

6a. Staff Report - Proposed DA for Shoreline Place

Planning Commission Meeting Date: May 16, 2019

Agenda Item: 6a.

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Proposed Development Agreement – Redevelopment of Sears Site at Shoreline Place		
DEPARTMENT:	Planning & Community Development		
PRESENTED BY:	Paul Cohen, PCD Planning Manager Rachael Markle, PCD Director Terry Danysh, Outside Counsel Merlone Geier Partners, Applicant		
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Study Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation Only	
<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Update	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Introduction and Background

The City has encouraged the redevelopment of Aurora Square almost since its incorporation in 1995. Over the years, City consultants and Economic Development Managers have worked with the property owners to improve the site, stimulate job creation, and increase community services and retail choices. In 2013, the City approved the Aurora Square Community Renewal Area Plan (CRA Plan) <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=14245> as a vision for private and public redevelopment of the site¹.

In support of the CRA Plan, Merlone Geier Partners (MGP) proposes to create a 17-acre mixed use center in the middle of the entire 70-acre Aurora Square, an area now referred to as Shoreline Place, for people to live, shop, and gather. The proposed redevelopment will bring a 1960s mall into the present with an urban designed setting that creates a more pedestrian-centered experience that includes residential units with new mixed use and integrated retail, under-building parking, private and public open space, and easier connections between the variety of uses and users. This type of redevelopment is anticipated to draw people from the surrounding community into Shoreline Place.

The redevelopment includes removal of the existing Sears building; developing seven (7) multi-family buildings providing 1,358 residential units, and two (2) commercial buildings adding 72,160 square feet of new space; public and private open space; and street, intersection, and bike lane improvements. The redevelopment will also provide various improvements to public infrastructure, including streets and utilities, along with facilitating better access to transit and 2.75 acres of publicly accessible park-like facilities.

On January 4, 2019, MGP's Development Agreement application was submitted and complete.

¹ The CRA Plan can also be found as Attachment C to the May 2nd Planning Commission Staff Report.

Approved By: _____

Project Manager _____

Planning Director _____

RM
CH

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March 7, 2019 Planning Commission Study Session

At the March 7 Planning Commission meeting, staff introduced the intent and process of a Development Agreement approval and Merlone Geier Partnership (MGP) introduced themselves as the applicant and presented the Conceptual Design Submittal for the redevelopment of the Sears site at Shoreline Place. A link is provided to obtain more information about the March 7 Planning Commission meeting including the Staff Report: <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/13990/182?toggle=allpast> and a link to the meeting video recording page: http://shoreline.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=9&clip_id=924

May 2, 2019 Planning Commission Study Session

At the May 2nd Planning Commission meeting, staff presented the draft Development Agreement and the review criteria that the Planning Commission will use in their recommendations for the proposed Development Agreement to the City Council. MGP presented various aspects of the proposed Development Agreement. At that meeting, public comment was heard followed by questions and comments from the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission decided to reschedule the Public Hearing on the Development Agreement from May 16 to June 6. Staff agreed to compile the questions and issues from the May 2 meeting for further discussion at the May 16 meeting. The Planning Commission was asked to submit additional questions to staff by Tuesday, May 7. Responses and information will be provided for the questions listed below at or before the May 16 meeting. A link is provided to obtain more information about the May 2 Planning Commission meeting including the Staff Report: <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/13998/182?toggle=allpast> and a link to the meeting video recording page: http://shoreline.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=9&clip_id=944.

Discussion

Questions/Comments from the May 2 Planning Commission Meeting

1. Was the intersection of Greenwood Ave N and N 145th Street included in the City's analysis of impacted intersections for the Aurora Square CRA? Did MGP analyze this intersection as part of the proposed Development Agreement? If yes, what did the analysis reveal.

Response: The intersection of Greenwood Ave N/N 145th St as well as Greenwood Ave N/Westminster Way were both studied as part of the City's CRA EIS. They were further considered in Merlone Geier's consistency analysis and separately studied by the Shoreline Community College. As such there are comprehensive forecasts for traffic volumes and performance for the intersection. The analysis for Greenwood Ave N/N 145th shows that it will operate at Level of Service (LOS) E, which is worse than the City's threshold (See SMC 20.60.140

<https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Shoreline/#!/Shoreline20/Shoreline2060.html> Adequate streets – Attachment A) allowing for D or better, however the intersection is not subject to Shoreline standards as it is owned and operated by the City of Seattle. Based on the City of Seattle's traffic standard (provided in Transportation Figure A-11 of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan – Attachment B), the increase in traffic from CRA

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projects is not anticipated to exceed the standard for this intersection and therefore there is no basis for mitigation.

For the intersection of Greenwood Ave N/Westminster Way, the intersection as a whole is projected to operate at a LOS C into the future. While users of this intersection traveling southbound may experience delay today and into the future, in evaluating the intersection LOS, all legs are considered in the average and therefore it performs well under the threshold. There is no current code trigger to require mitigation based on a single approach delay. Furthermore, decreasing the delay for that approach may carry the unintended consequence of inviting more rerouted trips that would otherwise use Dayton Ave N down the lower classification street which is an undesirable outcome.

2. How was the proposed crosswalk on N 160th St between Linden Avenue N. and Aurora Avenue N. determined? How will it function? Should there be additional crosswalks due to the current and anticipated traffic and speeds traveled on 160th St?

Response:

- a. Legal crossings will still exist at all intersections; there is no impetus for formalizing a crossing to the west at Evanston Ave N as it only serves a handful of single-family homes. In addition, residents of this location would be able to use the planned crossing that would be constructed by Merlone Geier just east, to access CRA amenities. Linden Ave N may be a place to formalize a crossing in the future, however is fairly close to the signalized crossing at Aurora Ave N, and to what will be the new midblock to the west. Consolidating crossings to the degree possible is often better in gaining compliance and safety between driver and pedestrian interaction; if drivers see frequent pedestrians at a highly used crossing they are more likely to anticipate it and stop as opposed to a more dispersed model of crossing. There are additional challenges regarding the roadway configuration between Linden Ave N and Aurora Ave N as a transition between the 4 lane and future 3 lane section would need to occur in this segment. The City would coordinate changes or crossing improvements in this area with any future redevelopment of the ROIC property.*
- b. Regarding the sight distance/topography and vehicle speeds on N 160th Street, as engineering Right of Way improvement plans are developed that change or establish new access points, sight lines and grades will be evaluated and vetted in accordance with engineering standards. With the conversion of the roadway from 4 lanes to 3 lanes, speeding behavior would be expected to decrease significantly.*

3. How does the proposed Shoreline Place development compare to other commercial centers such as University Village, Northgate, Lake Forest Park, Gateway Plaza, Alderwood Mall, and Dockside Green regarding the comparison of land area to commercial space and the commercial square footage to residential units/square footage ratios?

Response: More clarification on this question would be helpful. None of these properties currently have multifamily and each are different retail formats (Dockside Green in Vancouver, BC the only exception with multifamily). To the extent that each

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could be redeveloped, and some are seeking approvals, each would do so within their respective market context reflective of adjacent uses, densities, proximity to transit, demographics, competition, etc. MGP will come to the May 16th Planning Commission meeting with some information regarding each of these projects to aid in further discussion.

4. What makes a pedestrian-shared street or “Woonerf” different than a standard street where pedestrians and cars are separated?

Response: The City recently adopted standards in the Shoreline Engineering and Design Manual (EDM) <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=42690> Section 12.10 Woonerf – Attachment C. The EDM describes a woonerf (also known as a home zone, living street, or shared street) as a street that facilitates pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic within a shared space. Woonerfs typically lack separate pavement and include a variety of surface treatments, bollards, street lighting, and landscaping to define a shared space. The National Association of City Transportation Officials Urban Street Design Guide includes a description of a shared street and design recommendations. Please refer to Urban Street Design Guide – Shared Street <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/streets/residential-shared-street/> (Attachment D) for more information. MGP also provided a photo montage of woonerfs in Attachment E.

5. Explain/demonstrate how each building is proposed to be parked and how the buildings will be accessed.

Response: Please refer to the proposed Development Agreement Conceptual Guide Plan <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=43646> Submittal pages 38-39 and 47-84 to see the parking and access proposed for each building; and the Development Program Overall Table on page 11 for parking quantities.²

6. Prior to Sears closing, pedestrians could go through Sears using the escalator to access the ROIC properties to the North. Will the proposed pedestrian access be a steep climb or gradual?

Response: The on-site pedestrian access as proposed by MGP is gradual and accessible. For more details please refer to the proposed Development Agreement Conceptual Guide Plan <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=43646> submittal page 117 (site grading plan). The grades for the access throughout the MGP site are as follows:

- i. Internal N 156th Street (Woonerf Street) and N 157th Street are proposed as essentially flat (2% slope).*
- ii. The public frontage path along NE 160th Street will be 5% or less as specified in the Development Agreement.*
- iii. “B Street” and “C Street” will be designed at between 5%-8% grade.*

² The Conceptual Guide Plan can also be found in Attachment E Exhibit D of the May 2 Planning Commission staff report.

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- iv. See pp 32 of Conceptual Guide Plan <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=43646> submittal for accessible pedestrian site entry gateways.

7. Does the proposed MGP development include live/work units?

Response: No.

8. Explain/show how the heights of buildings proposed in the Development Agreement relate to surrounding properties.

Response: Please see Conceptual Guide Plan <http://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=43646> submittal pages 47-62 for an overview of the proposed buildings, building massing perspectives and sun and shadow analysis by block in relation to surrounding properties; and pages 109-110 for cross sections of how the proposed ROW improvements along 160th interface with existing and proposed development.

Question 9-17 will be provided before or as part of the May 16th presentation to the Planning Commission and the public. Any questions answered prior to the May 16th Planning Commission will be posted on the May 16 Planning Commission Meeting Page

<http://www.shorelinewa.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/14000/182>.

9. Were impacts on surrounding city parks studied as part of the CRA Plan? What are the anticipated impacts on surrounding city parks from increased use by new residents and visitors from the proposed MGP development?

10. What are the pros and cons of demolishing the Sears building sooner versus later?

11. What stormwater quality improvements can be made beyond the current requirements?

12. What are the pros and cons of a flexible, 20-year, phasing plan?

13. Will vehicular, bike and pedestrian access be maintained throughout the site as the MGP property develops in phases?

14. Is Central Market's parking impacted by the proposed development on the MGP property?

15. What is MGP proposing to do beyond Code minimums to make the development more sustainable?

16. What amount of impervious surface and pollution generating surface is being reduced as part of the proposed MGP development?

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17. What will be the light, glare, and noise impacts from the proposed development on the adjoining neighborhoods?

Because of the short turn-around time to ready the answers to these questions, they will be explained in more detail at the May 16 meeting.

Staff Recommendations

The May 16, 2019 meeting is a study session and no action is required. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission use this meeting to:

- Hear presentation from staff and the applicant regarding responses to questions and comments posed at the May 2 Planning Commission meeting
- Invite the public to comment on the proposed Development Agreement;
- Ask clarifying questions and provide feedback about the proposed Development Agreement to staff and MGP; and
- Provide direction to staff and MGP as to any additional information the Planning Commission might need to formulate a recommendation to City Council following the Public Hearing on June 6, 2019.

Next Steps

The Public Hearing has been re-noticed for June 6, 2019 at which the Planning Commission will deliberate and make its recommendation to the City Council. Staff anticipates the Development Agreement will be discussed by City Council on July 15, with potential action taken on August 5.

Attachments

Attachment A	SMC 20.60.140 Adequate streets
Attachment B	City of Seattle's traffic standard (provided in Transportation Figure A-11 of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan)
Attachment C	Shoreline Engineering & Design Manual Section 12.10 Woonerf
Attachment D	Urban Street Design Guide
Attachment E	Woonerf Photo Montage