

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

December 14, 2006
7:00 P.M.

Shoreline Conference Center
Mt. Rainier Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chair Piro
Commissioner Broili
Commissioner Hall
Commissioner Harris
Commissioner Wagner
Commissioner Pyle
Commissioner McClelland (arrived at 7:05 p.m.)

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 Phisuthikul
Vice Chair Kuboi

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Piro 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: Chair Piro and Commissioners Broili, Hall, Harris, Wagner and Pyle. Commissioners McClelland arrived at the meeting at 7:05 p.m. and Commissioner Phisuthikul and Vice Chair Kuboi were excused.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tovar provided a document describing the Commission's 2007-2008 anticipated work program. He explained that while the Commission was eager to start working on some of the issues identified on the

work program list, they were unable to do so in 2006 because the City Council had not finished sorting through their goals in order to provide direction on how to proceed. However, many of the items are ready to move forward in 2007. He specifically reviewed the following projects:

- **Comprehensive Housing Strategy.** The work on this has already been started, and three Commissioners are participating as members of the committee. It is likely the committee's recommendation to the City Council would include amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code, which would come before the entire Commission for review. There may also be Capital Budget implications, as well.
- **Town Center.** Work is underway by students from the University of Washington. Their work will be made public in 2007.
- **Environmentally Sustainable Community.** The City Council has indicated this issue is important, and they have allocated funding in the 2007 budget for this purpose. They specifically approved \$100,000 to support the development of an environmentally sustainable strategy. A joint meeting with the Planning Commission and Park Board is scheduled in February to discuss where the emphasis should be and what some of the issues are.
- **Redevelopment of the Fircrest Site.** One of Council's 2007 goals is to consider redevelopment options for the Fircrest Site. Staff has met with representatives of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to determine if the State has an interest in looking at possible future uses of the Fircrest site. While the State has not expressed a significant interest up to this point, the City Council decided to hasten some more favorable reaction from the State by identifying \$20,000 in the budget to be spent for this purpose. This work would likely involve help from a consultant.
- **Cascade Cities.** The Commission has been considering this topic for a few months, and a presentation was provided to the Planning Commission and Park Board in September. The same presentation will be presented to the City Council in March 2007. Staff has been working out the details of the Shoreline Speaker Series, and it is likely the sessions would start in February and occur about every six weeks.
- **Legislative Area Wide Rezones.** The Planning Commission has discussed this concept previously, and the City Council has expressed an interest, as well. A resolution will be presented to the City Council on January 8, 2007 for review and possible action. The resolution would affirm that the Planning Commission would be the hearing body for legislative items and that they would meet with the Commission at least twice a year in April and October. The City Council would also be asked to provide direction to the Commission on whether or not they want them to examine area wide legislative rezones to achieve consistency between the Zoning Map and the Comprehensive Plan. Staff plans to solicit the Commission's thoughts about parts of the City that might be good candidates for legislative area wide rezones.

Mr. Tovar summarized that 2007 would be a busy and important year for the Commission. Interesting and important policy issues would come before them for consideration. Staff and consultant resources are now available to complete the necessary work to move forward.

Commissioner Pyle asked if area wide rezones would have to be reported to the Washington State Department of Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED), and if so, what would be involved in this process. He noted that site-specific rezones do not have to go through CTED. Mr. Tovar explained that the City must provide a 60-day notice to CTED for any legislative amendment to the Development Code or Comprehensive Plan. They are not required to send notice to CTED for quasi-judicial rezones because they do not involve amendments to the Development Code.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of November 6, 2006 were approved as presented.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONERS

Report by Commissioners on State APA Conference

Commissioner McClelland said she liked the presentation by a representative from the Pierce County Department of Health and a planner from the City of Puyallup regarding the legislature's recent direction to help people be more physically active. They reviewed a demonstration the City of Puyallup is conducting about health and land use and suggested it might be informative to invite them to a Commission Meeting to provide an abbreviated version of what Puyallup has done in terms of connecting places to make it easier to bicycle and walk throughout the City. She said she also enjoyed the presentation about LEED certification (Leadership in Environmental & Energy Design) and "green development".

Chair Piro noted that the health related legislation referred to by Commissioner McClelland came out of the 2006 Legislative Session. It contains two components that are of interest to the City. One is that the City's land use element must address the area of physical activity or active living. Secondly, they must include provisions for a non-motorized element in the City's Transportation Plan. These are both exciting issues to work on as part of the next Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Tovar agreed that it would be interesting to hear a presentation about what the City of Puyallup has done in this regard. In addition, the City of Puyallup is very deep into the design and construction of a new city hall. Commissioner McClelland noted they are also developing housing in their downtown as per their vision of having a downtown that is suitable for the commuter rail line. She concluded that Puyallup provides a good model for the concepts the City is trying to implement.

Report by Commissioners Who Participate on the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Team

Commissioner Wagner reported that the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), for the Comprehensive Housing Strategy, has held two meetings to date. The first meeting was an introduction, and members of the committee were allowed to share their experiences with various housing options. The second meeting was an open house where the public was asked to brainstorm on selected housing topics. The public who attended the open house indicated their interest in continuing to be involved in the process. The ideas and comments that came out of the open house will be compiled and sent to the CAC members and those who attended the meeting.

Mr. Cohn said the committee discussed issues about affordable housing and the different groups that may need housing in the future, such as the elderly who want options to enable them to stay in their homes or move to another home in Shoreline, college students, young families, etc. They also discussed appropriate locations for multi-family housing in the City. They asked the public general issues, as well as specific questions about their concerns if certain types of housing were to come to their neighborhoods. He said staff's intent is to establish a work program to ensure the committee addresses the major issues identified at the open house. Staff anticipates the committee would complete their work by June or July of 2007. The CAC meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month.

STAFF REPORT

Status Report on Town Center and Central Subarea Plan

Mr. Cohen referred the Commission to the Project Charter for the Town Center Project and explained that the City has hired a consultant with experience in urban planning and design to assist them with ideas and a vision for creating a distinct and cohesive town center for Shoreline. Staff has asked the consultant to do the following:

- Review the Central Shoreline Subarea Report and use the document to influence their recommendation.
- Coordinate the four approved major CIP projects that are taking place in the general area (Aurora Avenue, Interurban Trail, Heritage Park, and City Hall) and develop suggestions on how to connect the projects to make them more distinctive and consistent with the future downtown core.
- Provide suggestions for additional near-future CIP projects the City could take on; continue to coordinate key property owners and developers to facilitate economic development actions.
- Consider how the Town Center Plan could complement other City Council goals, such as the Comprehensive Housing Strategy and Environmentally Sustainable Communities.

Mr. Cohen referred to the inventory prepared by the consultant to identify things they felt were unique to Shoreline that were worth incorporating into the Town Center Plan. The consultant provided a map showing the regional connections to describe how the area is physically centered in the City. The map points out some key institutions and public facilities in the area, as well. The consultant was quick to note that Shoreline has a significant number of large stands of trees that are located adjacent to and near

Aurora. There are also other landscape pieces that could be considered for possible expansion or connected to the town center concept. He said the consultant also identified the design elements that already exist in the area. For example, they looked at the brick road, the Methodist Church, the new fire station, and some of the old gas stations on Aurora Avenue to consider which designs were worth keeping and which were not. They also considered the tree spacing on the Interurban Trail and the local connections for bus stops.

Mr. Cohen said that over the next month, the consultant would develop with some proposed alternatives, with some variations. The public involvement process would start in April, and staff would approach the City Council in March for general direction. It is anticipated the plan would come before the Commission for implementation in early 2008.

Mr. Tovar said that the City Hall Project is a driving factor in the Town Center Plan Project. The City Manager has indicated that, overall, they would like to be in the new City Hall Building in the year 2009. In order to meet that goal, the City Council must make some quick decisions in the first half of 2007 about how they are going to go about designing the building. They must also consider how the City Hall Project relates to the Town Center Plan. They might adopt a resolution that addresses rudimentary site and early design decisions before there is a detailed building design for City Hall. He noted that the public process associated with the City Hall Project has not been firmed up.

Commissioner Hall asked if staff anticipates any modifications to the zoning for the area that would either include or exclude certain uses. Mr. Cohen said part of the process would include the consideration of different ways to look at zoning for this area, such as a form-based code approach, perhaps even changing how land use is reviewed.

Commissioner Hall said that if the City were to go all the way to a form-based code, without worrying about what uses were allowed, they might miss an opportunity to provide strong incentives for bringing in multi-story, mixed-use buildings with first floor retail and residential above. He suggested they at least consider the opportunity for inclusive uses that would not allow one-story strip mall development and would require some type of housing component. Rather than looking just at form, they should also consider some requirements on use. Mr. Cohen explained that the North City Overlay District is a type of form-based code, which provides the City with experience to see what has and has not worked well. The form-based code concept could include a range of options. Mr. Tovar noted that staff has invited Mark Hinshaw to participate in the speaker series on February 6th. He would talk about the form-based code concept and provide examples from other jurisdictions that have used it. Mr. Cohen emphasized that it takes time for cities to implement downtown plans.

Commissioner McClelland cautioned that the City should not get too attached to history as they consider the Town Center Plan. She noted that the mid-century look is popular now, and the City has a lot of this type of architecture. She said she would like the plan to take advantage of this architectural feature as part of Shoreline's character. She recalled that when Mr. Hinshaw chaired a panel for the Puget Sound Regional Council, he talked about how to celebrate cultural diversity and honor the way that different cultures use space. She suggested that the gathering places should react and respond to the City's cultural diversity. Mr. Hinshaw also suggested they move away from talking about zoning and land use

districts and instead, talk more about land development in relationship to the community members and groups.

Commissioner Pyle recalled reading in the Comprehensive Plan that the City's population growth is to be absorbed generally through areas that are zoned mixed-use. However, there is no real specific direction as to how this population would be absorbed in the mixed-use areas. If the City were to allow the Central Shoreline Area to be developed without a mixed-use component, they would not only push out the community element, but also the City's ability to meet the growth targets that are assumed to be absorbed in this location. The City would miss the boat unless they can promote the growth of mixed-use environments that absorb housing, enhance community, and meet the vision that is coming together.

Mr. Cohen agreed that a key component of the Town Center Plan is to build community, but everyone has a different idea about what this should be. He explained that traditional zoning was originally intended to help protect neighborhoods; but as applied it has sometimes instead segregated people and activities. The goal is to become more sophisticated and think outside of the box to encourage mixed-use development. In his experience in reviewing large developments in Shoreline over the past five years, there has been a significant emphasis on multi-family development. The city staff has tried to encourage developers to construct mixed-use projects, with the majority of the development being housing. He said he hopes that implementation of other City goals such as environmentally sustainable communities (Goal 6) and housing strategies (Goal 5) would contribute to and support the Town Center Plan.

Mr. Cohn advised that encouraging mixed-use development might require some changes to the City's current height limit. He recalled hearing from developers that a 75-foot height limit would be necessary in order to make mixed-use development feasible in some markets. Commissioner Hall agreed that height changes should be considered. He pointed out that the City of Mountlake Terrace is currently considering the final adoption of a plan that would allow up to 10 stories along 56th Avenue. He summarized his belief that most of the citizens of Shoreline would rather see 10-story buildings near Aurora Avenue than cottage housing in the single-family residential neighborhoods.

Mr. Tovar noted that Aurora Avenue is probably the only place in the community where taller buildings would be acceptable. He said staff has been talking with developers who are interested in constructing 10-story buildings on Aurora Avenue. In January, he will review with the City Council a staff-initiated legislative rezone for portions of Mile 1 of Aurora Avenue that might be able to accommodate this type of height and density.

Commissioner Broili suggested that it is important to consider the City's relationship to Seattle. They should consider opportunities for taking advantage of this proximity and how it influences what the City can and cannot do in the Central Shoreline Area.

Mr. Tovar said leaders in the suburbs are often reluctant to invoke Seattle as an example because of concerns that the public might think that they want to become too much like Seattle. However, he agreed that there are unique aspects about Seattle that the City could consider and learn from. For example, downtown Lake City provides a good model for what Shoreline might think about for parts of

Aurora Avenue. The Seattle neighborhood has retail and mixed uses as well as low to mid-rise buildings along Lake City Way, which traverses a well-established single family area on either side.

Mr. Tovar also advised that the City Council has been very active in looking at regional transportation issues, particularly along Highway 99. If the City envisions Aurora Avenue becoming a major population center, this would provide rationale for creating better bus rapid transit opportunities along the highway. Elected officials from Shoreline participate on the groups that make these decisions, but he doesn't know strongly they've cited the rationale of serving more population and employment in Shoreline's part of the Aurora Corridor. The City could be more aggressive in this regard.

Commissioner Broili explained that he does not advocate mimicking Seattle. Shoreline should be its own entity with its own niche. However, the City's proximity to Seattle offers many opportunities they could capitalize on in terms of employment, niche markets, etc. The City of Shoreline could offer a variety of things that Seattle cannot. Mr. Cohen said there are also people who are interested in moving to Shoreline because of housing costs and schools, and the City could turn this momentum to their advantage. In addition, people are less likely or willing to go into Seattle to shop or work. Mr. Cohn said that if more people are working out of their homes, the City could provide support services to these people in a variety of ways. There are many opportunities for redevelopment along Aurora Avenue if the City takes advantage of different markets.

Mr. Cohen said it would also be important to review how the periphery of the study area, particularly the single-family neighborhoods, would interface with the Town Center area. They must find a way to make the Town Center an amenity for the surrounding neighborhoods, but also protect the neighborhoods from the impacts associated with traffic, etc. They must also assure the residents of the single-family neighborhoods that they would remain protected so they feel less threatened by the town center concept.

Chair Piro referred to previous Planning Commission comments that there has been a lot of disappointment with missed opportunities and the fact that there has not been a plan in place for the Central Shoreline Area. He said he is encouraged to see that the City is working on this plan once again.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one in the audience to comment during this portion of the meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business scheduled on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Piro announced that a social gathering for the Commission has been scheduled for December 21st at his home starting at 7 p.m. He advised he would work with staff to get more information out to each Commissioner via email.

Commissioner Pyle announced that an Urban Ecological Consortium Symposium has been scheduled for January 22, 2007 in Portland, Oregon. The symposium would offer information related to livable communities, and he plans to attend.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Mr. Cohn advised that staff originally scheduled a public hearing on a site-specific rezone and a discussion on a proposed Development Code amendment to delete cottage housing on the January 18th agenda. However, because the proponent of the site-specific rezone could not be present on January 18th, the item was moved to the January 4th agenda. The Development Code amendment would only take a short amount of time. Therefore, it might not be necessary to hold the January 18th Meeting. He reviewed that the Planning Commission would meet on January 4th, February 1st, and again on February 6th for the first speaker series presentation. He suggested they run the speaker series on Planning Commission Meeting nights every six weeks.

Commissioner McClelland said the presentation by Alicia Sherman on the Aurora Avenue Project was excellent. It was helpful and a good model for future presentations.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Rocky Piro
Chair, Planning Commission

Jessica Simulcik Smith
Clerk, Planning Commission