

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

February 1, 2007
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline Conference Center
Mt. Rainier Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Vice Chair Kuboi
Commissioner Broili
Commissioner Hall
Commissioner Harris
Commissioner McClelland
Commissioner Phisuthikul
Commissioner Pyle
Commissioner Wagner

STAFF PRESENT

Joe Tovar, Director, Planning & Development Services
Steve Cohn, Senior Planner, Planning & Development Services
Steve Szafran, Planner II, Planning & Development Services
Ian Sievers, City Attorney
Jessica Simulcik Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Chair Piro

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Kuboi called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Because there was no one in the audience to provide testimony on Item 7.1, the Commission agreed to place this item after Item 7.2. The Director's Report was moved to after the public hearings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 4, 2007 were approved as corrected.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

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

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING ON SITE-SPECIFIC REZONE AT 18501 LINDEN AVENUE (PROJECT #201570)

Vice Chair Kuboi reviewed that, at the last meeting, the Commission opened and closed the public portion of the hearing, and the intent of the public hearing is to discuss the staff recommendation and develop a Commission recommendation for the rezone proposal. He reviewed the rules and procedures for the continued public hearing and reminded the Commissioners of the Rules of the Appearance of Fairness Laws. He opened the hearing and invited the Commissioners to disclose any communications they may have received concerning the subject of the hearing outside of the hearing. None of the Commissioners indicated ex parte communications. No one from the audience voiced a concern, either.

Bring Back Tabled Motion

Ms. Simulcik Smith reminded the Commission of the motion currently on the table, which reads as follows:

COMMISSIONER PYLE MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST TO REZONE BOTH PARCELS AT 18501 AND 18511 LINDEN AVENUE FROM OFFICE (O) AND R-48 TO REGIONAL BUSINESS (RB). THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MCCLELLAND.

The Commission briefly discussed whether or not the motion on the table would have to be withdrawn before a new motion could be made. It was decided that the Commission did not need to withdraw the motion. They could choose not to act on it and put forward a new motion instead.

COMMISSIONER HALL MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST TO REZONE BOTH PARCELS AT 18511 AND 18501 LINDEN AVENUE FROM OFFICE (O) AND R-48 TO COMMUNITY BUSINESS (CB). COMMISSIONER PHISUTHIKUL SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Hall recalled the Commission's previous discussion about whether or not they could condition a rezone or place conditions on a development that go beyond the zoning code requirements. He noted that the City Attorney cautioned against this practice. If the choice is to approve the rezone to CB with no conditions or deny it outright, he would prefer a rezone to CB. However, he asked that the City Attorney provide further insight regarding his position.

Mr. Sievers explained that, from his history with the City, he is very reluctant to use contract rezones and concomitant agreements. However, there have been occasions when this concept has been utilized.

He said he cautions against contract rezones because they are cumbersome to implement. Instead of a simple zoning designation, a contract rezone requires that applicants agree to the conditions imposed by the City Council and Commission, and this agreement must somehow be identified on the zoning map. In addition, a contract rezone would place an additional constraint on future property owners.

Mr. Sievers explained that the City's current criteria for project rezones are very brief, and there are no rules on what zoning conditions could be addressed through a contract rezone. After further reviewing the issue with staff, he concluded that contract rezone concept probably runs against the intent of the Growth Management Act. He advised that contract rezones have been authorized by Washington Courts since 1967 if conditions agreed to between the developer and the City are permissible exercises of the police power authorized by statute or ordinance (*Myhre vs. Spokane*). Contract rezones were used to impose conditions to prevent harm from possible development, and were one of the only ways to address environmental impacts at the time. Since that time, however, SEPA has become a valuable tool for addressing environmental impacts. In addition, over time, the zoning codes and development standards have become more sophisticated. Also under 1995 regulatory reform, counties and cities were required to adopt a comprehensive planning process under the Growth Management Act. The intent was to restrain the way project permits were processed, with the objective of providing protection to property owners and the public through expeditious and predictable project permit approval.

Mr. Sievers expressed his belief that preserving the process of public participation is one of the underlying purposes of his thoughts on contract rezones. He explained that contract rezones have traditionally been used as a restrictive measure. He noted that the City's current Comprehensive Plan provides a number of zoning designations that would be consistent for the property, and contract rezones allow property owners to obtain approval for higher density zones based on specific conditions outlined in the contract. Once developers figure out they can get whatever zoning designation they want through the contract rezone process, the zoning map could become convoluted.

Mr. Sievers expressed his belief that there should be a lot of public process in creating and amending the Comprehensive Plan Policies and the Development Code. He noted several recent discussions on development regulation amendments (critical areas, cottage housing, trees, etc.) that drew significant public feedback. He expressed his concern that with some of the recent contract rezones the public process might not have been adequate. When the Commission suggests conditions on applications that were advertised to the public as straightforward rezone proposals, the public is often not allowed an adequate opportunity to comment regarding the impacts of the conditions. Because rezones and contract rezones are quasi-judicial actions, the public would not have the ability to talk to the City Council about their concerns after the Commission has forwarded their recommendation. The City Council's hearing would be closed record based on testimony provided at the hearing before the Commission.

Mr. Sievers advised adopted legislative findings indicate that "type of land use" is more than a simple category of occupancy or density. It includes a comprehensive packet of development standards that attach to each land use district to define the appearance and impacts of property use. He suggested there are certain development standards that should be inviolate and not changed at the project review level. Instead, the project should be changed to fit the framework provided by the Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations. If the plan and regulations are too restrictive, they should be docketed for

amendment so the cumulative impacts of making the change equally available to all properties similarly situated can be fully addressed.

Mr. Sievers explained that while the contract terms often address concerns that are raised by neighboring property owners, it is difficult for the City to enforce the conditions in perpetuity. He suggested it can be misleading for the Commission to review proposed site plans for a property when reviewing a rezone application. It is important to understand that once a rezone is approved, the applicant would not be required to develop as per the design plans that were presented to the Commission.

Mr. Sievers advised that the old King County Title 18 laid out very limited circumstances when the zoning district could be re-opened for conditions in a contract rezone. However, it did not permit reduction of minimum development standards. This was dropped when the new Shoreline Development Code was adopted, but it could be put back in.

Commissioner Hall pointed out that in the three years he has been on the Commission just about every rezone application that has come before them has had a staff recommendation for conditions. He asked what has changed since the last rezone that staff recommended with conditions. Mr. Sievers agreed that many the recent rezone applications have included staff recommended conditions, and that is why he has advised them to stop this practice. He said he has had to redraft many of Commission's recommendations regarding contract rezones before forwarding them to the City Council because they have not been legal as far as the model of a concomitant agreement.

Commissioner Pyle recalled Mr. Sievers' comment that many of the impacts the Commission is trying to address through conditioning a rezone could be mitigated through the SEPA process. However, he pointed out that some of the rezone applications ultimately lead to the subdivision of property that is four lots or less, which would not require a SEPA review. Building a single-family residence would not require a SEPA review, either. Mr. Sievers agreed there are categorical exemptions where projects can go straight through the permit process without a SEPA review, but this would not include the significant parcels. He suggested the City should follow the statute. A property owner has the right to build according to the regulations. If problems arise, the statutes allow the City to fix the regulations, but do not give an excuse to change the rules on a developer or take something away from the public.

Mr. Tovar said that since he was hired as the Shoreline Planning and Development Services Director he has had concerns about how the City's development code was put together and how rezoning has been done in the City in the past. He reminded the Board that the Growth Management Act requires all cities in the State to have a timely, fair and predictable permit process. It also requires that zoning regulations, including the zoning map, be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Local governments have a responsibility to make the two documents consistent. Relying on contract rezones or parcel-by-parcel rezones is common practice but is not the intent of the Growth Management Act. A more attractive option would be to legislatively rezone parts of the City to be consistent with what the Comprehensive Plan says they ought to be.

Mr. Tovar agreed with the City Attorney that the City Council could adopt regulations to amend what is permitted in a use zone of the City and create a requirement for discretionary site review, including appropriate conditions. Instead of being a rezone process, it would be a condition of the zone for that property. He said it would take a fair amount of work to reform the City's code to get that kind of an outcome everywhere in the City, but longer term that would be the more sensible direction to move. This would avoid the current problems with the contract rezone process. It would also avoid the risk of potential appeals.

Commissioner Pyle asked if the City would be able to condition 4-lot subdivisions that follow a rezone to a higher density to mitigate any kind of identified problems on the site. Mr. Tovar answered that once the zoning map has been changed, the zoning is set for the property. Future property owners would have the ability to construct whatever the zone allows and would not have any legal obligation to abide by the conditions that were imposed upon the prior property owner. Commissioner Pyle asked if plat conditions could be placed on the property when it is subdivided. Mr. Tovar answered that subdivisions of four lots or less would be categorically exempt from SEPA, unless there were critical areas on the site. Commissioner Pyle noted that the development code could be written in such a way that would allow staff to place conditions on a short plat subdivision as part of the administrative review process.

Commissioner McClelland said she understands the need for consistency between the zoning ordinance, zoning map and the Comprehensive Plan. However, she noted that while the Development Code does not allow flexibility, there are some policies in the Comprehensive Plan that do. She referred to Land Use Policy 18, which states some limited industrial uses might be allowed under certain circumstances. Next, she referred to Land Use Policy 22, which states that City could provide incentives such as increased height and bulk up to 30% of allowed floor/area ratio if a development could provide three of the things on the list.

Mr. Tovar agreed that the Comprehensive Plan does allow flexibility. However, it is important to remember that the Comprehensive Plan provides policy statements, not regulations. The regulations found in the Development Code control what can happen on a property. While the Comprehensive Plan states that the regulations should have flexibility, if the Development Code does not give this flexibility, the Comprehensive Plan policy cannot be implemented. It is the City's responsibility to make sure their Development Code is written in such a way that allows them to implement the policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Sievers suggested that the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies speak to those who draft and approve legislative changes to the regulations. They are intended to guide the City by identifying what should be in the regulations. However, they are not meant speak to the Commission and/or City Council when judging a project application. He emphasized that the existing Development Code controls projects, and not all of the policies in the Comprehensive Plan have found their way into the regulations.

Commissioner Hall pointed to the criteria by which the Commission is supposed to evaluate rezone applications. Criterion 1 states that the rezone must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and Criterion 3 states that the rezone must be warranted to achieve consistency with the Comprehensive

Plan. He suggested that under the City's current code, rezones are supposed to be judged by the Commission explicitly for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. A rezone is a quasi-judicial process that requires a public hearing, and the Commission's job is to balance the competing interests and values of the community. In the past, the Commission has been able to accomplish this goal by imposing conditions on rezones. If this tool is no longer an option, the threshold for approving a rezone would go up. If there is anything about a proposed rezone that would adversely affect the public health, safety or general welfare, the Commission would not be able to mitigate with conditions. Therefore, they would be compelled by the code to reject the rezone application.

Commissioner McClelland referred to the table on Page 42 of the Staff Report and noted that an O zone would allow up to 8 units, and an R-48 zone would allow 15. An RB zoning designation would allow 35, and a CB zone would allow 15. She asked if it would be possible to build 23 units on the subject properties based on the current zone. Mr. Szafran answered no. He explained that the Development Code identifies a maximum density of 24 units per acre for the property zoned O, and 48 units per acre would be allowed on the property that is zoned R-48. The densities cannot be added together.

Mr. Tovar suggested that, at some point in the future, the City should complete an overhaul of the entire zoning code. This would enable them to create zoning categories that are more flexible, but more targeted to what the City wants to achieve. Commissioner McClelland noted that the applicant has the option of taking the application off the table until the zoning code has been revised to address his situation.

Presentation of Final Staff Recommendation

Mr. Szafran said staff's final recommendation is that the Commission accept the original recommendation in the Staff Report to approve a rezone for both of the subject parcels to Community Business (CB).

Final Questions by the Commission and Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Wagner suggested the applicant be invited to share his view regarding the current motion on the table to rezone the properties to CB.

Jim Abbot said the applicant is still willing to be bound by all of the requirements of a CB zone (impervious surface, 60-foot height limit, etc), with the exception of the number of units allowed. They would like to construct 25 units instead of 15. The development would look the same from the outside, but they would like to build smaller apartment units (900 to 1,000 square feet) as opposed to fewer large condominium units (1,700 to 1,800 square feet). He summarized that, while the applicant is not opposed to the staff's recommendation to rezone the property to CB, the CB zone would not allow them to accomplish their intended development.

Mr. Abbot noted that a memorandum from staff indicates that within the next few weeks, they plan to initiate an amendment to the Development Code to permit greater residential densities on CB zoned properties between approximately Fremont and Ashworth Avenues. The applicant is concerned about

postponing the project until the amendments have been approved. He noted that contract rezones and concomitant agreements have been used legally by the City and other communities for a long time. He concluded by stating that what the applicant is proposing would be a good thing for the City.

Ms. Cohn said staff's intent is to move the change to the Development Code forward very quickly. Mr. Tovar said that if a rezone to CB is approved by the City Council, an amendment to remove the unit count limitation in the CB zone would address the applicant's concern. The property would be subject to the amended standards for the CB zone. However, there is a risk that the Commission or City Council would not recommend approval of an amendment to remove the unit count limitation. Mr. Cohn noted that staff has been discussing this Development Code amendment for about two months, so it was not brought up just to address this particular rezone application.

Closure of the Public Hearing

The public hearing was closed at 8:07 p.m.

Vote by Commission to Recommend Approval, Denial or Modification

Ms. Simulcik Smith recapped the motion on the floor as follows:

COMMISSIONER HALL MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST TO REZONE BOTH PARCELS AT 18511 AND 18501 LINDEN AVENUE FROM OFFICE (O) AND R-48 TO COMMUNITY BUSINESS (CB). COMMISSIONER PHISUTHIKUL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SITE-SPECIFIC REZONE AT 20309 – 8TH AVENUE NORTHWEST (PROJECT #201588)

Vice Chair Kuboi reviewed the rules and procedures for the public hearing and reminded the Commissioners of the Rules of the Appearance of Fairness Laws. He opened the hearing and invited the Commissioners to disclose any communications they may have received concerning the subject of the hearing outside of the hearing. Commissioner Broili disclosed that because he knows the applicant well, he would not participate in the hearing or vote on the application. None of the other Commissioners indicated ex parte communications. No one in the audience voiced a concern, either.

Staff Overview and Presentation of Preliminary Staff Recommendation

Ms. Szafran reviewed the Staff Report for the proposed rezone application to change the zoning designation of two parcels from Residential – 4 Dwelling Units (R-4) to Residential – 6 Dwelling Units (R-6). He advised that the subject properties are identified in the Comprehensive Plan as low-density residential. The block where the subject property is located is currently zoned R-4, while everything else in the vicinity is zoned R-6. He provided an aerial photograph of the site, showing one home on

each of the two parcels. There is currently heavy vegetation and moderate slopes on the properties. He described the surrounding development, which is all single-family residential.

Mr. Szafran reviewed that neighbors have expressed concern about access to the subject properties from 10th Avenue Northwest, and the impact this would have to traffic. However, he emphasized that no access is proposed from this street. The neighbors also expressed concern about the proposed increase in density. The current R-4 zoning designation would allow for the construction of up to 7 homes, and an R-6 zoning designation would allow up to 11 homes. The applicant has proposed 10 homes for the properties. Lastly, the neighbors expressed concern about the removal of significant trees. He reviewed that the City's current code allows a property owner to remove up to 6 significant trees in a 3-year period without a permit, but they would not be allowed to disturb the trees that are located in the sloped areas.

Mr. Szafran referred to the zoning criteria the Commission must consider when reviewing rezone applications and noted the following:

- The rezone is consistent with the existing zones of R-6 to the east, west and south.
- The rezone would provide infill opportunities that reflect the character of the existing single-family neighborhood.
- The development would be located away from the sensitive areas.
- Natural landscaping would provide a buffer from existing homes to the north and south and also from the 8th Avenue Northwest street front.

Mr. Szafran said staff's preliminary recommendation is approval of R-6 zoning for the two subject parcels located at 20309 – 8th Avenue Northwest and 20320 – 10th Avenue Northwest. Staff recommends that, in the future, the City could consider an area wide rezone to change the whole block of R-4 zoned properties to R-6.

Questions by the Commission to Staff and Applicant

Commissioner Hall noted that the Comprehensive Plan Map provided in the Staff Report shows that the parcel immediately to the left of the subject properties has a designation of private open space. He asked if this tract was required as part of a previous subdivision. Mr. Szafran said he didn't know.

Commissioner Wagner asked what would prevent the applicant from providing access to the subject parcels from 10th Avenue Northwest. Mr. Szafran explained that in order to provide access from 10th Avenue Northwest, the applicant would have to gain access through properties owned by two separate people. In addition, the slope would make it difficult to provide access in this location based on current engineering standards.

Commissioner Pyle asked if the applicant would be required to place the steep slope portion of the subject properties into a native growth protection easement. Mr. Szafran answered that the slopes on the subject parcels are not significant enough to be regulated as critical areas.

Larry Blake advised that the properties to the north along 205th Avenue were subdivided a number of years ago. The lots were allowed to be smaller than code, provided that an open space area be designated and maintained.

Commissioner McClelland said the Staff Report indicates that an R-6 zone would allow the developer to build 11 detached single-family houses on one lot. She asked if this would be a condominium type project. Mr. Blake said that is one possibility in order to save the existing vegetation along the property line. He said there would be only one road into the development from 8th Avenue Northwest.

Public Testimony or Comment

There was no one in the audience who expressed a desire to address the Commission during this portion of the hearing.

Presentation of Final Staff Recommendation

Mr. Szafran said staff's final recommendation is that the Commission recommend approval of R-6 zoning for the properties located at 20309 – 8th Avenue Northwest and 20320 – 10th Avenue Northwest.

Final Questions by the Commission and Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Harris asked if the notice that was sent out to surrounding property owners was mailed to all of the owners of R-4 zoned properties. Mr. Szafran answered that about half of these properties are located within the 600-foot radius for which notices were sent out.

COMMISSIONER HALL MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO REZONE THE SUBJECT PARCELS TO R-6. COMMISSIONER MCCLELLAND SECONDED THE MOTION.

Commissioner Hall commented that the neighborhood concerns about access off 10th Avenue Northwest are important to consider, but is also important for the Commission to remember the value of having circulation and connectivity in transportation. If they were in a transportation or sub area planning mode, he would actually prefer to see a connection from both 8th and 10th Avenues Northwest in order to improve traffic circulation. Further, he pointed out that there are topographical features on the subject parcels that have resulted in lower density development in the past, but using techniques such as detached condominium development, might create an opportunity for more infill projects that are creative and achieve the densities envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Harris said he struggles with rezoning these two parcels to R-6 zoning, while all of the other R-4 zoned properties would remain unchanged. However, he noted that none of the property owners from the R-4 zoned area came forward to express opposition.

Closure of the Public Hearing

There public hearing was closed.

Vote by Commission to Recommend Approval, Denial or Modification

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Note: Commissioner Broili did not participate in the hearing or the final recommendation.)

PUBLIC HEARING ON DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS

Vice Chair Kuboi reviewed the rules and procedures for the legislative public hearing on proposed amendments to the Development Code, and then opened the public hearing.

Staff Overview

Mr. Szafran reviewed that the City Council repealed the City's Cottage Housing Ordinance, and the proposed amendments would delete all references to cottage housing from the Development Code. He noted that he would come back before the Commission at a later date with a proposal to remove all references to cottage housing from the Comprehensive Plan.

Questions by the Commission to Staff

None of the Commissioners had questions for the staff during this portion of the meeting.

Public Testimony or Comment

There was no one in the audience who expressed a desire to address the Commission during this portion of the hearing.

Final Questions by the Commission and Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Pyle asked if the Commission has the ability to propose Development Code amendments. Mr. Tovar answered affirmatively and suggested the Commission discuss their ideas for possible Development Code amendments at their March 1st meeting. Commissioner Hall clarified that, after their discussion, they could forward their list of proposed amendments to the City Council, with a request that they be docketed for consideration during the next round of Development Code amendments.

COMMISSIONER HARRIS MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS ALL REFERRING TO COTTAGE HOUSING, AS SPELLED OUT IN THE STAFF REPORT. COMMISSIONER BROILI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Closure of the Public Hearing

The public hearing was closed.

Vote by Commission to Recommend Approval, Denial or Modification

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tovar reviewed the following bills related to land use that have been introduced into the Legislature this session:

- Eminent Domain Notice Requirements. There was a recent Supreme Court decision that when an agency wants to condemn property, notice to the property owner was sufficient if the agency simply posted notice on its website. The Legislature is currently working on a bill that would require the agency to mail notices to property owners.
- Transfer of Development Rights. Representatives from the Cascade Land Conservancy came before the Commission to talk about the transfer of development rights from rural areas or resource lands into urban areas. A study bill has been introduced that would call upon the Legislature to set aside funds and provide direction to the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to work with a number of organizations and report back to the Legislature about how the mechanism for transferring development rights might be made more practical and useful.
- Regulatory Fairness and Apparent Conflicts Between Agricultural Uses and Critical Areas Regulations. The Governor has requested legislation to create a joint gubernatorial and legislative task force to look at matters of regulatory fairness. The goal for the task force is to study the situation and bring back some recommendations on how to increase fairness in the intersection between agricultural uses and environmental protection.
- Critical Areas. One bill has been introduced which states that critical areas regulations do not operate within agricultural lands. Another bill says that any buffers, specifically setbacks from critical areas, would be counted for purposes of development potential. A bill will be reintroduced this session that would identify safe harbors for local governments. It calls for the State to promulgate specific ways to regulate critical areas using best available science. If a city or county uses that method, they would have safe harbor and couldn't be challenged for compliance with the Growth Management Act.
- Vesting of Development Rights. A bill has been introduced to establish when vesting of development rights should occur. In the State of Washington, development rights are vested at the time an application is made. In most other states, the development rights are vested at the time the permit application is granted by a local government. He pointed out that while the Growth Management Act requires detailed Comprehensive Plans, land use regulations, and capital budgets, the State has one of the most liberal vesting statutes in the country. Commissioner Broili asked if vesting rights have a

sunset. Mr. Tovar said that, according to State law, the vesting rights would extinguish when the permit expires.

Commissioner Pyle asked staff to provide more information about whether the City's current critical areas ordinance allows buffers to be counted for purposes of development potential. Mr. Tovar said the City's current critical areas ordinance does not allow development or other modifications to a critical areas buffer. However, a property owner can receive credit for the buffer area for purposes of establishing lot size and density allowed. Apparently, some jurisdictions in the state require that the buffer area be deducted from the net lot area and/or unit count. The proposed legislative bill would prevent that from happening.

Mr. Tovar advised that the City's 2007-2008 work plan would be published in the next issue of *CURRENTS*. The article would introduce a new City website where citizens can learn more about various issues and projects. The website would provide the work plan chart, as well as links to City programs and/or projects such as the upcoming speaker series, comprehensive housing strategies, recycling construction materials from demolition sites, environmentally sustainable communities, the Ridgecrest process and the South Aurora Triangle project.

Mr. Tovar said the website would also provide a link to the civic center/city hall project, which the City Council recently decided to move forward with. The objective is to have the project under construction within the next year, which would involve a very intense public process and decision making by the City Council. He advised that the University of Washington Students have nearly completed their Town Center Report, and the staff would use this report as a resource when preparing staff recommended town center policies or strategies for the Commission and City Council to consider in April or May.

Mr. Tovar said the City Council has raised concerns about exactly what is meant by the phrase "town center," and he agreed that a clear description of the town center concept must be created. He suggested the description include three distinct tiers: the new city hall, the immediate town center environment, and the residential neighborhoods that lie to the east and west. He said concern has been expressed about whether these residential neighborhoods could remain as viable, long-term residential communities and the intent is to include them in the broader Central Shoreline Sub Area Plan discussions.

Vice Chair Kuboi pointed out that when an article was published in the Enterprise asking for citizens to serve on the Comprehensive Housing Strategies Committee, the City received a lot of response. But there was very little community response from the website, itself. He stressed the importance of making people aware that the website is the primary place to find information about City projects.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Broili reported that the first ABC Team Meeting was held on January 30th, and they spent time covering the ground rules and allowing participants to express their ideas and opinions. The next meeting is scheduled for February 14th. Commissioner McClelland said the City Manager attended the

meeting and commented on the number of talented individuals who were participating on the team. The membership is quite diverse.

Vice Chair Kuboi reported that the Comprehensive Housing Strategies Committee is also made up of talented individuals. They spent the first three or four meetings brainstorming ideas for consideration, and now they are in the transitional process of refining and categorizing the issues. Staff has proposed a work plan that maps out the meetings and agenda topics through June.

Commissioner Harris reported on his attendance at the recent Ridgecrest Meeting, which was well attended. A lot of ideas and dreams were brought forward, and the University of Washington Students were fun to watch. Mr. Tovar noted that the meeting was attended by two Planning Commissioners, three elected officials, five developers and about 110 citizens from the Ridgecrest Neighborhood. Commissioner Harris credited much of the meetings' success to Patty Hale and her leadership.

Commissioner Pyle reported that the Briarcrest Neighborhood recently held their first meeting, which was attended by about 35 individuals. He and his neighbor facilitated the meeting to obtain neighborhood feedback. The top issues were related to transportation, planning and neighborhood preparedness. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 12th to work on the issue of planning. They would likely invite planning staff and Commissioners to attend.

Commissioner Broili said he and Commissioner Pyle attended the Green Building Forum, along with a few City Council Members. Presentations were made by representatives from various green businesses. The meeting was well attended and interesting.

Commissioner Broili announced that the citizens can now watch the City Council Meetings on the internet.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business scheduled on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was scheduled on the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Pyle announced that there is a new website available for people who are interested in sustainable energy called citizenrenew.com. He noted that one of the Council's goals is a sustainable community. He explained that the website promotes solar energy, and the company is actually selling solar power back to the public at the grid price. They will put solar panels on roofs and lease them for the price of the power. This company could help the City achieve their sustainability goals without having to put forward a significant upfront cost for solar panels.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Cohn announced that Mark Hinshaw would provide a speaker series presentation at the next Commission Meeting. The format would be the same as that used for the last speaker series. The presentation would be televised and available on the web. Mr. Cohn advised that staff would meet with Mr. Hinshaw a week prior to his presentation, so Commissioners could forward their specific questions to staff.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Rocky Piro
Chair, Planning Commission

Jessica Simulcik Smith
Clerk, Planning Commission