

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

February 7, 2008
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline Conference Center
Mt. Rainier Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chair Piro
Vice Chair Kuboi
Commissioner Wagner
Commissioner Phisuthikul
Commissioner McClelland
Commissioner Harris
Commissioner Broili

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Cohn, Senior Planner, Planning & Development Services
Alicia McIntire, Senior Planner, Planning & Development Services
Flannery Collins, Assistant City Attorney
Kirk McKinley, Aurora Corridor Planner, Public Works Department
Jeff Forry, Permit Services Manager, Planning & Development Services
Miranda Redinger, Associate Planner, Planning & Development Services
Jessica Simulcik Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Commissioner Pyle
Commissioner Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Piro called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call by the Commission Clerk, the following Commissioners were present: Chair Piro, Vice Chair Kuboi, Commissioners Wagner, Phisuthikul, McClelland, Harris, and Broili. Commissioners Pyle and Hall were absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Commission accepted the agenda as proposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The January 17, 2008 minutes were approved as corrected.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Dennis Lee, Shoreline, suggested the City has been attempting to change the Comprehensive Plan to fit the needs of developers. He asked the Commissioners to read the first 55 pages of the Comprehensive Plan, which should be the foundation by which all land use decisions are made. He suggested that if the City wants to move forward with proposals to change the high-density residential zoning, they must also make Comprehensive Plan amendments so the two are consistent. He expressed his belief that the City did not do a Comprehensive Plan Review in 2005. Instead, they completed three master plans.

Commissioner McClelland explained that most of the current Planning Commissioners participated on subcommittees throughout 2005, which were formed to review various elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Every element of the Comprehensive Plan was covered as part of that review.

STAFF PRESENTATION ON SEAMLESS TRANSIT ON AURORA

Kirk McKinley said this presentation is in response to a draft resolution the Commission prepared in September of 2007. The resolution noted there were service and jurisdictional issues associated with providing a seamless ride across the county line, and they supported an effort to push forward with the transit agencies to accomplish this goal. He advised that representatives from various transit agencies were present to provide background information to help the Commission better understand their decision making and planning processes.

Mr. McKinley reviewed that the City is currently moving forward with the Aurora Project. The middle mile (165th to 185th) is currently in the design and right-of-way phase, and they hope to be under construction in mid 2009. As did the first mile, it would include business access/transit (BAT) lanes. The third mile (185th to 205th) has not been fully funded yet. While the environmental process has been completed and construction on the third mile can move forward, there is not a date set for its construction.

Mr. McKinley said the City is currently working with the transit agencies to provide better service along Aurora and to obtain additional funding for infrastructure improvements. The Cities of Shoreline and Seattle are working with Metro to put together a Speed and Reliability Partnership Program that would enable them to get an additional 5,000 service hours per year on the corridor. The City of Shoreline is also working with Metro and the City of Seattle to put together a Federal Transit Administration Small Starts Grant Application. This grant would include capital money, which would probably be enough to pay for construction of the last mile of Aurora. Mr. McKinley introduced the individuals who were present to make the presentation.

Joy Munkers, Community Transit, explained that "Bus Rapid Transit" (BRT) is defined as a new mode of transportation, and national standards are currently being created. BRT is an attempt to get the performance of rail using a bus and is made up of a number of different elements including unique vehicles, running ways or various kinds of transit priorities, enhanced shelters and stations, different fare collection methods, and different technology and service and operating plans. She advised that although

all BRT programs have different combinations of these elements, it is actually the synergy of the individual elements that makes the difference for a program's success.

Ms. Munkers quickly reviewed some of the successful BRT demonstrations around the country that have been sponsored by the Federal Transportation Administration. Then she explained that Community Transit's Swift Line Program would implement a 16.7-mile BRT corridor on Highway 99 and the Evergreen Corridor (from the Everett Station to the Aurora Village Transit Center). There would be 14 stations northbound and 15 southbound, which is about a quarter of the typical number of stops for local service along the corridor. The plan is to provide frequent, rapid, bi-directional service at 10-minute intervals during the day, with less service during the evenings and on weekends. She explained that the Highway 99 Corridor was chosen for the Swift Line program because it has the highest density in population and employment in Snohomish County. In addition, it allows Community Transit to capitalize on infrastructure investments already in place on the corridor, including 6.7 miles of BAT lanes, and 10.5 miles of transit signal priority.

Ms. Munkers advised that the northern terminal for the Swift Line would be the Everett Station, which is a connection point for more than 750 daily transit trips served by Community Transit, Sound Transit, Everett Transit, Skagit Transit, Island Transit, Sounder, and Amtrak. In addition, this station is a focal point for local jobs and businesses. She further advised that the southern terminus would be the Aurora Village Transit Center, which is a connection point for almost 700 daily transit trips served by Community Transit, Metro, and the future point for connection with Rapid Ride (Metro's BRT service).

Ms. Munkers said Community Transit and Metro have been working together for a few years on the future integration of the Swift Line and Rapid Ride Programs. There would be a common BRT platform at the Aurora Village Transit Center, with the Swift Line operating on one side of the platform and Rapid Ride on the other. Nice facilities would be provided and extra attention would be given to ensure the connection between the two services is fast.

Ms. Munkers described the design of the new 60-foot articulated coaches that would be used for the Swift Line Program. She noted that the three doors would be extra wide to allow people to board and disembark quickly. She reported that the 60-foot articulated coaches used for the Swift Line would be of a modern, sleek design. Ms. Munkers also advised that the new hybrid, diesel, electric-compulsion vehicles would be delivered between February and May of 2009. The program would have an off-board fare collection system, so people would not have to queue at the front to pay fares with the coach operator. A smart card reader would be provided at each station, as well as ticket vending machines.

Next, Ms. Munkers reviewed Community Transits' proposed linear station design, which would minimize the footprint along the corridor and make it easier to implement their program without taking a lot of extra right-of-way. She noted that an iconic marker would make it easy for customers on the corridor to identify the stations from a distance. Good customer information would be provided, as well as weather protection from two sides. She displayed an artist rendering of the conceptual design and noted that final designs would be completed in a few months.

Karl Otterstrom, Metro, described Metro's Rapid Ride Program. He summarized that the program would offer frequent, quick, reliable, easy to use service that has a distinct look and feel and is safe and secure. He recalled that in 2006 the public approved an increase in the sales tax to improve service throughout King County by implementing a BRT program, frequency improvements on core routes, more service in developing areas of the county, as well as partnerships with cities and non-profits to provide additional programs. He advised that the proposed Rapid Ride Program identifies five corridors: Aurora, Ballard, West Seattle, Pacific Highway South from the light rail station in Tukwila to Federal Way, and Bellevue Redmond via Crossroads and Overlake. The target frequency for the Rapid Ride Program is every 10 minutes, all day, seven days a week.

Mr. Otterstrom said the purpose of the Rapid Ride Program is to be quick and reliable, and Metro is working with jurisdictions to gain priority at traffic lights. They are developing a new transit signal priority system that would communicate throughout the entire corridor via a fiber optic channel. They are also working to improve boarding and deboarding times by providing additional doors, fewer stops, and collecting fare payment either before boarding or via a smart card reader at all doors.

Mr. Otterstrom said another goal of the Rapid Ride Program is to make it easy to use. It is important for people to be able to get on a bus without having to work around a complicated schedule. Metro's goal is to set up a network of routes on the corridors that are frequent and work together to provide service to the community. The stations and bus stops would have common features so they could be easy to identify and access. Real time information signs, improved lighting and other amenities would be provided at each of the major stations.

Mr. Otterstrom stressed the need for the Rapid Ride Program to be safe and secure. He explained that because a proof of payment system would be used, there would be people available to check fares and research shows there is a lower fare evasion rate when people actually check the fares. This also makes it safer for drivers and riders. More security officers would be hired, and better lighting at stops and more security cameras on the bus would increase safety, as well.

Mr. Otterstrom said the Rapid Ride Program would be established where the current Bus #358 travels today. Data from 2007 indicates that on average there are almost 10,000 weekday boardings along this route, making it one of the top three routes in King County. The 12.5-mile segment of the Rapid Ride from downtown Seattle/Pioneer Square area to the Aurora Village Transit Center would be implemented by the year 2013. Metro is building their program upon improvements made by the Cities of Shoreline and Seattle, and they are working with both cities to obtain federal funding not only for the Rapid Ride Program, but for the cities' required infrastructure improvements.

Ms. Munkers reported that all transit organizations have been working together for quite a number of years to identify the transit demands for the entire area. She advised that as part of the Swift Line Program, Community Transit created a Transit Technical Advisory Committee, which has met regularly with representatives from Sound Transit, Metro and Everett Transit to integrate the various plans and programs and to share design expertise. An Agency Technical Advisory Committee was also formed, which included representatives from Shoreline, Mountlake Terrace, Edmonds, Everett, Lynnwood, Snohomish County, the Department of Transportation and the Puget Sound Regional Council. This

group has been meeting monthly for the past two years to provide guidance, finalize station location, and offer feedback about the various design and service characteristics of the Swift Line.

Ms. Munkers specifically noted that when Community Transit did their feasibility study of ridership in Snohomish County, it became very obvious that the only logical way to do a Swift Line in Snohomish County was to take it along the Evergreen Corridor in the City of Everett, which is an area outside of Community Transit's jurisdiction. Community Transit representatives shared their vision with representatives from the City of Everett, and this meeting eventually resulted in a substantial partnership agreement. The City of Everett would fund all of the capital investments required within their jurisdiction, which is significant since more than 50% of the improvements needed to implement the Swift Line would be located in Everett. The City of Everett would also dedicate a portion of their local sales tax to support the preservation of the Swift Line in the City of Everett.

Ms. Munkers said people often ask why Community Transit decided to terminate their Swift Line service at Aurora Village. She explained that Aurora Village is a major regional transit center, with more than 700 transfer trips linking in that location. Connectivity between the Swift Line and the other connecting services is essential to the success of the program so it would not make sense to bypass this major transit center. While they could choose to extend the Swift Line past Aurora Village, both of the proposed BRT lines would be longer than most BRT lines in the country that are currently in operation or planned, particularly given the traffic setting.

Ms. Munkers emphasized that rather than a schedule-based system, the Swift Line would use a headway-based system. Once a vehicle has started the line, it would move as quickly as possible through the corridor, without having to stop at specific times along the way. New technology would allow the dispatch center to see where each bus is along the corridor, and possibly hold buses back to make the program more consistent. She advised that this type of headway-based system would be difficult to run on a longer corridor, unless there were grade separated traffic lanes that allow them to avoid traffic congestion. She summarized that Community Transit felt the Aurora Village Transit Center would be the logical place to terminate their Swift Line Program. However, as new roadway improvements are made by the Cities of Seattle and Shoreline, Community Transit could consider opportunities for continuing their service further south.

Mike Bergman, Sound Transit, provided an update on what is happening with Sound Transit since Proposition 1 was voted down by the public in November. He explained that the Sound Transit portion of the proposition was largely for expansion of the light rail system that is currently under construction to the north, south and east. Sound Transit is polling the public to identify a funding package that might be more acceptable to the voters. The Sound Transit Board has identified some general information about what another package might look like, including a continued emphasis on Sound Transit being a regional transit agency that focuses on longer distance regional trips between counties and jurisdictions. Any package presented to the voters in the future would likely be much smaller than Proposition 1, with a shorter time duration and a lower tax increase, too. The new plan would probably be more multi-modal, whereas Proposition 1 emphasized light rail expansion. There would still be some expansion of the light rail system, but fewer miles. A new package may also include more Sounder commuter trains

and stations. There would also be a renewed emphasis on freeway-based BRT, utilizing the existing and planned High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) System with additional access points.

Commissioner McClelland encouraged the representatives present to ride the 358 bus route. She recalled that when the Commission previously discussed this issue, they were concerned that Community Transit and Metro bus service stops and starts at the county line and there would be no opportunity for Community Transit's Swift Line to utilize Metro's Rapid Ride stations that are located along Shoreline's portion of Aurora. She pointed out that there are residents of Snohomish County who cross the line to take the metro service downtown. She questioned how their needs are being considered. Chair Piro agreed there are people in Snohomish County who need to get on the Metro system and people within the Metro service area who need to get up into the Community Transit service area. He recalled that the Commission previously voiced concern that the proposed BRT programs do not adequately address the needs of these individuals. He said the Commission also voiced concern that Aurora Village would be the only transfer point. While it is appropriate to have a platform for people to transfer from Community Transit to Metro buses, the Commission is concerned that Community Transit would not be able to use Metro's transfer stations and vice versa.

June DeVoll, Community Transit, said there has never been a formal statement that Community Transit buses could not use Metro stops or vice versa. Commissioner McClelland said the Commission is not so concerned about each of the transit agencies offering permission for joint use, but the proposed station configurations do not appear to allow this exchange. Ms. DeVoll clarified that the elements identified for the Swift Line Program would not make it prohibitive to use any bus stop in the system. They are looking at a 10-inch curb for the Swift Line stations to facilitate easy boarding, but that doesn't mean the coach cannot use a regular curb on a regular street. The beauty of the BRT program is that it can go anywhere and be set up in any way. Community Transit buses could easily utilize Metro Rapid Ride stops just as easily as Rapid Ride buses could use Swift Line stops. They are different approaches, but they are not prohibitive from one to another.

Chair Piro said that if the transit agencies could assure the Commission that it would be possible for buses from one agency to utilize the stations of another agency, much of their concern and confusion would be resolved. He expressed his belief that any bus should be able to stop at any station throughout the three-county region.

David Hull, Metro, said there has already been a lot of coordination in this regard, and this coordination would continue as both programs are developed further. He cautioned that Metro's Rapid Ride Program is a little bit different than the Swift Line, in that it would probably stop more frequently. It would really be designed for operating shorter trips, with people having the opportunity to get off and on. Also, while they want to help the City of Shoreline complete the BAT lanes and other improvements that makes buses reliable and fast, they aren't really looking at purchasing a lot of right-of-way or reconstructing curbs. Their shelters would be designed to fit on existing pads. He explained that they decided to do the Aurora Village segment of the Rapid Ride Program last because they want to have it fast and reliable from the day it starts. They are willing to work with the Cities of Seattle and Shoreline to obtain federal money for infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Hull said it is important to have places to park the buses at the end of a line, and Aurora Village can currently meet this need. However, it might be possible in the future to overlap the two programs. He pointed out that Metro currently works with Community Transit and Pierce County Transit to provide overlapping service at the county lines. Although they are separate, county funded agencies, they recognize that the public doesn't care about the county line. They just want to get to their destination.

Commissioner Broili expressed disappointment that there are still two bus systems, and no regional strategy or plan. He said he strongly believes in effective transit systems. Washington is one of the most progressive states in one of the most powerful nations in the world, yet they can't seem to come up with a regional strategy or plan to provide a healthy transit system. Because Shoreline is located at the border of King County, the problem is more evident for its residents. Although he is glad to see they are moving forward with something, he is disappointed that the approach is still piecemeal.

Chair Piro recalled the problems associated with the bus tunnel in Seattle. He cautioned against the transit agencies heading down a similar path by implementing programs without considering how they would be integrated together to best serve the entire region. He recalled the Commission felt the Aurora Corridor would be an excellent location for a regional Sound Transit Program, rather than two separate agencies implementing their own plans. He expressed concern about Mr. Bergman's comment that Sound Transit focuses on freeway BRT programs, not arterial BRT programs. Having so many agencies try to implement BRT programs on their own could result in incompatible programs in the future.

Commissioner McClelland pointed out that the King County side of Aurora is urban and the existing 358 Route is a very urban bus route. In addition, Shoreline is trying to create a beautiful town center concept in the center of Aurora Avenue. She suggested the various transit agencies consider that cities have very different value systems than transit agencies. The transit agencies both emphasize the importance of getting people around quickly, but the City of Shoreline must concern themselves with the physical, social and emotional changes that would impact their citizens. Ms. Munkers applauded the City of Shoreline for their efforts to improve the Aurora Corridor, including pedestrian access plans. She said their goal is to create nice stations that add to the atmosphere the City of Shoreline is trying to implement. The stations would be designed to help humanize this very large and wide corridor. It is hoped the Swift Line Program would help steer development along the Snohomish County portion of Aurora into something other than strip mall development. She noted, for example, each jurisdiction would have an opportunity to personalize the stations within their boundaries.

Mr. Otterstrom clarified that when he was discussing the concept of speed, it was related to moving more and stopping less and had nothing to do with increasing the speed of the buses. He said he believes the BRT concept would be consistent with the land use goals of mixed-use development. It is not just about commuters getting to work, but also about getting them to the services and amenities they need. Mr. Otterstrom said he has picked up on a general disgruntled feeling about transit integration as a whole. He suggested this is symbolic of the struggle between making things local and unique, but at the same time, trying to integrate new things. The transit agencies have also been asked to consider distinguishing factors associated with each community, which requires a localized effort, as well. He said that while they are concerned about the need to provide a system that can meet regional needs, they

also have to work with numerous political agencies with a variety of authority and restrictions. He concluded by stating that he supports the opportunities that are provided to work together on a regional basis to make the transit program better.

Chair Piro referred to the draft resolution that was prepared by the Planning Commission to forward to the City Council. The resolution encourages the Shoreline City Council to continue this discussion and follow through as elected officials to address concerns associated with integration of the various transit programs. It asks the City Council to invite city councils from neighboring jurisdictions to become part of the dialogue, potentially including legislative representatives. He advised that the purpose of the presentation was to allow the Commissioners to gather information and identify the dominant issues that need to be resolved. The resolution is ready to forward to the City Council.

Mr. McKinley reminded the Commission that staff is in the early scoping stage of updating Shoreline's Transportation Plan, which is part of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff anticipates this effort would also include a stand alone transit plan that focuses on Shoreline. There would likely be stand alone bicycle and pedestrian plans, as well. Within the next year, staff would discuss this effort further with the Planning Commission. He summarized that as land uses continue to become denser, more active and more transit oriented, Community Transit and Metro would become even more interested in providing higher levels of service in these areas.

Mr. McKinley reported he recently learned that Community Transit is just getting started on their first 20-year long-range plan, and it would be important for the City to track this process and provide appropriate input. The City should also carefully follow the progress of Sound Transit's work on their Phase II proposal. Once again, Chair Piro questioned why Sound Transit is not proposing to provide the BRT Program along Aurora Avenue. He agreed with Commissioner Broili that more effort should be made to integrate the transit programs.

Mr. Hull clarified that it is not the bus that will make the Rapid Ride or Swift Line Services successful, but how they operate. While the bus selected by Metro is different than the one selected by Community Transit, the two would provide the same purpose. Metro's program requires a bus that is consistent with the platforms that are currently used for their other buses. For cost effectiveness, they are looking at hybrid coaches that are similar to those they already run. Chair Piro expressed concern that the platforms provided by the two agencies would be incompatible. Mr. Hull explained the difference is that Community Transit is investing a lot of money to provide level boarding, and Metro has decided to invest their available dollars in service. But the buses and the service they provide would be nearly the same.

Commissioner Broili asked when the Rapid Ride System would be implemented. Mr. Otterstrom answered that the first Rapid Ride line on Pacific Highway South would become operational in February 2010, which is coordinated with implementation of the Link Light Rail system to and from the airport. He said the current plan is to have the segment from Aurora Village moving south operational in 2013. Mr. McKinley said this date would be consistent with the City's plan to complete the last mile of the Aurora Project. He said City staff argued against losing stops along Aurora Avenue in Shoreline. They did not believe the speed savings would adequately compensate for the loss of service at some of the

existing stops. The City's goal is to have a stop at every signalized intersection, and Metro has been very receptive to that concept. Mr. Hull said Metro's goal is to have average spacing of about ½ mile, depending on the land uses around the stops.

The Commission and staff expressed appreciation for the transit partner's presentations and willingness to address concerns.

QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING ON MIDVALE STREET VACATION

Chair Piro reviewed the rules and procedures for the quasi-judicial public hearing. He reminded the Commissioners of the Appearance of Fairness Rules. The public hearing was opened and Chair Piro invited Commissioners to disclose any discussions they might have had regarding the subject of the hearing outside of the hearing. None of the Commissioners disclosed ex parte communications, and no one in the audience voiced a concern, either.

Staff Overview and Presentation on Preliminary Staff Recommendation

Mr. Cohn introduced Jeff Forry, Permit Services Manager and Miranda Redinger, Associate Planner, who would present the Midvale Street Vacation Proposal.

Mr. Forry referred to the revised map that outlines the general location of the proposed Midvale Street Vacation. He reminded the Commission that the City Council is authorized to initiate street vacations under SMC 12.17, and the process for vacation was outlined in the Staff Report. He advised that the City Council made a commitment to Opus Northwest, LLC to convey a specified parcel in the ground lease necessary to construct the civic center. In order to fully convey this parcel, a small portion of Midvale Avenue North must be vacated.

Mr. Forry said that upon reviewing the proposal, staff determined that a portion of Midvale Avenue could be considered surplus right-of-way and is not necessary to support the current road designation of "local access street." He advised that this determination was based on a review of the Transportation Master Plan that is part of the Comprehensive Plan and the City's standard right-of-way configurations. They also took into account the proposed widening of 175th Street for the Aurora Project, the traffic analysis that was prepared for the civic center project, as well as a capital improvement project for East Boeing Creek Phase II (a stormwater upgrade between 175th and 178th Street). In addition, the City Traffic Engineer reviewed the proposed vacation for conformance with the City's standard engineering practices.

Mr. Forry noted that the only property affected by the vacation is the civic center site, and no adjacent properties would be encumbered or otherwise impacted. He referred to criteria identified in the Staff Report, which must be used by the Commission when reviewing the proposal and making a recommendation.

Questions by the Commission to Staff

Commissioner McClelland inquired if the proposed vacation would impact the professional center (current City Hall site) that is currently located to the north. Mr. Forry answered that the East Boeing Creek Project would provide an overflow capacity pipe out in the Midvale right-of-way, and this would extend along the western boundary of the property. But this project would not be impacted by the proposed vacation. Commissioner McClelland asked if the proposed vacation boundary would run through the parking lot of the professional center. Mr. Forry clarified that the vacation would end at the professional center property line.

Commissioner Phisuthikul asked if the easterly boundary of the proposed right-of-way would extend to the north. Mr. Forry said there is currently a substantial jog in the right-of-way as it moves north to the professional building site, and then it jogs back in. The East Boeing Creek Project would also propose a 10-foot dedication on the current professional center property to provide more capacity to improve the alignment of Midvale Avenue. Commissioner Phisuthikul suggested it would be better to consider all of the Midvale Avenue right-of-way at the same time rather than as separate proposals. Mr. Forry said he does not anticipate more vacations of the Midvale Avenue right-of-way based on the current alignment plans.

Chair Piro recalled that when reviewing previous vacation requests, the Commission suggested the City would benefit from a comprehensive planning effort for all of Midvale Avenue. Mr. Forry emphasized this comprehensive planning effort would take place as part of the Aurora Project. The Central Aurora Sub Area Plan should also consider the future of all of Midvale Avenue.

Commissioner Phisuthikul pointed out that a lot of land is available on the east side of the civic center property, so he questioned the logic of vacating right-of-way to provide more space on the west. Mr. Forry clarified that the developer did not request the additional land. The proposal was initiated by the City Council based on their acceptance of a proposed plan and contract for Opus Northwest, LLC to deliver a building according to the design option selected by the City Council. The City Council's approved design concept would not fit in its entirety on the existing parcel of land. He explained that Midvale Avenue exists as a local access street in the Comprehensive Plan, and the Transportation Master Plan anticipates this street would remain as such. The current amount of right-of-way on Midvale Avenue would not be necessary for future use of the roadway.

Public Testimony or Comment

No one in the audience expressed a desire to address the Commission during the public portion of the hearing.

Presentation of Final Staff Recommendation

Mr. Forry said staff recommends approval of the street vacation proposal based on their analysis, the information that has been prepared for the City Hall Project, the information contained in the staff report, and the review criteria.

Final Questions by the Commission and Commission Deliberation

The Commission did not have any additional questions for staff.

Closure of the Public Hearing

COMMISSIONER WAGNER MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. COMMISSIONER HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote by Commission to Recommend Approval of Denial or Modification

COMMISSIONER HARRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO VACATE A PORTION OF MIDVALE AVENUE. COMMISSIONER WAGNER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS

Vice Chair Kuboi reported that the Comprehensive Housing Strategy's Committee has completed their work, with the exception of a final briefing to the City Council that is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, February 19th.

Commissioner Harris provided a report on his attendance at the Council of Neighborhoods Meeting. Cleanscapes briefed the neighborhood groups on the new garbage service. It was noted that the new containers were made of 40% recycled plastic, which is the most of any city in the United States. They offer five choices for recycling.

Mr. Cohn asked if Commissioner Harris introduced himself as a representative of the Commission. Commissioner Harris explained the meeting format, which includes an opportunity for attendees to introduce themselves. He said was asked two brief questions, but he did not have a formal opportunity to participate in the discussion or provide comment.

Chair Piro recalled the Commission's original intent that sending a Planning Commission representative to the Council of Neighborhoods Meetings would help the Commission become better informed of issues and concerns throughout the City. However, it may not be providing the neighborhood outreach opportunity they had originally anticipated. Commissioner Harris said it is his distinct impression that the Council is not really asking for input. Instead, it is their opportunity to discuss issues and concerns amongst themselves.

Commissioner Broili expressed his belief that the Council of Neighborhoods would still be the best venue for the Commission to inform the neighborhoods of issues that might impact them. He suggested it would be appropriate for the Commission to request an opportunity to at least provide an update of issues that might concern the neighborhoods. The Commission agreed it would be appropriate for staff and Chair Piro to explain the Planning Commission's expectations to the Council of Neighborhoods and obtain feedback regarding how they envision the Planning Commission's participation at future meetings. The Commission also agreed it would be appropriate to schedule a discussion in the near future about other opportunities to reach out to the neighborhoods.

Commissioner Phisuthikul reported on his recent attendance at the Town Center Visioning Meeting on January 30th. The meeting was a good opportunity for citizens to provide feedback and identify their vision for the town center. The boundary was described, but most of the discussion seemed to focus on Midvale Avenue from 175th to 185th Street. The main street concept was discussed, as well as the need for pedestrian access and green elements. Mr. Cohn advised that Paul Cohen would provide information to the Commission in the near future, outlining the next steps for the Town Center Project.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business scheduled on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket

Mr. Cohn explained that the Growth Management Act (GMA) limits review of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to no more than once a year. To ensure the public can view the proposals within a citywide context, the GMA directs cities to create a docket that lists the amendments to be considered in this "once-a-year" review process. He reported there were no privately-initiated amendments. There is one City-initiated amendment that falls under the docketing process, and it is related to master planning. Staff is working to develop a new process or identify ways to improve the existing process. The proposed new language would be presented to the Commission sometime in April or May.

Mr. Cohn said that in addition to this one docketed amendment, staff may work on modifying the definitions for some of the Comprehensive Plan designations, particularly focusing on the commercial areas.

Mr. Cohn said the subarea plans were not identified on the docket, since GMA allows cities to adopt subarea plans at any time during the year. This year the City plans to start the Southeast Shoreline Subarea Plan, the Town Center Subarea Plan, and the Southbridge Subarea Plan. There may be a fourth subarea plan for Shoreline Community College, and Phase I of this process may start in 2008.

Chair Piro referred to Mr. Lee's comment early in the meeting regarding amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. He recalled that in 2005 and 2006 a number of citizen-initiated amendments were docketed and added to the Commission's review of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Phisuthikul suggested that if the City does consider amendments to modify the existing Comprehensive Plan designation definitions, he would also like them to review the definition for "mixed-use," which appears to be too vague. Mr. Cohn agreed. He said staff has concluded that the Comprehensive Plan designations should be more focused, and staff will strive to develop designations that are more specific than the current ones.

Mr. Cohn advised that staff would present the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket to the City Council in the near future for approval.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cohn reported that the Ridgcrest Commercial Neighborhood Proposal would come before the City Council for additional review on February 19th and March 3rd. It is anticipated the City Council would discuss the proposal on February 19th and identify possible amendments. Staff would update the proposal and prepare a final recommendation for the City Council to consider and possibly approve on March 3rd. Mr. Cohn thanked the Commission for their hard work.

Chair Piro said he listened to the City Council's initial deliberation regarding the Ridgcrest Commercial Neighborhood Proposal, and he was impressed to see how much they drew upon the Commission's discussion.

Mr. Cohn said the City Council was going to consider a resolution regarding the Planning Commission and Planning Department's 2008 Work Program on February 12th. However, because City Council meetings are segregated between study session meetings and business meetings, and February 12th is a business meeting, the Planning Director has recommended the item be rescheduled to a study session meeting so the City Council would have more time for discussion.

Mr. Cohn also reported that Planning Department staff is still very busy. Last year was a record year in terms of permit value, and in January there were a record number of short plat requests.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Piro announced that the City Council approved the Plateau at Jackson subdivision proposal, particularly noting the Commission's split 6-1-2 vote. The City Council's vote was similar.

Commissioner McClelland referred to an article published in today's edition of *THE SHORELINE JOURNAL*. The article suggests that one of the consequences of increased property values is the impact on the stock of land available for small, locally-owned businesses. The article notes that land zoned for business may yield a greater return if it is developed for multi-family residential uses than for business. It states while there is nothing wrong with multi-family development, it could mean small businesses are

crowded out. This could result in greater auto dependency as people drive further to go shopping and take their trade dollars out of Shoreline.

Commissioner McClelland said she couldn't recall a single incidence where the City has converted commercial land to residential. Mr. Cohn said it is not a question of the City making a zoning decision. It is a question of the private market making the decision. Land zoned for community and regional business allows an option of residential, commercial or mixed-use; and there have been some situation where the decision has been for purely residential development. None of these proposals came through the Planning Commission for review because the uses were already permitted by the zoning code.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Cohn reviewed the February 21st agenda, which includes the following items: continuing the public hearing on housing density in the CB zone, a public hearing on the Hart Rezone Request, and a public hearing on interim regulations to move certain quasi-judicial hearings (rezones and formal subdivisions) from the Planning Commission to the Hearing Examiner for a maximum of one year. It was noted that the Commission may not have enough time to conduct the third public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

COMMISSIONER WAGNER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:20 P.M. COMMISSIONER MCCLELLAND SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Rocky Piro
Chair, Planning Commission

Jessica Simulcik Smith
Clerk, Planning Commission