

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

May 17, 2007
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 Hall
Commissioner Broili

STAFF PRESENT

Joe Tovar, Director, Planning & Development Services
Steve Cohn, Senior Planner, Planning & Development Services
Paul Cohen, Senior Planner, Planning & Development Services
Jessica Simulcik Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Commissioner Pyle

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Commission accepted the agenda as proposed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tovar thanked the Commission for meeting three consecutive weeks in May. He reminded them that they would also host the next Speaker Series presentation on May 24th.

Mr. Tovar reminded the Commission that staff previously spoke to them about the Cascade Agenda City Program. Since that time, staff has made changes to the proposed resolution and staff memorandum to address the Commission's concern that endorsing the agenda should not require the City to endorse all of the Cascade Land Conservancy's legislative programs. The item has been scheduled on the City Council's May 21st agenda.

Mr. Tovar announced that the presentation on the Ridgecrest Design Charette Process done by the University of Washington Students is scheduled to go before the City Council on June 11th. The students would provide a presentation of their process and present bound copies of their final report. Staff will recommend that the City Council authorize them to proceed with a legislative rezone of some of the properties in the center, but not a plan amendment. Staff feels new form-based zoning would allow for implementation of some of the options presented by the students. Staff anticipates coming back to the Commission for a study session and public hearing later in the summer. He noted that making significant changes to the Comprehensive Plan related to the Ridgecrest Neighborhood would be time intensive and goes beyond staff's current ability to accomplish this year.

Vice Chair Kuboi asked what timeline a legislative rezone would have to proceed under in order to be relevant to the redevelopment of the Ridgecrest Bingo site. Mr. Tovar said the property owners have expressed some urgency, and they want to know what the code might look like in four to six months. He emphasized that the simpler they keep the rezone, the easier it would be get through the review process in a timely manner. If they take too long, the property could change hands and a developer who is interested in developing under the current zoning could vest a permit application. This would prevent the City from meeting some of their objectives for the new zoning category.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 3, 2007 minutes were approved as corrected.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

John Wolfe, Shoreline, referred to a development proposal for property at the corner of Northwest 190th Street and 20th Avenue Northwest. He pointed out that 20th Avenue Northwest has a 40-foot right-of-way, and the lot is a corner lot with two front yards. The depth of the lot would only be 45 feet. When the required setbacks are applied to the property, only a 20-foot building pad would remain. While the lot meets the qualitative aspects of the development code, it does not meet the "character of the neighborhood" standard in the code.

Next, Mr. Wolfe referred to a three-lot short plat at 2103 Northwest 201st Street where only the minimal standards would be achieved. The proposal is to retain stormwater from 50% of the site (11,000 square feet), and let it flow down an inadequate ditch and into the Puget Sound. The City has revised traffic at the corner so that cars for three homes would access a street where there is a stop sign 40 feet away. He suggested this would not meet the City's safety standards. Mr. Wolfe distributed a copy of a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission.

Russell Nash, Shoreline, voiced his concern about the character of his neighborhood. He said he lives on Northwest 201st Street where a three-lot short plat development is planned. He noted the site contains 50-year old trees, and the neighbors are passionate about retaining this type of quality. Other lots on Northwest 201st Street were also recently sold. The property is zoned for R-6, and the developer is proposing three more homes. He suggested that this type of development goes against the character of the Richmond Beach Neighborhood where they have sufficient setbacks, some greenery, and the ability to enjoy the community. He said he feels strongly that their neighborhood quality is being diminished by recent development proposals.

Jeffrey Johnson, Shoreline, said he was present to represent a group called the 20th Avenue Neighbors, which formed after neighbors attended a neighborhood meeting sponsored by the developer of property located on 201st Street. The group's purpose is to layout concerns about how the proposed development would impact the character of their neighborhood (*See PowerPoint presentation*). Based upon their concerns, they decided to hire a consultant to look at homes west of 20th Avenue Northwest all the way to Saltwater Park and the Town of Woodway. The consultant evaluated the number of units, the value of homes, the square footage of homes and the square footage of lots. They collected data on 673 homes, and 103 (15%) of the total housing units in this area are valued at over \$1 million. Of the 103 homes, 53 of them had major construction or are new construction since 1997. The 103 homes are 40% larger than the other homes west of 20th Avenue Northwest.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that the larger, expensive homes increase the value of all the surrounding properties. However, this apparent benefit is, in fact, negative for most residents since they must pay higher taxes and can only gain the value appreciation in their homes by selling them. This particularly impacts the fixed-income residents who have lived in the neighborhood for a long time. Higher taxes and homes values affect the affordability and accessibility of homes in the Richmond Beach Neighborhood. The group is concerned that this trend is effectively driving people out of their own neighborhoods. Mr. Johnson provided pictures to illustrate the typical types of houses that currently exist in the neighborhood. To emphasize the significant difference, he also provided pictures of the much larger type of development that is taking place.

Mr. Johnson said the neighborhood group is asking the City staff to provide regulations that place a limit on the number of houses of certain sizes, shapes and values in order to retain accessibility to the neighborhood and maintain the economic diversity that exists in Richmond Beach. He noted the City has recognized the Richmond Beach Neighborhood a number of times for being an extraordinary and committed neighborhood community.

Vice Chair Kuboi asked if the 20th Avenue Neighbor's position is primarily related to the scale of the new homes, or are they concerned about view preservation, as well. Mr. Johnson said they are interested in both. He explained the space that currently exists between the homes creates a certain sense of community. When vistas and views are diminished to accommodate the larger development, the character of the community cannot be maintained.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS

None of the Commissioners provided reports during this portion of the meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

Strategic Points for Town Center Projects

Mr. Cohen recalled that the Commission met last Thursday to discuss the draft Town Center Strategic Points. Staff compiled the comments from the group discussion, public comment letters, and suggestions from the Planning Commissioners to draft new points. He referred the Commission to the original draft points, as well as several alternate and entirely new points that were drafted by staff. The Commission and staff discussed the points as follows:

- **Alternative Strategic Point 11:** Mr. Cohen said this alternative language addresses concerns raised by some workshop groups that the Central Shoreline Area should connect to surrounding pedestrian connections throughout the City. **The Commission agreed that Strategic Point 11 should replace the language in Strategic Point 10 to read, “Create a walkable Central Shoreline area, with an emphasis on safety, convenience, and connectivity within and to the surrounding community.”** *(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 9 in the final draft.)*
- **Alternative Strategic Point 12:** Mr. Cohen explained that this alternative language clarifies between “green infrastructure” and “green structures,” which is found in Strategic Point 2. Commissioner Broili said the alternative language for Point 2 is still not specific enough. He explained there are two parts to green development: low-impact development relates to the infrastructure and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program deals with the buildings. He noted that there are different levels of participation associated with the LEED Program, and developments that reach a higher level typically have lower life-cycle costs. He urged the Commission to recommend the Town Center Project be required to meet the highest level of LEED.

Commissioner Hall said he does not have adequate information to make a recommendation of that type, and Commissioner Wagner agreed. Commissioner Phisuthikul pointed out that because the LEED targets are constantly changing, requiring the City to meet the highest standards would not necessarily guarantee they receive the best product for the City. **Rather than using the language in Alternative Strategic Point 12, the Commission agreed that Strategic Point 2 should be changed to read, “Identify and incorporate low-impact development and the highest feasible Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles and features.”** *(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 2 in the final draft)*

- **Alternative Strategic Point 13:** Mr. Cohen said this alternative language refers to Strategic Point 6. He recalled that at the workshop, it was suggested they consider opening Stone Avenue to the Civic Center for pedestrian access only. The proposed alternative language would allow the pedestrian access to occur. While he would support language that would allow Stone Avenue to be opened for pedestrian access only, Chair Piro said he suggests they consider a more holistic approach that addresses connections on both sides of Aurora Avenue North in general. Commissioner Hall noted

that Chair Piro's concern is addressed by Strategic Point 10. He noted that Stone Avenue is specifically called out in Strategic Point 6 because of the significant concern raised by residents on Stone Avenue about through vehicular access. **Rather than using the language in proposed Strategic Point 13, the Commission agreed that Strategic Point 6 should be changed to read, "Do not Open Stone Avenue North through to North 175th Street for vehicle access."** They agreed that pedestrian access would be a separate issue covered by Strategic Point 10. *(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 5 in the final draft.)*

- **Alternative Strategic Point 14:** Mr. Cohen said the proposed alternative language was intended to address the concern raised by a number of people at the workshop, as well as the Commission, about east-west connections. Mr. Tovar suggested that the high school should also be identified as Shorewood High School. **The Commission agreed that Strategic Point 9 should be changed to read, consider design treatments to tie together, visually and functionally, the public spaces of the City Hall with Heritage Park, Shoreline Museum, Shorewood High School, and east-west connections."** *(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 8 in the final draft.)*
- **New Strategic Points 15 and 19 and Strategic Point 5:** Mr. Cohen advised that Strategic Point 15 is intended to ensure that plazas and entries are built to the sidewalks along Midvale Avenue, without requiring a pedestrian to cross a parking lot or driveway to get to a building. He pointed out that this would likely be the City's only opportunity to change Midvale Avenue from a short cut through the neighborhood into a pedestrian oriented main street character that would enhance the connection between 175th and 185th Street. Chair Piro suggested that Strategic Point 15 appears to be an expansion of Strategic Points 5 and 19. Mr. Cohen agreed there is some overlap between some of the points, but they are each distinctive, as well. For example, Strategic Point 5 is related to connecting across Midvale Avenue from the Civic Center to the Interurban Trail, and Strategic Point 15 talks about the relationship between the civic center building and the frontage along Midvale Avenue. Strategic Point 19 is a separate point that deals with Midvale Avenue between 175th and 185th Streets.

Commissioner McClelland suggested the Commission discuss whether or not they want to have design standards specific to Midvale Avenue so that it would have a "main street" look. Commissioner Hall recalled that this topic is identified on the Commission's work plan to consider as part of the Central Shoreline Sub Area Plan within the next year. Therefore, he suggested the Strategic Points be limited to the capital project high-level strategies. Mr. Tovar agreed that the Strategic Points are intended to help the City make decisions about the four capital projects, and the discussion related to Midvale Avenue would come up as part of the Central Shoreline Sub Area Plan.

Commissioner Broili expressed his concern about making the points so specific they don't allow for flexibility in design. However, he agreed that Strategic Points 5, 15 and 19 are interconnected, and they should be able to create language that ties them together in a more holistic way that still allows for creativity. He reminded the Commission of discussion at the workshop about the need to take holistic approach and not only consider the four capital projects, but how they can connect to the rest of the community, existing neighborhoods and future development.

The Commission agreed to move on, while staff develops some possible new language for them to consider.

- **New Strategic Point 16:** Mr. Cohen said staff has further considered the language they proposed for Strategic Point 16 and feels it should be changed to read, “Evaluate off-peak and shared-parking opportunities for different parking uses.” Chair Piro agreed that the reference to “park-and-ride” should be deleted from this point since they don’t want the civic center to be a place to store vehicles during the day while people go elsewhere in the region. However, he suggested it would be appropriate to maintain the idea of incorporating a parking management plan.

Vice Chair Kuboi asked staff to clarify the term “public uses.” Does it speak to parking for citizens who are using the public facilities, or could it include parking opportunities for people who want to visit the commercial uses in the area. Commissioner Broili said it is important for the City to consider parking options to accommodate public events that are held at City Hall, Heritage Park, and elsewhere on the Civic Center site.

Commissioner Hall reminded the Commission that, strategically, the goal is to create a walkable Central Shoreline with connections to other areas. While he recognizes that parking must be dealt with at some point, he suggested they leave the parking issue out of the Strategic Points. Commissioner Broili expressed his concerns that problems could arise later if parking is not considered and accounted for during the design discussions. Commissioner Hall expressed his opinion that the Strategic Points should be broad and vague, and the City should rely on the professional capital project managers to do their best to all pertinent issues. Chair Piro pointed out that because parking was a key issue raised at the public forum that was conducted on May 10th, it should somehow be incorporated into the Strategic Points.

The Commission agreed that rather than use the alternative language proposed by staff, a new Strategic Point should be added to read, “Incorporate a parking management plan.” *(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 10 in the final draft.)*

Commissioner McClelland said it appears that the terms “City Hall” and “Civic Center” are being used interchangeably. She suggested the nomenclature used in the Strategic Points should be consistent.

- **New Strategic Point 17:** Commissioner Broili recalled that at the May 10th meeting, the point was raised that there are a number of non-profit organizations that provide services that support the City’s goals and aspirations. It was suggested it would be appropriate for space to be made available at the Civic Center for non-profit organizations to use. He said he believes this would be a laudable goal for the City to consider; however, he questioned if it would be appropriate to include it as a Strategic Point. Chair Piro suggested that if it were to become a Strategic Point, it would be appropriate to include educational groups, the arts community, etc.

Commissioner Hall suggested the language be softened. He also suggested that the “community” section of the Comprehensive Plan be updated to encourage opportunities to provide space for non-

profit and other community groups that provide services the City relies on. Commissioner Broili recalled the suggestion that the City should consider opportunities for partnerships with the high school, the college, and other organizations.

Vice Chair Kuboi said he would like Strategic Point 17 to be included in the document, but with softer language. He pointed out that every point on the list is arguably an amenity that would impact the cost of the project. He said it is important that the facility be used as many hours of the day as possible. Active alternative uses outside of the normal work day would generate traffic and activity to make the site vibrant. If the issue is not addressed as part of the Strategic Points, the opportunity might be lost. Commissioner McClelland said it is one thing to offer meeting space to non-profit groups during the evening hours, but her understanding of the original intent of the suggestion was that the City would offer office space. She expressed her belief that this would not be appropriate, and the Commission concurred. **The Commission agreed to change Strategic Point 17 to read, “Consider providing meeting space for community/non-profit organizations in the Civic Center.”** (Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 11 in the final draft.)

- **New Strategic Point 18:** Mr. Cohen said New Strategic Point 18 was offered up at the May 10th workshop to ensure that construction impacts on the adjacent neighborhoods are minimized. Commissioner McClelland suggested the language be changed to include businesses, and the Commission concurred. Commissioner Wagner suggested the use a different verb that is more consistent with the other Strategic Points. **The Commission agreed to change Strategic Point 17 to read, “Minimize construction impacts on the adjacent neighborhoods and businesses.”** (Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 12 in the final draft.)
- **New Strategic Points 15 and 19 and Strategic Point 5 (continued):** Mr. Cohen proposed language to address the concerns raised earlier by the Commission. Commissioner Phisuthikul expressed his belief that pedestrian access to the Civic Center building should be provided without requiring someone to walk through a parking lot and/or driveway. **After further discussion, the Commission agreed that Strategic Points 5, 15 and 19 should be combined to read as follows:**

Develop a strategic design for Midvale from 175th to 185th, including:

- **pedestrian access to the Civic Center without crossing driveway or parking lots,**
- **pedestrian linkages between the Civic Center and the Interurban Trail, and**
- **pedestrian facilities with landscaping and other amenities.**

(Note: This Strategic Point was later identified as Strategic Point 13 in the final draft.)

COMMISSIONER HALL MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE AMENDED STRATEGIC POINTS TO THE CITY COUNCIL. COMMISSIONER MCCLELLAND SECONDED THE MOTION.

Vice Chair Kuboi asked if the workshop discussion that took place on May 10th included the issue of disability access. It was pointed out that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) would address this issue. Vice Chair Kuboi questioned if it would be desirable for the City to go beyond the ADA

requirements when providing access for citizens with special needs. Commissioner Phisuthikul pointed out that all pedestrian access would require ADA accessibility, which should be sufficient.

Commissioner Broili pointed out that the Strategic Points would be applied to four projects that are all part of the Town Center Project. He agreed with Vice Chair Kuboi that it would make sense to place an emphasis on this group of developments to encourage and support a broad range of challenged people. Commissioner Phisuthikul reminded the Commission that ADA requirements would be applied to all public properties, including buildings, park lands, access points, and parking areas. The ADA regulations are strict and applied internationally. The majority of the Commission agreed it is important to ensure that access for individuals with special needs is addressed. However, the ADA requirements would cover the issue, and no additional Strategic Point would be necessary.

THE MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Mr. Tovar advised that the Strategic Points would be presented to the City Council on June 4th, and he invited the Chair or Vice Chair to attend the meeting to help convey the Commission's recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one in the audience who expressed a desire to offer comment during this portion of the meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business scheduled on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business scheduled on the agenda.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Chair Piro reminded the Commissioners of the next Speaker Series Session that is scheduled for May 24th. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 7th. Mr. Tovar advised that a study session on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and zoning regulations for the South Aurora Triangle has been scheduled for June 7th. He announced that staff would host a neighborhood meeting in the Westminster Neighborhood on May 29th at 7 p.m. at St. Dunstan's Church. The purpose of the meeting is to explain the proposal to the neighborhood and describe their opportunities to have an influence on the outcome. In addition, staff would set up a page on the City's website to provide information and updates related to the South Aurora Triangle proposal.

Mr. Cohn advised that no items have been scheduled for the Commission's June 21st agenda. He asked the Commission to identify topics for that meeting by May 24th. Perhaps they could hold a workshop discussion on some of the items on their parking lot list. Mr. Cohn suggested that perhaps it would be

appropriate to spend some time debriefing each other about the main points that have been raised during the Speaker Series. Mr. Tovar reminded the Commission that all of the Speaker Series presentations are available on video stream via the City's website.

Commissioner Hall complimented the staff for bringing forward a work plan that includes the topics the Commission feels are important to the community. He agreed a discussion to debrief on the Speaker Series would be worthwhile, but he questioned if this would be a sufficient agenda to merit calling a meeting. He suggested it be added to another agenda, instead. The remainder of the Commission concurred.

Mr. Cohn pointed out that the Shoreline Center would be closed on July 5th. Therefore, the Commission's first meeting that month has been scheduled for July 12th.

Vice Chair Kuboi asked staff to forward a copy of the Commission's parking lot list to each of the Commissioners via email.

Chair Piro asked the staff to provide a follow up response to the comments provided earlier in the meeting by the 20th Avenue Neighbors.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Rocky Piro
Chair, Planning Commission

Jessica Simulcik Smith
Clerk, Planning Commission