small houses." She said she knows of a neighbor who is considering selling her home and moving to Monroe because most the small, compact homes in Shoreline have stairs. She suggested that the Housing Element offer more opportunities for seniors to age in place by encouraging more small homes without stairs in Shoreline.

Representative Ryu suggested the Commission consider discussions with the Shoreline School District. She applauded the effort to find housing for disabled, some of which are students that have an impact on both programming and funding. It is important for the City to make these connections so needs can be identified at the local level and forwarded to those responsible for education funding at the State level. Representative Ryu also suggested the Commission consider how the Sound Transit Station sites might impact the school district. For instance, the City of Shoreline officially supports studying sites at 130<sup>th</sup> in Seattle, 145<sup>th</sup>, 155<sup>th</sup>, 185<sup>th</sup>, and points to the north. Unfortunately, she helped Council Member

Phillips remove the 175<sup>th</sup> Street site as a potential station location. However, if a station is located at 130<sup>th</sup>, it would make sense to locate another station at 175<sup>th</sup>. She suggested that this site be placed back on the list of potential sites. She noted that there are no commitments from the school district or homeowners on the east side of Interstate 5 to relinquishing property for a Sound Transit station in this location. It is time for the City to have public discussions about what is best for Shoreline and not let the Sound Transit Board and other outsiders dictate what is good for Shoreline.

**Janet Way, Shoreline, Paramount Park Neighborhood Group**, said the Paramount Park Neighborhood, which is located just north of the City boundary on the east side of Interstate 5, could be significantly impacted by the proposal to locate a light rail station at 145<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Way said she is a baby boomer and would like to age in place in her house. She does not want to be forced to move elsewhere because of City policies. When creating policies, it is very important to consider the current residents of Shoreline (stakeholders). She noted that Policy SA3 calls for encouraging and soliciting input from all stakeholders. She suggested the City form a stakeholders committee to review the Housing Element. She commented that the “devil is in the details” of how the areas are planned and how people of all income levels are incorporated. It can be done in a way that makes everyone in the City angry, or it can be done in a way that makes most everyone happy about the outcome. She noted that the Paramount Park Neighborhood is already culturally diverse with numerous low-income people. She said she appreciates the conversation about homelessness because she has been homeless and knows how hard it is to “claw your way back” to a place that is secure. She suggested they work on policies that will not displace other people. There must be a way for gradual implementation so that everyone feels heard.

Ms. Way said the Paramount Park Neighborhood Group supports Policies SA3, SA5, SA6, SA7, SA11, SA12 and SA13. She specifically referred to SA13, which calls for designing study areas to provide gradual transition. She emphasized that any housing development on the Fircrest site needs to be compatible with the medically fragile disabled people who currently live there.

**Marilyn Ramirez, Shoreline**, said that, at one time, she lived in government housing in Mill Valley, California, a very affluent area. The government housing did not impact the area; it was a nice development located below condominiums and single-family homes. However, it was located too far away from transit opportunities. She emphasized the need to develop affordable housing near transit locations so it is easier for those who don’t have cars. She said affordable housing gives people who are down on their luck a jumping spot. People need affordable places to live where they can still be independent. She said she now has a condominium of her own.

**Maria Walsh, Mountlake Terrace**, said she was present to speak on behalf of her son who lives at Fircrest. She invited Commissioners to visit the Fircrest property and offered to arrange a tour to enhance their knowledge of the site. She agreed with Ms. Way’s earlier comment that whatever is developed on or near the Fircrest site must be compatible with the existing residents. People deserve to remain on the property, regardless of its value. They have been there a long time, and the site provides excellent safety services for people with developmental, physical and behavioral disabilities. She asked the Commission to be understanding of their needs.

**Abdulah Polovina, Imam of the Mosque Islamic Center in Shoreline**, said he was present to learn more about the Commission and to thank them for their work. He said the mosque is working in

partnership with the Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry and five other congregations in King and Snohomish County on a project called Faith and Family Homelessness. Currently, the group is working to raise public awareness of family homelessness, and he suggested that the City and other congregations should join in this effort. He said the project encourages faith based institutions and organizations to be more involved. They anticipate grant funding to start the public awareness campaign in the next six months, and he is hoping the group can expand and do more to address homelessness in the future. Now is the time to do something for those who are less fortunate, and it is time to involve other faith-based organizations.

### **Staff and Commission Discussion**

Ms. Redinger clarified that staff thoroughly reviewed the current Comprehensive Plan to clean out policies that were obsolete, redundant, background, etc. However, based on the project timeline for adoption, they were unable to spend a great deal of time developing new policies. This has become the task of the Commission and staff, and they are encouraging community input. She emphasized that the current iteration of the Housing Element represents an extremely preliminary draft. The fact that policies may not exist yet to address many of the issues raised by citizens does not mean there is no intention to include them. That is why feedback from the public and the Commission is so important.

Commissioner Wagner asked if the supporting analysis would be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan by reference. Ms. Redinger said she has not received a definitive answer regarding this question from the City Attorney. Staff will meet with the City Attorney in the near future to address this question, as well as other issues about what would be included in the final draft and the subject of public hearing.

The Commission reviewed the draft Housing Element and made the following observations and suggestions:

- Chair Moss referred to the third paragraph in the Introduction Section and asked if there are very many areas with manufactured homes in Shoreline. If so, does the Housing Element provide specific language to address this type of use? Mr. Szafran said the City keeps a count of how many manufactured homes are located on individual lots in the City. While they do not have any “parks” for manufactured homes, they are allowed on any single-family lot in Shoreline.
- Commissioner Wagner said the second sentence in the third paragraph in the Introductory Section implies that the Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the City to provide opportunities for a range of housing types. She suggested the sentence be clarified. She echoed Representative Ryu’s suggestion that rather than “cottage housing,” the City could come up with a better way of articulating the values they are trying to encourage such as smaller-scale housing with communal open space, etc.
- Commissioner Scully said he was convinced even before the public comments that the Housing Element is missing two goals that must be part of the City’s transition from being a suburb of Seattle to its own urban center. Rather than relying on regional services to address social problems, the City should address the problems in house by adding the following two goals: Provide housing support

for the temporary homeless, and provide ongoing assistance for the bottom 30% of AMI. Vice Chair Esselman suggested the two additional goals could be folded into the existing goals.

- Vice Chair Esselman said it is important to remember that Shoreline started as a bedroom community and suburb of Seattle, and it consists primarily of single-family housing. Because it is important to acknowledge the need to maintain and enhance both single-family and multi-family residential areas, she suggested that Goal IV not be changed as recommended by staff.
- Commissioner Craft recalled that, at their last meeting, the Commission discussed that the Housing Element would be updated to incorporate analysis associated with light rail and various other forms of public transportation. Mr. Szafran advised that updated numbers would be presented to the Commission on June 7<sup>th</sup> as part of their review of the Land Use Element.
- Chair Moss noted there are goals related to universal design, transit-oriented development, the Comprehensive Housing Strategy, and green building. She questioned if the Commission would also like to add a goal for potential Development Code amendments related to housing styles.
- Chair Moss reminded the Commission that the Housing Element is in draft form, and the staff and Commission is open to suggestions. She invited members of the public to submit their ideas to staff in writing.
- Commissioner Wagner referred to Goal H V, which talks about ensuring compatibility in quality, design and scale. She recalled that the Commission has worked extremely hard over the last several years to address public concerns about pushing higher-density development into neighborhoods. However, she suspects there are a large number of people who support a different perspective, and it is important for them to share their thoughts. She particularly referred to the Bingo site identified earlier by Ms. Straham and recalled that allowing high-density development on the site was part of a long, drawn-out process and the perception was that the neighborhood was not interested. She said it is important for the Commission to listen to new viewpoints they have not heard before.
- Commissioner Craft commented that the advent of light rail in existing neighborhoods will end up creating new neighborhood environments. He suggested the language in Goal H V should be changed to read, “. . . quality, design and scale within existing and future neighborhoods. . .” This change would make it clear that the City anticipates an increase in population and density and an increase in density hubs as a result of transportation changes.
- Commissioner Maul observed that there is a lot of language in the Housing Element about preserving quality, but they are actually considering significant changes in some areas. For example, the residents in the area of 185<sup>th</sup> are not excited about selling their homes to allow for future higher density development that would make sense where a transit stop exists. The Commission should keep in mind that some areas will change, and the change must be done sensitively, smartly and in the right places.

- Commissioner Montero said Goal H VII calls for cooperation with other jurisdictions to meet housing needs. He suggested the goal should also call for cooperation with other organizations throughout the City and county that support homelessness. These organizations have a lot of helpful ideas. The Commission agreed to add “and organizations” after “jurisdictions.”
- Chair Moss said she heard a number of citizens comment about the need to incentivize low-income housing development, which is not really addressed in the goals. She invited Commissioners to forward their comments to staff to address this issue.
- Commissioner Wagner said one session she attended at the fall 2011 American Planning Association Conference talked about how costly green design is to implement. She suggested the City should have some ability to certify and/or approve a certain level of LEED without a huge administrative overhead as an incentive for affordable housing.
- Commissioner Wagner said it is important to plan for people to “age in place.” She recalled that when discussing the Southeast Neighborhoods Subarea Plan, the Commission recommended the City allow an exemption to the impervious surface limitations so existing housing stock could be retrofitted to accommodate Americans with Disabilities (ADA) access. It was noted that pervious surfaces could be used as an alternative in these situations. Ms. Redinger advised that the City used to calculate impervious surfaces and then give credit for pervious surfaces. However, this changed when the City adopted the Department of Ecology’s (DOE) Low-Impact Development Manual. Now everything that is not natural landscaping or grass is considered hardscape, but the stormwater calculations give credit for pervious surfaces.
- Chair Moss commented that building on incentives for universal design and ease of access is important. It is easier to address this issue when development occurs rather than later as a retrofit to an existing structure. They may want to add policies to address this particular issue.
- Commissioner Wagner recalled that Ms. Redinger has pointed out on numerous occasions that single-family residential development is the most environmentally unsustainable type of housing. If the City’s goal is to become more sustainable, they would be remiss if they did not require single-family residential development to incorporate low-impact development techniques. Commissioner Scully agreed and suggested a new goal be added to “encourage sustainable housing development.” He agreed that single-family residential development is generally the least environmentally sensitive, but that is not the case in all situations and in all environments. If the goal is sustainability, they should craft policies to meet that goal within specific neighborhoods and areas.
- Commissioner Maul commented that LEED certification is becoming more common and less intimidating. Some of his clients are finding they are hitting LEED Silver with very little work and minor overhead costs. Chair Moss recalled that one citizen commented about the length of time an affordable housing unit should last. She said it makes sense to incorporate LEED type of standards in the beginning. If a structure needs to last for 40 to 50 years, it is important to make sure it is as efficient as possible.

- Commissioner Maul referred to Policy H1 and suggested that it should be strengthened in a way that talks about special needs and affordable housing. These issues are paramount to accomplish Goal H I, which is to provide sufficient development capacity to accommodate the 20-year growth forecast. Commissioner Kraft expressed his belief that Policy H1 is a global statement that talks about housing for all citizens of the community. While he agreed the policy could further address the issues of affordability and sustainability, encouraging a variety of residential design alternatives that increase housing choices would accomplish the goal, as well. Commissioner Maul observed that while Policy H1 talks about increasing choices, requiring compatibility with the character of existing development throughout the City does not exactly open the door for change. He suggested that additional language should be added to Policy H1 to encompass future growth.
- Commissioner Scully agreed with staff that Policy H2 should be rewritten to place proximity to transit as a priority for residential development in commercial zones. He said the City should do everything they can to make sure residential development takes place around the transit hubs. Commissioner Craft said it is important to be sensitive to the fact that residential development in commercial zones can be mixed-use development, and a mixture of commercial and residential uses can be compatible within a dense area.
- Commissioner Maul suggested the language in Policy H15 should be strengthened by replacing “if it helps provide” to “to encourage.” Commissioner Wagner noted that this policy is intended to be an incentive to allow additional density in exchange for low-income or moderate-income housing. Ms. Redinger invited the Commission to provide specific direction about how to balance incentives versus mandates. Mr. Szafran said the Development Code already includes provisions for increased density if a developer provides affordable housing. Ms. Redinger noted that in the one test case, other issues such as hardscape coverage prevented the developer from utilizing the density bonus. The Commission could add an additional policy to consider what variances, exemptions or other incentives could make the density bonus more meaningful and/or achievable. Commissioner Wagner said an effective density bonus provision has been a Commission goal for a number of years, and stating it more explicitly in the Housing Element would be appropriate. Based on public input, perhaps the policy could be stronger to accommodate even greater density bonuses than what the current Development Code allows.
- Vice Chair Esselman suggested that Policy H8 could be rewritten to make the intent clearer.
- Commissioner Scully suggested that a more definitive action statement could be provided in Policy H16. He asked if the City has had an opportunity to explore the feasibility of creating a City housing trust fund for low-income citizens. Mr. Smith said it takes money to implement a trust fund, and this issue has not been resolved. Ms. Markle said the City participates in and provides some funding to other housing consortiums.
- Chair Moss said the use of a siting process that includes citizen input has been part of the discussion on numerous issues. She pointed out that sometimes, citizens provide input but do not feel they are heard. She questioned how they can help the public understand the difference between input and information and what an influencing factor is. While they want to be inclusive and hear what

citizens have to say, it is important to make it clear that State law, not City law, regulates the placement of special needs housing.

- Commissioner Montero asked if there is a tax incentive for creating affordable rental properties. Ms. Redinger said the City has several property tax exemption (PTE) areas, including Ridgecrest. When a PTE area is created, the level and terms of affordability in order to qualify for the PTE must be specified. Within the last year, the City Council adopted new language for how to qualify for PTEs as an economic development incentive. She said there has been a lot of debate on how to use the PTE but also get something in return for the tax revenue the City would be forfeiting. The most recent PTE that was applied to several commercial areas did not include provisions for affordability.

The Commission reviewed the draft Supporting Analysis and made the following comments and suggestions:

- Commissioner Craft suggested that the term “different housing styles” in the last sentence on Page 29 of the Staff Report is intended to refer to the variety of housing types rather than architectural styles.
- Chair Moss referred to staff’s comment regarding the first paragraph on Page 30 of the Staff Report, and said she supports the idea of replacing the classification “mature suburban community, with “a suburban community that is maturing into a sustainable urban city” or something similar that is consistent with the City’s adopted vision statement.
- Vice Chair Esselman suggested there is a better term than “tract lot,” which is used in the second paragraph on Page 30 of the Staff Report. Staff agreed to reconsider this term and report back.
- Commissioner Montero asked if the “other” category in Table H-1 includes homeless people. Mr. Morrison Winters said it does not. He explained that although there are some efforts underway to collect data, he has not been able to locate reliable information.
- Commissioner Craft asked staff to add actual numbers for housing units in Shoreline to Table H-1.
- Chair Moss referred to the paragraph directly below Table H-2 and asked the time frame for which King County provided the permanent housing vouchers. She felt this information would help quantify the numbers.
- Commissioner Montero referred to the last paragraph on Page 32 of the Staff Report and asked if the reference should be Table H-6 rather than H-8. Mr. Morrison Winters said the actual reference should be Table H-10. He agreed to verify references throughout the document.
- Chair Moss referred to previous Table H-5 and proposed Table H-9 and asked why the middle column was changed from “annual income required to buy” to a “percentage of AMI.” She suggested that identifying the actual salary required to buy is easier to understand. Mr. Morrison Winters said this change was made to tie in with the discussion of AMI that takes place in the



“affordability” section. He agreed to change it back to annual income based on current available data. Chair Moss said it would also be helpful to provide a simple map to define the three areas identified in Table H-9.

- Vice Chair Esselman agreed with staff’s comment at the bottom of Page 34 of the Staff Report to provide a new policy related to attracting and maintaining households with children to support the Shoreline School District. Commissioner Craft expressed concern that the percentage of families with children has gone down precipitously. He suggested an additional goal to encourage housing for families with children.
- Chair Moss expressed her belief that the affordability gap is an important factor to consider. She suggested that a policy supporting more affordable housing around transit facilities should be incorporated into the Housing Element as a way to minimize the affordability gap. It is important for people to be able to access the services they need without using a private vehicle.
- At the request of Commissioner Montero, Mr. Morrison Winters agreed to provide actual numbers to match the percentages in Table H-8 for the Commission’s further discussion. He explained that if affordable units are not available, individuals living in unaffordable housing would be classified as cost-burdened households.
- Commissioner Craft suggested it would be helpful if Chart H-2 also included information about the number and types of homes that have sold. The community has a wide variety of home prices, and one home could skew the numbers.
- Chair Moss recalled that the City Council challenged the Commission to make the Comprehensive Plan smaller. She questioned how much value Charts H-1 and H-2 add to the narrative. Ms. Redinger said the charts point to the trend of falling home prices, and the Housing Work Group has talked about how falling home prices may open other opportunities. She suggested the data is worth retaining if the Commission finds it is meaningful and it has some implication for policy direction. They agreed the charts should be retained to help people visualize and understand the trends.
- Commissioner Craft recalled that in 2010, some of the larger developments in the City were still partially vacant and developers were leasing up or allowing incentives to get the spaces filled. He asked staff to correct Table H-10 to account for these situations. Mr. Morrison Winters said it may be difficult to find information about lease ups at individual developments. However, he could compare 2010 numbers with prior years. Commissioner Craft suggested staff could contact some of the developments, such as Echo Lake, to obtain this information.
- Chair Moss said when she read the last sentence in the second to the last paragraph on Page 40 of the Staff Report regarding community concerns about the density and design of infill developments, she recalled other comments about mega homes that were consuming large amounts of space. She asked staff to rearrange the order of the information contained in this paragraph to clarify the intent. If they want to quote the Comprehensive Housing Strategy, it should be done in a separate paragraph without adding other language that is not directly part of the strategy.

- Commissioner Scully said he does not like the second sentence in the last paragraph of the Supporting Analysis, which states that rental homes or homes held for speculative redevelopment may have deferred maintenance. While this may be true, he said it does not inform any specific City policy. The City cannot craft a policy that requires rental homes to maintain themselves. He suggested this sentence is a slight on renters and rental owners, and he does not see a benefit. The remainder of the Commission concurred.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Markle reported that the Ridgecrest site will most likely not remain vacant, although it will not become the grand plan the community worked on. It will be an interim plan instead. She reminded the Commission that one problem with redeveloping the site to the level identified in the vision is that it will cost about \$800,000 to upgrade the water system to provide adequate water flow. She advised that in addition to \$500,000 in site renovations, Veolia Transportation will partner with Shoreline Water to upgrade the system at a cost of between \$300,000 and \$500,000 to obtain the fire flow necessary for the type of remodel they are proposing. That means the water system upgrades necessary to implement the full vision will be approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  done. The proposal will bring 90 jobs to the area and provide a 24-hour presence with offices and van service.

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Commission discussed whether or not they wanted to continue to receive notice of upcoming dates and agendas for Council of Neighborhoods meetings. They reviewed that the original intent was for Commissioners to attend the neighborhood meetings on a rotational basis to inform them of upcoming items on the Commission's work program. However, a formal program was never established. The Commission agreed to continue the notices, and reevaluate the issue later in the year.

## **AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Mr. Szafran said the June 7<sup>th</sup> agenda will include a presentation and discussion on the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. He noted this is the largest element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Moss reminded Commissioners to notify staff as soon as possible if they will be absent from a meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

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Donna Moss  
Chair, Planning Commission

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Jessica Simulcik Smith  
Clerk, Planning Commission

**TIME STAMP**  
**May 17, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**ROLL CALL:**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: 1:04**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 4:20**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: 5:30**

**STUDY SESSION ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAJOR UPDATE – HOUSING ELEMENT**

**Staff Presentation: 9:30**

**Public Comment: 28:00**

**Commission Discussion: 1:16:40**

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT: 2:18:04**

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: 2:20:07**

**AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING: 2:23:52**

**ADJOURNMENT**