

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

June 20, 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 (arrived at 7:06)
Commissioner Wagner

Staff Present

Steve Szafran, Senior Planner, Planning and Community Development
Paul Cohen, Planning Manager, Planning and Community Development
Kate Skone, Planning Commission Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moss called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call by the Commission Liaison the following Commissioners were present: Chair Moss, Vice Chair Esselman, and Commissioners Craft, Maul, Montero, and Wagner. Commissioner Scully arrived at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 16, 2013 were adopted as submitted.

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 SUBAREA STUDY BOUNDARIES

Staff Presentation

Mr. Szafran said that the purpose of this agenda item is to discuss the proposed Light Rail Station Subarea Study Boundaries, which will require a Comprehensive Plan amendment. He explained that, in the current Comprehensive Plan, the initial study area boundaries were purposely vague placeholders until staff had the opportunity to engage the public, develop criteria, tour the station areas, and hire a consultant to help them through the process. The current Comprehensive Plan identifies two ½ mile radius circles around the City's preferred station locations.

Mr. Szafran reviewed that, working with staff, the Planning Commission's Light Rail Station Area Planning Subcommittee drafted study area boundaries using the following criteria: walk and bike travel shed, topography, Comprehensive Plan policy direction, existing conditions, jurisdictional conditions, and homeowner preferences. The study area boundary maps were presented at a joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting on May 2nd, and some modifications were made. The updated maps were presented at a public light rail meeting on May 22nd. He referred to maps, which illustrate the study area boundaries for both the 145th and 185th station areas.

Mr. Szafran advised that staff is recommending the following changes to the draft study area boundaries since they were last discussed by the Planning Commission and City Council.

- **Removing ¼ and ½ mile radius circles.** These circles will be replaced by the more precise mobility and land use study areas.
- **Removing land use study area from 5th Avenue Northeast.** During discussions of the Northeast 185th Street boundaries, the committee included parcels adjacent to 5th Avenue Northeast, between Northeast 185th and Northeast 165th Streets, as land use study areas. When both boundary maps were combined, it became clear that the line should either be extended all the way to 155th or stopped at 175th. He requested feedback from the Commission about whether or not parcels adjacent to roads that connect the two station areas should be considered for potential zoning changes or just the mobility study.
- **Removing mobility study area from 8th Avenue Northeast.** The initial thinking was that including 8th Avenue Northeast would provide an opportunity to support higher density because of the wide right-of-way. However, since the City plans to make additional investments in infrastructure along 5th and 10th Avenues Northeast, staff feels it would be redundant to also pursue a similar plan for 8th Avenue Northeast.
- **Removing mobility study from Northeast 187th and 188th Streets.** The City's transportation planners do not anticipate that these roads will be used to access the 185th Station. At the public open house, there was significant concern about cut-through traffic on these small and curvy streets.
- **Adding mobility study area for Meridian and 15th Avenue Northeast.** The City's transportation planners recommended including these roads.
- **Adding opportunity site at Ridgecrest.** When the study areas were combined, it became apparent that this property is a prime candidate to be considered as a catalyst for development or

an opportunity site. The site is located directly in between the 145th and 185th Stations, and it is already zoned for high-density residential development.

- **Adding environmental asset at Paramount Park.** For consistency, this park should also be included as an environmental asset.

Mr. Szafran once again referred to the draft study area maps and advised that the City's transportation planners recommended that black arrows be placed along the rights-of-way to show access points into the study areas. The Commission agreed that the arrows were helpful, but suggested that they should be larger.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Commissioner Craft asked if it would be wise to include 8th Avenue Northeast in the mobility study area for the 185th Station, particularly if Northwest Perkins Way is identified as a potential access point. He expressed concern that eliminating this area could exclude any potential studies with regard to transportation that might enhance safety. He suggested it might be wise to include the area so the City can mitigate any potential future impacts that might arise. Mr. Szafran answered that staff would not be opposed to including this area. The intent was to steer people away from the neighborhood streets and direct the traffic onto collector arterials via wayfinding signs. Commissioner Craft pointed out that wayfinding signs can be ignored by virtue of convenience for drivers. Therefore, it might be appropriate to at least study potential impacts to the smaller streets. He said that he understands the neighbors' concern that including 8th in the study area might result in significant changes, but it would be important to at least understand the safety impacts of increased traffic. Mr. Szafran emphasized that the mobility study would simply be a study and no changes would be proposed. Chair Moss suggested it would be better to include the area in the mobility study area now rather than having to go back at some point in the future.

Commissioner Scully said that the subcommittee specifically discussed the fact that inclusion in the mobility study area did not necessarily mean that the roads would be made wider to accommodate more vehicles. It might actually mean traffic calming measures and signs for "local use only," etc. He agreed that the area between Northeast 187th and 188th Streets should be included in the mobility study. He asked if any of the other changes recommended by staff are based upon the thought of excluding streets where growth is undesirable from the mobility study area. Mr. Szafran answered no.

Commissioner Wagner suggested that it would be helpful to differentiate between preferred routes and study areas as soon as possible. She agreed that 8th Avenue Northeast should be studied even if it is not a preferred route. Other streets within the study area that are not preferred routes might be candidates for traffic calming, etc. She also suggested it would be helpful to add the pink lines back onto the maps to identify roads which would be included in the mobility study, particularly if 8th Avenue Northeast is removed from the mobility study area. Once again, Mr. Szafran advised that a lot of study and money has been focused on 5th and 10th Avenues Northeast, both of which have already been designated as arterials. He said 8th Avenue Northeast is designated as a local street. Commissioner Wagner explained that including a street in the mobility study area would not necessarily mean changes to accommodate additional traffic. Instead, the study might identify appropriate traffic calming measures to discourage cut-through traffic, etc.

Commissioner Maul commented that it makes sense to at least study 8th Avenue Northeast based on the neighborhood's concern about cut-through traffic. Commissioner Wagner highlighted the need for the City to facilitate more education and public regulations to help residents understand what the mobility study means. She suggested that staff provide more detailed descriptions for what the various colors on the study area maps mean.

The Commission discussed each of staff's recommended changes as follows:

- **Removing ¼ and ½ mile radius circles.** Mr. Szafran said the intent was always to include the radius circles as placeholders until more specific study area boundaries were identified; the study area boundaries would then replace the circles. The Commission agreed with this proposed change.
- **Removing land use study area from 5th Avenue Northeast.** Chair Moss agreed that there are likely opportunities along 5th Avenue. It is important to study these opportunities now rather than having to come back at a later time. Commissioner Scully said he lives in this area, and he questioned whether there really are terrific opportunity sites on 5th Avenue Northeast other than in Ridgecrest itself. It is all developed as single family residential, and he does not know of any vacant properties outside of the Ridgecrest area. He suggested that including 5th Avenue Northeast in the land use study area would not be the best use of City resources, and the remainder of the Commission concurred. It was noted that 5th Avenue Northeast is a main route between the two stations and would still be included in the mobility study area.
- **Adding opportunity site at Ridgecrest.** The Commission agreed to identify Ridgecrest as an opportunity site, given its location between the two stations and the fact that it is already zoned commercial.
- **Removing mobility study area from 8th Avenue Northeast.** The Commission agreed that 8th Avenue Northeast should be included in the mobility study area boundaries.
- **Removing mobility study from Northeast 187th and 188th Streets.** Chair Moss pointed out that the mobility study would also address pedestrian and bicycle access. She suggested that it might be appropriate to include these two streets in the mobility study area so they can specifically identify that the streets are not preferred alternatives and traffic calming devices are appropriate. She summarized that it is better to be inclusive, particularly when talking about traffic and mobility. Commissioner Montero noted that the streets are currently used by residents of Lake Forest Park as a shortcut to access the freeway. Changes in the current traffic pattern will be necessary if these streets can no longer be used for access to the 185th Station. The Commission agreed that the two streets should be included in the mobility study.
- **Adding mobility study area for Meridian and 15th Avenue Northeast.** The Commission supported this proposed change.

Chair Moss observed that although the City has indicated a preference for station areas around Northeast 145th and 185th Streets, the City will not know Sound Transit's final decision regarding station locations until a later date. She asked if this entire process would have to be repeated if Sound Transit chooses other locations for the stations. Mr. Szafran answered affirmatively.

Vice Chair Esselman pointed out that the land use study area boundaries were generally extended to the back side of parcels located along arterials. However, the study area boundary depth is much greater in

some areas along Northeast 185th Street. She asked if this is related to the intensity of the anticipated uses. Commissioner Maul pointed out that Northeast 185th Street will become a main corridor, and the street will get busier. The subcommittee felt this street would be appropriate for high-density, commercial uses.

Public Comment

Tom Jamieson, Shoreline, said he was glad to see that staff incorporated his recommendation to show both station areas together on one map. He said this is very useful, particularly when considering the Ridgecrest opportunity site. He said it might also be useful to highlight the community renewal area (near Sears) and describe its relevance to the project. He summarized that there are a number of things going on concurrently that should be taken into account. He said he would also like staff to provide a diagram showing the entire City of Shoreline with the station area boundaries overlaid. He observed that the Comprehensive Plan has a number of different diagrams that talk about geological hazards, pedestrians, etc. He said it appears that the Commission has considered all of these issues when preparing the draft station area boundary maps, and it would be useful to also overlay the station area boundaries on these maps. He said he likes what he has seen so far.

Continued Commission Discussion

Chair Moss asked when Sound Transit is expected to make an announcement on the actual location of the station areas. Mr. Cohen said he does not anticipate that the Sound Transit Board will make a final decision on the preferred alternative for stations until October. Chair Moss asked if the study of both areas would move forward concurrently. Mr. Szafran said the City has already started Phase 1 of the 185th Station planning process based on the assumption that 145th will be the other preferred location. The 145th Station planning process has not yet started.

Commissioner Scully suggested that staff update the maps to incorporate the recommendations made by Mr. Jamieson. He said it is particularly important to provide a map of the City with the station areas overlaid. This will help the public get a sense of how large the area is compared to the City as a whole. Mr. Szafran noted that, at the recent open house, staff provided a map of the City that specifically identified the community renewal area, Point Wells, Shoreline Community College, Crista, and North City. He agreed to post this overview map on the City's webpage.

Chair Moss asked if the mobility study area will extend down Northeast 155th Street past Aurora Avenue North and to the Interurban Trail. Mr. Szafran advised that the consultant will review off-site traffic impacts on major corridors leading from the station to Highway 99, Crista, Point Wells, etc. These streets will be part of the Environmental Impact Statement that is prepared for the 185th Street station, and a similar process will be used for the 145th Street station. Chair Moss pointed out that regardless of whether the station is located at 145th or 155th, the Northeast 155th Street corridor will be a major access point.

Mr. Szafran advised that the map changes will be made for the public hearing that is scheduled for July 18th. Commissioner Wagner asked that the maps also include definitions for each of the colors. She suggested that these definitions should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, as well.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cohen announced that Sound Transit has sent out letters to property owners informing them that Sound Transit may be interested in purchasing their properties. As the process gets refined, Sound Transit will be more specific about the properties they want to purchase. Their goal is to provide as much notification to property owners as possible.

Mr. Cohen advised that the Draft Environmental Impact Statements (DEIS) for the station areas and rail alignment alternatives must be completed by the end of July. Staff will review and comment on the documents that relate to Shoreline. Based on the DEIS, the Sound Transit Board will select preferred alternatives for the station areas and alignments in October.

Mr. Cohen announced that staff is currently preparing to bring the issue of transportation impact fees to the City Council for consideration.

Mr. Cohen recalled that the City Council adopted the Planning Commission's recommendations for commercial design and zoning consolidation. However, there was one exception related to the setback requirement in the transition areas when single-family residential zones are located across the street from commercial zones. The Commission recommended a base setback of 15 feet, and the City Council reduced the setback to zero. There is a lot of consternation in the community, particularly around the Ronald Methodist Church, and the City Council agreed to reconsider their decision. They directed staff to bring that one specific change back to the Commission for further review and a recommendation to the City Council. The Planning Commission will conduct a study session on the issue on September 5th, followed by a public hearing in October.

Mr. Cohen reported that he met with the Richmond Highlands Neighborhood Association on June 18th, and there was a lot of discussion about the Ronald Methodist Church and the proposed subdivision of property located behind the church to develop low-income housing and community services. While the meeting went well, people are still very interested in the topic. There is currently a binding site plan application for the purpose of subdividing commercial property, and the project is vested under the regulations in place at the time the application was deemed complete. Staff is waiting for a development application to come forward.

Chair Moss clarified that, based on the City Council's action, the current zoning regulations require zero setback for commercially-zoned properties that are located across the street from properties zoned single family residential. Mr. Cohen said the setback would remain at zero while the Planning Commission and City Council go through the process of reconsideration. The current application is vested in the existing code and would not be impacted by any future changes in the setback requirement.

Mr. Cohen announced that the Washington State Supreme Court has agreed to consider Save Richmond Beach's suit against the vesting of the Point Wells application in Snohomish County. The State Legislature has also adopted annexation rules that allow jurisdictions to annex areas of the county without going through the boundary review board if certain criteria can be met. This change may impact Woodway's ability to annex Point Wells.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Montero announced that the Richmond Beach Community Association met on June 11th, and the meeting was attended by representatives from the City of Woodway and Save Richmond Beach, as well as the City of Shoreline's Assistant City Manager. The association discussed House Bill 5417, which would allow a city to annex an area without approval from the Boundary Review Board if the area is surrounded by the city by at least 80%. They also discussed House Bill 2068, which requires the area to be surrounded 100% by the city, which would eliminate Woodway's claim. The City of Shoreline supports House Bill 2068 and the City of Woodway does not.

Commissioner Scully announced that the Light Rail Station Area Planning Subcommittee will meet on June 21st.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Szafran announced that a public hearing on the study area boundaries is scheduled for July 18th. There are no items currently scheduled on the August 1st agenda and many of the Commissioners will be unavailable. In addition, a public visioning meeting for the 185th Station is scheduled for August 1st. He suggested the Commission cancel their August 1st meeting. He noted that no items have been scheduled on the August 15th agenda, either.

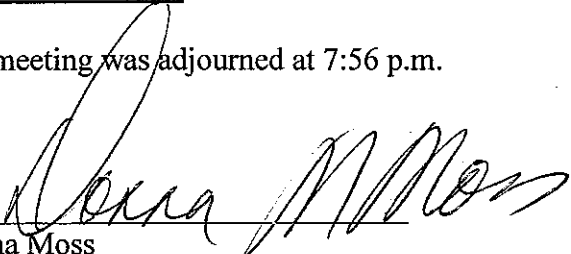
Commissioner Wagner suggested the Commission consider holding a retreat in August. The Commission agreed and tentatively scheduled a retreat for August 15th. Mr. Szafran invited the Commissioners to email him their ideas for topics of discussion at the retreat.

Mr. Szafran announced that the Commission would have a study session regarding the setback requirements in transition zones on September 5th. Staff is working to set up a City-sponsored visioning meeting regarding the light rail station area planning for September 19th.


Commissioner Wagner suggested it would be helpful for staff to describe the different elements of the station area planning process. It is important to let citizens know which meetings they should attend and when their participation will have the most impact. This information could be added to the City's website. Mr. Szafran said staff is currently working on a master list of dates, which will be published on the City's website as soon as it is available. The list will provide a link to the sponsoring organization's website. Mr. Cohen pointed out that the link to "frequently asked questions" spells out the different groups that are involved in the station area planning process to date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Donna Moss
Chair, Planning Commission



Kate Skone
Clerk, Planning Commission

