

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING

May 2, 2013
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline City Hall
Council Chamber

Commissioners Present

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

Staff Present

Julie Underwood, City Manager
Debbie Tarry, Assistant City Manager
Scott Passey, City Clerk
Rachael Markle, Director, Planning and Community Development
Paul Cohen, Manager, Planning and Community Development
Steve Szafran, Senior Planner, Planning and Community Development
Miranda Redinger, Senior Planner, Planning and Community Development

Council Members Present

Mayor Keith McGlashan
Deputy Mayor Chris Eggen
Jesse Salomon
Doris McConnell
Will Hall
Chris Roberts

Council Members Absent

Shari Winstead

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moss called the joint meeting of the Shoreline City Council/Planning Commission to order at 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call by Mr. Szafran the following Commissioners were present: Chair Moss, Vice Chair Esselman and Commissioners Craft, Maul, Montero, Scully and Wagner. Upon roll call by City Clerk Passey, the following City Council members were in attendance: Mayor McGlashan, Deputy Mayor Eggen, and Council Members McConnell, Hall and Roberts. Council Member Salomon arrived at 7:10 p.m., and Council Member Winstead was absent.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROBERTS MOVED THAT COUNCIL MEMBER WINSTEAD BE EXCUSED FROM THE MEETING. COUNCIL MEMBER MCCONNELL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission minutes of April 4, 2013 were accepted as amended.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No one in the audience indicated a desire to address the Commission during this portion of the meeting.

STUDY ITEM: LIGHT RAIL STATION AREA PLANNING DISCUSSION WITH CITY COUNCIL

Staff Presentation

Ms. Redinger introduced the consultant and project manager, Mandi Roberts from Otak. She advised that a Planning Commission committee, consisting of Commissioners Craft, Maul and Scully, has been meeting monthly with staff to discuss criteria and establish draft study area boundaries. The criterion includes walk and bike travelsheds, topography, Comprehensive Plan policy direction, existing conditions, jurisdictional boundaries, and homeowner preference. While individual homeowners will not have the ability to opt in or out of the study areas, blocks may have an opportunity to share their criteria-based reasons for being inside or outside of the study area, which may influence decision making. She referred to the proposed boundaries for the 185th and 145th Study Areas. She said that after the staff presentation, the Commissioners and Council Members would be invited to review the map and identify and discuss potential line adjustments.

Ms. Redinger said staff is also seeking direction from the City Council and Commission regarding their expectations for the citizen advisory function. She noted that, in addition to the Planning Commission's committee, citizens have formed the 185th Station Citizens Committee (185SCC), and staff anticipates that a similar committee for 145th station area may be formed soon. She advised that representatives from the 185SCC were present in the audience, as well as representatives from Futurewise and Senior Services. In addition, members of staff have participated in meetings of the Puget Sound Regional Council's Growing Transit Communities Task Force. She summarized that there is a lot of momentum behind the citizen planning effort, and staff believes the advisory function can be accomplished through large community meetings led by the consultant to present different alternatives. She said she is confident the City can do a good job of providing information and soliciting public opinion.

Ms. Redinger announced that a community meeting has been scheduled for May 22nd from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. She briefly described the draft agenda for the meeting where the consultants will be present to provide background information and outline a timeline for completing the studies. Representatives from Sound Transit will also be present to discuss the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and identify dates for when the document will be released for public comment. The study area boundaries

will be presented, and those in attendance will be invited to provide comments and questions. Attendees will have an opportunity at the beginning of the meeting to talk further with representatives from Sound Transit, citizens groups, staff, and the consultant. She said staff is specifically seeking input from the Commission and City Council regarding additional expectations for the study process and the roles each group would like to play in the upcoming community meeting. Staff would also like to address specific questions of the Commissioners and Council Members in preparation for the public meeting on May 22nd. Questions and comments can be forwarded to staff via email as well.

Consultant Presentation

Mandi Roberts, Principal with Otak, is the Project Manager for the 185th Subarea Plan. She said she and her consulting team are excited to work with the City staff and the community to develop a subarea plan. She provided a brief overview of the team and the different responsibilities each will serve as the subarea plan is developed:

- **Otak** will lead the effort by providing project management. The scope of their work will include planning and visioning for the station area, land use, SEPA compliance, urban form/urban design considerations, infrastructure and utilities, community workshops and graphics presentation support.
- **EnviroIssues** will provide support for the public and stakeholder involvement process. They have done work in Shoreline and are very familiar with the community.
- **Fehr & Peers** is well known for their expertise in multi-modal transportation. The scope of their work will involve looking at pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular access and how they interrelate to light rail. They will also complete the traffic analysis that will relate to the alternatives analysis in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) document.
- **BAE Urban Economics** focuses specifically on transit-oriented development and has done work throughout the country.

Ms. Roberts reviewed the timeline for the project. She advised that, in the near term, the consulting team will review the existing and planned conditions in the station area and conduct market research and analysis. During the summer, the team will engage the public as they work to define potential land use changes and conduct an opportunities, challenges, and alternatives analysis. Another public workshop will be held in the fall as the consulting team works to shape a preferred alternative. Once a preferred alternative has been identified, the consulting team will be able to further develop the subarea plan and prepare a Draft EIS. The subarea plan and DEIS will then go through a formal public review process before developing the Final EIS and planned action ordinance. They anticipate final adoption of the plan in June 2014.

Ms. Roberts provided a flowchart to illustrate the process further. She said the intent is for the process to be efficient and cohesive with SEPA. She noted that after they have defined the range of alternatives, the second workshop will provide a great opportunity to obtain public input on potential environmental effects or considerations related to the alternatives.

Ms. Roberts advised that the consulting team would use a “design dialogue workshop” process to engage the community in developing the subarea plan. She explained that during the course of several days to a week, the consulting team’s planners and designers will meet with various groups in small

group workshop sessions throughout the community. These sessions will focus on issues related specifically to the groups in attendance. The goal is to understand what is important to the groups and integrate that into the process. She commented that this approach allows participants to see immediate ideas as planners and designers draw and sketch. An open house will be held at the conclusion of the workshop sessions, and people will be invited to come see the ideas that have been created. Ms. Roberts explained that process allows the consulting team to identify common themes amongst the various stakeholders, as well as potential conflicts. Information received at the workshops will be documented and integrated into the alternatives analysis and SEPA process.

Ms. Roberts explained that **BAE Urban Economics** has a lot of experience looking at how to foster and promote community vitality as part of transit-oriented development, develop healthy diverse neighborhoods, phase development in station areas over time, and transition between less and more dense areas. She shared examples of projects that **BAE Urban Economics** has done in California. She noted that the mixed-use project combined multi-family rental and for sale units with single-family residential units to provide affordable and market-rate housing. **BAE Urban Economics** also has experience financing transit-oriented development projects using a variety of public and private sources.

Ms. Roberts advised that **Otak** has done the planning and design work to change catalyst sites into transit-oriented developments. She shared a particular project they worked on in Portland, Oregon, which is located along a transit line in a very suburban area with adjacent single-family neighborhoods. She specifically noted the interior space, which provides family-friendly aspects. She said **Otak** also has experience looking at how neighborhood infill works best and how to use form-based urban planning to transition between high-density and single-family zones. Ms. Roberts said that, through photos and drawings, **Otak** has the ability to illustrate what different densities look like on the ground. They can also create visualizations related to scale and urban form in station areas. This helps people understand not only the scale of a potential development, but what the design and qualities of that place might look like.

Commission Discussion

Deputy Mayor Eggen referred to Ms. Redinger's earlier comment that a 145th (or 155th) Station Citizens Committee (145SCC) may be formed. He said he lives in the Northeast 145th Street area and has not heard anything about the new group. Ms. Redinger said no group has been formally created, but she has been in contact with Patricia Hale, who works with the Ridgecrest Neighborhood Association, about the best time to form the group. She has also met with residents from the Briarcrest neighborhood, and the Parkwood neighborhood has expressed an interest as well. She summarized that there is interest and momentum and people are paying attention. As the public participation plan is created early in the process, the consultant will help staff identify the overlaps between the two subarea plans and what areas need individual attention. The goal is to get all interested citizens to attend the community meeting on May 22nd and view the information provided on the website.

Council Member Hall said he is particularly interested in the market research and analysis portion of the project. He recalled a recent presentation before the City Council in which a gentleman suggested there is no market in Shoreline for higher-intensity development. He acknowledged that would be true based on the current single-family zoning that exists in the station areas, which does not allow higher-intensity

development. He further acknowledged that when the station area planning process is finished and zoning is put in place to allow transit-oriented development, the vision will not be achieved until the market responds and projects are actually built. He asked if the consultant's scope of work includes identifying tools, techniques and methods the City can use to ensure that the regulatory and zoning environment that is intended to implement the vision will actually stimulate the market and attract investment that is consistent with the vision. Ms. Roberts answered that the team will identify tools and techniques to help catalyze redevelopment that is consistent with the City's vision, and BAE Urban Economics has expertise in helping communities foster transit-oriented development. The team will also identify infrastructure and other improvements the City can implement to help attract development.

Council Member Roberts asked what experience the consulting team has with transforming single-family neighborhoods into more intense transit-oriented developments. He observed that, often, there is already zoning in place for mixed-use, transit-oriented development potential around transit stations, but the properties in the draft study areas in Shoreline are primarily single-family residential. Ms. Roberts referred back to examples provided earlier in her presentation of mixed-use, transit-oriented developments to illustrate how development with different densities can transition to the single-family neighborhoods. She concluded that experience is important, but it is also important to have a smart, phased approach and to work closely with the neighborhood to identify key sites that have more potential and could move forward more quickly than others. Chair Moss suggested that when providing examples of redevelopment projects, it would be helpful to provide before and after pictures to help people visualize the concepts.

Council Member McConnell asked at what point people would know what the highest density that would be proposed for the properties within the study boundaries. Ms. Roberts answered that there is no cookie cutter approach. She explained that there are all types of neighborhoods focused around transit stations. Some are more commercial, and others are more business oriented. Some are single-family, and others have higher density residential development. While they would like to achieve certain goals with regard to ridership and overall density in the areas around each station, there are numerous ways to achieve the goals. The process will include working with the community to define the different options and the potential affects each might have related to transportation, traffic, ridership, etc. The information gathered will be used to develop specific criteria for selecting a preferred alternative to move forward. Ms. Redinger added that staff has asked the consulting team to "paint a picture" for what is likely for redevelopment in the 10-year timeframe between now and when the station opens, as well as a 20 to 30-year timeframe and beyond. She said the goal is to figure out a way to phase changes over time and provide good transition between the more intense uses and the existing single-family residential neighborhoods.

Study Area Boundaries

Ms. Redinger referred to the criteria created and used by the Commission's Station Area Planning Committee to identify draft study area boundaries: She explained that when applying the criteria, the committee recommended using two sets of boundary lines to be clear about what will be studied in each. She reviewed the two types of study areas as follows:

- The **Mobility Study Area** encompasses a broader region and is drawn on existing rights-of-way. In some cases, the study area lines extend down the length of the road, but this is not intended to imply that areas between the lines are to be studied. That is why there are dashed boundaries that denote arterials for study. The intent of this study will be to examine multi-modal routes and traffic flows that potential users will likely use when traveling to and from the station. The study may lead to recommendations regarding traffic calming, infrastructure for alternate modes of travel, or creating connections in neighborhoods with no direct access.
- The **Land Use Study Area** represents a smaller geographic region that is more likely to undergo transition and zoning change. It is not the committee's intent to suggest that everything within the study area is going to change. The boundaries simply identify the area that will be studied. The study may lead to recommendations regarding appropriate uses, design and transition standards, redevelopment scenarios and thresholds that may trigger phased zoning or other strategies to encourage implementation of station area plans. The boundary lines are generally drawn along the back side of parcels fronting on arterials so that transitions occur stepping down into neighborhoods, providing more consistency from the streetscape. In some cases, environmental assets or other sensitive areas that are not anticipated to be redeveloped were included in the study area boundaries to capture information about their value and function.

Commission Discussion

Deputy Mayor Eggen said he has already heard concerns from people in his neighborhood about their properties being included in the study area, and he expects to hear more. He urged staff to be clear that there will be opportunities for public input as the process moves forward. It should also be clear that the City is not proposing to rezone properties at this time. Ms. Redinger agreed that it is important to take every opportunity to be very clear about the difference between a study area boundary, a Comprehensive Plan designation and a zoning designation. She noted that many people are paying attention to this project, which results in a very good opportunity for the City to discuss general land use and development issues and address misunderstandings and fear.

Vice Chair Esselman recalled that the Commission discussed the need to draw large the study area boundaries because the stations will have an impact beyond just adjacent properties. While zoning changes may not be appropriate for all properties within the study area boundaries, it is important to review the potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods. The City must be responsible and make sure all of the potential pitfalls are considered.

Council Member Roberts asked why the area northwest of Twin Ponds Park was included in the 145th Street Study Area. He observed that the park does not appear to be in the walk shed of the proposed station, and Twin Ponds Park provides a natural boundary for transition. He also asked why the area south of the cemetery and Ballinger Commons were not included in the 185th Street Study Area. He noted that both the bike trail and the cemetery provide natural boundaries for transition. Commissioner Scully said the committee had significant discussion about the properties northwest of Twin Ponds Park. He said it is important to keep in mind that the boundaries simply identify a study area and not necessarily properties that will be changed. If any member of the committee felt a property should be included in the study area, they wanted to err on the side of inclusion rather than exclusion. He further

pointed out that creating public spaces will be a challenge in both station areas. The stations will be located next to Interstate 5, and it will be difficult to make public gathering places next to the freeway. The committee considered existing features that might become focuses for redevelopment such as a large park. That may not be the direction the City goes after public debate, but the committee wanted to include the property in the study area to accommodate the possibility if determined appropriate.

Commissioner Craft asked Council Member Roberts to provide more detail about the area he was talking about, located south of the cemetery and Ballinger Commons. Council Member Roberts said the area is located between Meridian Avenue and Northeast 195th Street. He pointed out that there are natural boundaries that will not likely be developed and could provide transition. He said he does not see the harm in adding the properties to the study area. Commissioner Craft explained that the committee felt it would be best to focus on areas that are closer to the stations or have other opportunities that would transition to the station areas in a different or more reasonable way. He agreed that the boundaries could be expanded to include the additional properties if the City Council provides that direction.

Council Member Hall commended the Commission and committee for drawing boundaries that are actually larger than what he envisioned. He expressed his belief that the more people involved in the study, the better. He pointed out that the Shoreline Center area has been identified on the study area map as an “opportunity area.” Rather than thinking about the whole exercise as being centered entirely around the station, other properties, such as the Shoreline Center, could be a catalyst for redevelopment. He noted that the Shoreline Center could easily and immediately be connected within walking distance to the area located between Meridian Avenue and Northeast 195th Street. He said he supports the concept of using a park, cemetery or some other existing buffer to ease transition concerns into adjacent single-family neighborhoods. He suggested that the property should be included in the study area boundaries. Ms. Redinger pointed out the differences between the 145th and 185th Study Area Maps. She explained that opportunity sites have been identified on the 185th Subarea Map, but none were identified on the 145th Subarea Map. The 145th Subarea Map identifies environmental assets that are not identified on the 185th Subarea Map. Much of the opportunity in the 185th Subarea consists of large parcels that are likely candidates for redevelopment, but the large parcels in the 145th Subarea are not likely to redevelop.

Mayor McGlashan asked why the triangular areas located at Northeast 175th Street on the east and west sides of the freeway were not included in the study area. Commissioner Scully answered that topography and access were major factors in whether or not these two areas should be included. For example, there is only one access to the neighborhood on the east side of the freeway, which consists primarily of cul-de-sacs. Without some major road readjustment, redevelopment of the properties did not seem realistic given their distance from the proposed station area.

Public Comment

Brock Howell, Futurewise, said Futurewise is a statewide organization with several offices. They work to protect natural and open spaces and to build great, healthy communities. His work focuses primarily on King County, and over the past two years he has been working with the Growing Transit Communities Task Force, an effort led by the Puget Sound Regional Council, to think strategically

about how to capitalize on the \$15 billion light rail investment that is coming to the area. Futurewise received an Equity Network grant in partnership with the 185SCC to undertake a public awareness program that will include door-knocking and additional visioning work. The point of their work is to learn what neighbors are concerned about, what they are interested in, what they identify as their community assets, and how they would like to see their neighborhoods grow. Hopefully, they can build leadership capacity to become long-term citizens in the betterment of their neighborhoods and sense of place. He said Futurewise could also work with a citywide stakeholder group that provides input and advocates for local and regional interests. He could work with City staff to make sure the group consists of a diverse set of people who represent the community and can act as a voice in terms of how the station areas grow.

Mr. Howell said the consultant has done a fantastic job of describing the work they have done and will do. As the project moves forward, he stressed the importance of focusing on the assets they have now and communicating what makes the neighborhoods great. The City has great family neighborhoods and a good sense of place. These assets are important to maintain. While increased density is expected in the station areas, there are ways to communicate the changes in a way that is based on family values and ensuring that more people have the opportunity for housing and jobs. It is also important to think of additional services that people want such as a mid-sized grocery store, a neighborhood coffee shop, etc. The station areas will change dramatically over the next 50 years. However, most people think in the near term and they want their current values to be reflected in the subarea plan.

Thomas Leary, Jr., Shoreline, said he is part of the 185SCC. He said he is impressed with the process the City is using to move the 185th Subarea Plan forward. He commented that change is coming, and he wants to be informed so he can talk to his neighbors. He said he is looking forward to redevelopment in east Shoreline.

Wendy DiPeso, Shoreline, said it has been pointed out in some of the 185SCC's conversations that there is a huge need for not only affordable housing, but low-income housing. She said she hopes this will become part of the mix, and the best way to handle it is to have low-income housing mixed in with market rate housing. She said she hopes the subarea plan will help attract potential employers. She said there is a need to make sure all the local utility districts are included in the planning process because they have expertise the City can benefit from and they will be impacted by redevelopment. Lastly, she noted that when zoning is raised, people may not be able to afford to live in Shoreline anymore. As part of the phasing, she suggested the City identify what zoning developers can expect. However, rather than changing the zoning now and making the property values more expensive for developers to purchase, the City could streamline the rezoning process to be seamless, quick and easy. This would make the properties more affordable for current owners to remain in the area until they are ready to sell their properties for redevelopment.

Dori Gillam, Senior Services, said they are a non-profit organization serving seniors, the disabled and the people who care for them throughout King County. She said she manages a program called, "Aging Your Way," which started 3.5 years ago to look at what the next generation of aging people want their communities to look like. They have held events to solicit comments from this age group and learned that they are interested in walkability, transportation, housing, arts, life-long learning, etc. Through an Equity Network grant, the program will sponsor two events to encourage older adults and groups that

traditionally have a low rate of participation in planning processes to become involved in the station area planning. Events have been scheduled on July 11th for the Korean community and on August 7th for people with limited incomes.

Council Member Salomon commented that he is very encouraged from the energy he has seen from the citizens who have been involved in the station area planning process. He said his expectation was that the comments would be negative. Instead, there is a general acceptance that light rail is coming, and community members are interested in how they can contribute to create vibrant, forward-thinking redevelopment. When there is community buy in, the end result will be a lot better.

The Commission reviewed the list of questions staff would like them to consider (Page 5 of the Staff Report) and made the following comments:

- **What role do Council Members wish to play in the community meeting on May 22nd, if any?**

Council Member Hall said he does not see a need for Council Members to be directly involved in the community meeting. They have a great consultant team on board, and the staff and Commission is doing a great job leading, as well. He said he is comfortable with the City Council being in listening mode at this point. However, he emphasized that messaging is important, and all City events and communications must make it clear that the City is not taking property or kicking people out of their homes. At the same time, the City should be clear that the area will change in the future and they want the community to be involved in defining the change. They must also assure property owners that if they choose to relocate at some point in the future, nothing the City is proposing to do would negatively impact property values. Property values increase as zoning is changed to allow more intense uses. Having these messages up front to allay fears will be useful. Ms. Redinger said a main point staff wants to communicate at the May 22nd community meeting is the role and responsibility of homeowners, since most change will occur as a result of individual homeowner decisions.

Council Member Roberts said it is also important to make clear at the community meeting that the City Council has adopted a vision for the two subareas. For example, the vision talks about a minimum of R-48 development within ¼ mile of the stations. It is important for the community to understand that the City is working based on an established vision. Deputy Mayor Eggen recalled a previous City Council discussion about the need to ensure that property owners can profit from the land increases if and when they decide to sell. It is important to provide property owners with information about the assessed value of their properties.

Council Member McConnell said she would prefer that Council Members not play a significant role in the initial community meeting. She supports Deputy Mayor Eggen's suggestion that the City record the comments received during break-out sessions. It is important to hear from people who do not usually participate in the public process. Many people are uncomfortable speaking before large groups but their opinions are valuable as well.

Council Member Salomon agreed that the City Council does not need to play a lead role in the community meeting. Their role is really to listen. They will make the ultimate decision, and it is

important for them to gather information. He said he likes the small group format, and he would want to listen in on each group.

Mayor McGlashan agreed with staff that it might be better to start the community meeting with a large group discussion to explain the purpose of the study areas and other details related to the project. The large group meeting could be followed by break-out sessions.

- **Do Planning Commission committee members prefer to lead the discussion of the study area boundaries or have staff provide the majority of background and explanation?**

Chair Moss encouraged the committee members to continue to collaborate with staff as the process moves forward. She advised that staff and committee members will provide monthly updates to the Commission, and the public will be invited to comment. She summarized that the Planning Commission can serve as a venue for people to share their thoughts.

Commissioner Scully suggested that Ms. Redinger should lead the discussion at the May 22nd community meeting. She has a great relationship with all of the various groups, and she has been their point of contact. The three committee members, the rest of the Commissioners, and City Council Members can be present at the meeting to provide input and further comment.

- **Would the discussion of study area boundaries be better suited to a large group discussion or multiple facilitated break-out sessions?**

Deputy Mayor Eggen recalled that during the visioning processes, the facilitated break-out sessions worked well because there were more than 50 people in attendance. It allowed people more chances to speak, and a report was prepared for each group. People tend to feel more inhibited at large group meetings, and comment time is limited. He recognized that break-out sessions may not be necessary if attendance is low. Ms. Redinger said she anticipates that all community meetings related to light rail station area planning will be well attended. She recalled her earlier suggestion that perhaps it will be possible to have both a large group discussion and a break-out session. The large group discussion could provide basic information to those in attendance, and then participants could divide up and have discussions with representatives from the 185SCC, staff, the consultant, Futurewise, Senior Services, etc., depending on their area of interest. She suggested that to do a large facilitated visioning session at the first community meeting may be overwhelming. There will be other opportunities for visioning.

Chair Moss announced that a schedule of future meetings related to light rail station area planning will be posted on the City's website. Ms. Redinger said staff is launching a new communication strategy for the light station area planning process, and they are hoping that citizen groups can take more ownership of content. She commented that she is impressed with the momentum that has been established for public involvement. The groups have posed good questions and provided good information. While small group discussions can be worked into the process, she suggested that the initial community meeting should provide large group information, punctuated on either end by opportunities for small conversations and comments.

Ms. Redinger asked that the Commissioners and Council Members identify additional changes to the study area boundary maps. She also asked for feedback about whether or not a Council-appointed citizens' advisory committee should be formed.

City Manager Underwood asked when staff anticipates the City Council would formally adopt the actual study area boundaries. Ms. Redinger advised that because approval of the study area boundaries requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment, a formal public hearing must be conducted. Staff will announce the date for the next public meeting (either an additional study session or a formal public hearing) at the May 22nd community meeting. They are hoping the City Council can adopt the study area boundaries by September.

Council Member Hall said he supports the formation of a citywide citizens' advisory committee, but he is not sure the participants need to be appointed by the City Council. Instead, the City Council could give broad guidance to the City Manager on the kind of diversity of representation they want, and the City Manager could make the appointments. Given there are so many self-directed committees at this time related to the light rail station area planning project, City Manager Underwood recommended a broader public outreach program. Otak's proposal to meet with specific stakeholder groups is unique. She said she is hoping to get more people involved in the conversation than the self-selected group that usually wants to participate on a committee. Council Member Hall said he supports this approach, which is consistent with his earlier comment that the City Council does not need to formally appoint the advisory committee participants. He would rather have staff and the consultant reach out to everyone who needs to be engaged. Ms. Redinger summarized that the public outreach program will provide layers and layers of communication, even before the interactive walking maps, communication tools and social network programs are initiated.

Deputy Mayor Eggen said he sees the need for stakeholder groups for each of the two study areas, but he questioned the long-term role of a citywide stakeholder group. Ms. Redinger said staff would like feedback about the purpose and benefit of creating an additional stakeholder group. Commissioner Scully pointed out that the light rail station area planning project is growing organically as a community-based participation effort, and it should remain as such. If the City Council were to artificially impose structure to the process, they may inadvertently leave out some people who are currently participating. He said that the process does not need more structure, as long as they are getting great, positive community outreach and participation. Council Member Roberts agreed. He does not see the value of having a formal City committee on top of the existing groups. He expressed concern that this approach could prevent some voices from being heard. He also noted that additional staff time would be required to serve the committee.

Once again, Mayor McGlashan referred to the triangular areas located at Northeast 175th Street on the east and west sides of the freeway. While he understands why the property on the east side was excluded from the study area because of topography, he suggested the Commission and City Council consider including the property on the west side down to Meridian Avenue and Northeast 175th Street. He noted that there are existing neighborhood buffers (the bog, a school, a church, and the park to the north), and the area is relatively flat.

Council Member Roberts said he was thinking the opposite. Because of the freeway exit going eastbound on Northeast 175th Street, it would make more sense to include the properties located east of Northeast 175th Street in the study area boundaries, with the exception of the four or five properties located west of the library. He said he is also interested in hearing thoughts about including all properties abutting Northeast 175th Street in the study area.

Commissioner Scully pointed out that there is a significant topographical change adjacent to Northeast 175th Street, and access to the properties is through a cul-de-sac. While the properties could be included in the study area, his sense is that redevelopment is highly unlikely. He noted that another area within the eastern triangle is fed only by Northeast 175th Street or one major arterial, which makes the properties less attractive to developers. Including it in the study area for a potential upzone, which is highly unlikely, might distract from other areas where redevelopment might be more economically attractive.

Commissioner Wagner pointed out the need to highlight environmental assets on the 185th Study Area Map. She recalled that environmental assets identify areas that are not likely to undergo significant transition.

Deputy Mayor Eggen suggested that the small park north of North City School should be included in the study area as well.

Commissioner Craft said he supports Council Member Roberts' earlier suggestion that the properties located south of the cemetery and Ballinger Commons, between Meridian Avenue and Northeast 195th Street, should be included in the study area. Mayor McGlashan agreed that including this area seems reasonable. He noted that the City Council recently authorized improvements for the trail that runs behind Ballinger Commons, past the cemetery and over 5th Avenue, which has access to the bridge over to the east side.

Deputy Mayor Eggen questioned how much additional staff and consultant time would be required if the study areas are expanded as proposed. Ms. Redinger answered that adjusting study area boundaries slightly would take minimum expense and effort. She noted that there has been no particular public notice, and the May 22nd community meeting will be the first opportunity to introduce the boundaries to the community.

The Commission and City Council agreed that the area northwest of Twin Ponds Park between Meridian Avenue and Northeast 155th Street should remain as part of the study area. They also agreed that environmental assets should be added to the 185th Study Area Map, and the boundaries should be adjusted to follow 195th.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Report to City Council

Chair Moss referred to the Commission's written annual report to the City Council. She thanked the City Council for their support as the Commission moved through the Comprehensive Plan process,

which was quite a lot of work and went very well. She explained that as the Commission deliberates on items that come before them for a recommendation, questions often arise about aspects not directly related to the topic under review. In addition, public questions and concerns are frequently raised that are outside the immediate scope of the meeting. In some cases, the Commission places these items on the “parking lot,” which is a list of items the Commission would like staff to study and bring back at a future date. Council approval is needed before the items can be added to the Commission’s work plan. She advised that the parking lot items fall under two primary topics: housing and neighborhood compatibility and parking.

Chair Moss expressed her belief that housing and neighborhood compatibility will continue to be an issue, particularly as the City moves forward with its light rail station area planning process. Specific issues include lot-size-to-structure ratio; design review process and Director’s discretion; exemptions for affordable housing that require more specific criteria to implement the concept yet remain sensitive to residential transition areas; and whether or not the City has the ability to impose a minimum density requirement for residential properties and what is the appropriate process to do so. Chair Moss said parking has also come up over and over again, and will likely be an issue during the light rail station area planning process.

Chair Moss invited the City Council to identify additional items that might be included on the Commission’s work program, as well as provide direction regarding how the work items should be prioritized.

Council Member Roberts expressed his belief that it would be helpful for the Planning Commission to have a discussion about parking, especially for home-based businesses. He said he has been pleasantly surprised with the number of new home-based businesses in the City. As the businesses grow and employees are hired, parking can become an issue based on the current code.

Council Member Salomon said he believes there is a lot of parking space available in the City. He questioned if current parking restrictions are inhibiting growth. If they are, they should consider liberalizing the restrictions on parking to allow for greater use of streets for parking to address the increased demand for home-based businesses, etc.

Deputy Mayor Eggen agreed that the Commission should consider parking, particularly as it relates to home-based businesses. They might also consider a policy on shared parking so that daytime and evening parking can be leveraged to enable commercial and residential developments to both thrive with a reduced investment.

Council Member Hall said he is not particularly concerned about the lot-size-to-structure ratio. While there have been some issues in the past, the City currently has a 35% lot coverage limit. He suggested that promoting redevelopment in the planned areas is one of the best ways to reduce the pressure for inappropriate out-of-scale development elsewhere in the single-family neighborhoods.

Regarding the issue of design review, Council Member Hall said he is concerned about anything that will create unpredictability. If the City pursues additional design review, the standards and criteria must

be very clear. He reminded the Commission that design review was reduced when the commercial zones were consolidated.

Council Member Hall said he is not a big fan of varying bulk standards for affordable housing because the person living across the street will experience the bulk of the building. They will lose predictability if bulk standards can be varied. He said he would prefer to address affordable housing by revisiting the property tax exemption program to allow a longer exemption if a property owner meets fairly stringent affordable housing requirements.

Council Member Hall expressed his belief that the City has the ability to impose a minimum density requirement, and he would strongly favor this approach in the station areas so that any redevelopment moves closer to the City's vision. This is particularly true in areas that are zoned for mixed-use development. There is a limited amount of property available in the City for multi-family and commercial development compared to peer cities.

Council Member Hall said he believes that parking will become an increasing concern in the community if the City's Town Center and light rail station area plans are successful. While it may be painful, it is a natural evolution into a community that is less reliant on cars. He said that as the station areas are developed, they can expect land values to go up and parking to become a problem. While he does not believe they will ever solve all the City's parking problems, it is important to keep looking at what can be done.

Council Member Salomon said the intent is that light rail will solve at least some of the parking problems. Council Member Hall agreed but noted that the transition period will be a challenge. Council Member Salomon agreed that implementing a minimum density requirement around the station areas will be critical.

Chair Moss said much of the concern about a minimum density requirement was related to single-family residential neighborhoods. The Commission was specifically thinking about whether or not it would be appropriate to require a minimum density as a way to prohibit a property owner from building a single house on several parcels. Council Member Hall said he would not be in favor of a minimum density requirement in single-family zones. Having a mixture of lot sizes in single-family zones is good and avoids monotony.

Chair Moss said she appreciates the good relationship the Commission has with the City Council and the opportunities for dialogue. She also thanked staff for the support they provide to the Commission. She said it is an honor to serve and help the City Council, and she looks forward to the two groups continuing to collaborate in the future.

City Manager Underwood noted that this is the first time the City Council and Commission have met jointly since the Comprehensive Plan update was completed. She thanked both groups for all of their hard work. She said her performance is judged on how well she accomplishes the City Council's goals and action steps, which included completion of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Mayor McGlashan also commended the staff and Commission for their hard work to complete the mandatory Comprehensive Plan update. He noted that many other jurisdictions are still working to meet this mandate. He commented that without the Commission fulfilling their advisory role, it would be difficult for the City Council to move forward with many items.

Council Member Salomon thanked the Commissioners for their volunteer work. The product they provide is extremely helpful.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Moss announced that the Growing Transit Communities Task Force's work has been solidified into a first draft. She reminded the Commission that the group is sponsored by the Puget Sound Regional Council, and several representatives from Shoreline, including herself, participate on the task force. Their last meeting is next week. She agreed to forward a link to the draft, which is available for public comment until June 7th.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Szafran said a public hearing for miscellaneous development code amendments has been scheduled for May 16th. Chair Moss encouraged Commissioners to notify staff of planned absences from Commission meetings as soon as possible.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Donna Moss
Chair, Planning Commission

Kate Skone
Clerk, Planning Commission

TIME STAMP
May 2, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: 2:35

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 2:58

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: 3:32

STUDY ITEM: LIGHT RAIL STATION AREA PLANNING DISCUSSION

Staff Presentation:

Consultant Presentation: 8:40

Discussion: 25:41

Study Area Boundaries: 37:00

Discussion: 39:34

Public Comment: 53:12

Discussion: 1:04:25

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Report to City Council: 1:40:30

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1:54:19

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING: 1:55:47

ADJOURNMENT