

DRAFT
CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL/ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARING

June 4, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Held Remotely
Via Zoom

Commissioners Present

Chair Mork
Vice Chair Malek
Commissioner Callahan
Commissioner Galuska
Commissioner Lin
Commissioner Sager
Commissioner Rwamashongye

Staff Present

Rachael Markle, Director, Planning and Community Development
Nora Gierloff, Planning Manager, Planning and Community Development
Andrew Bauer, Senior Planner, Planning and Community Development
Julie Ainsworth-Taylor, Assistant City Attorney
Carla Hoekzema, Planning Commission Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mork called the public hearing meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call by Ms. Hoekzema the following Commissioners were present: Chair Mork, Vice Chair Malek and Commissioners Callahan, Galuska, Lin, Rwamashongye and Sager.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of May 7, 2020 were accepted as presented.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no general public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING: AMENDMENTS TO FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT (SMC CHAPTER 13.12)

Chair Mork reviewed the rules and procedures for the public hearing and then opened the hearing.

Mr. Bauer recalled that the proposed amendments were initially presented to the Commission on May 7th for a study session. He explained that the fundamental purpose of the Floodplain Management Regulations is to protect people, property and the environment. The regulations work in conjunction with flood maps to regulate development in the floodplain. The last substantive update to the City's floodplain regulations occurred in 2012. He further explained that updates are necessary to adopt the new flood maps that were issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and set to take effect on August 19th. The amendments are also necessary to meet the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), of which the City is a member. Failure to adopt the new maps and the amendments by August 19th would result in the City being suspended from the NFIP, and property owners would no longer be able to purchase flood insurance.

Mr. Bauer advised that adopting the amendments would maintain the City's membership in the NFIP. There are approximately 110 properties in Shoreline with flood hazard areas mapped on them, including the properties with the 100-year floodplain designation, as well as properties with the 500-year floodplain designation. The map updates would not significantly expand or change the boundaries. The most significant changes are on the Puget Sound shoreline where there is now base flood elevation data, which did not previously exist. The date and changes have effectively been in use since about 2014 when the preliminary maps came out. Overlaying regulations, such as the Shoreline Management Act (SMA) and Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) have already pushed most structures out of the flood hazard areas based off of buffer and setback requirements.

Mr. Bauer reviewed that the City joined the NFIP in 1997, shortly after it was incorporated in 1995. The NFIP is a federal program that was established in 1968. The program is administered by FEMA and essentially allows property owners in member communities to purchase flood insurance. However, in order to be a member, communities must adopt and enforce flood maps and regulations. There are about 5 million policy holders in the NFIP nationwide, encompassing over 22,000 member communities.

Mr. Bauer explained that the NFIP consists of three primary components: mapping, regulations and insurance. Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are developed by FEMA in partnership with local jurisdictions. They map the flood hazard areas and identify different flood zones based on risk and whether flood elevations have been determined. Again, he said there are about 110 properties in Shoreline with mapped flood hazard areas, and they are primarily located on Puget Sound, Boeing Creek and Thornton Creek. In most instances, the properties don't have structures built within the flood hazard areas and all development within the flood hazard areas is subject to the floodplain regulations that are administered and enforced by the local jurisdictions. Shoreline's regulations are adopted in Shoreline Municipal Code (SMC) 13.12. Anyone wishing to do any development or improvements within the flood hazard areas needs to file for a Floodplain Development Permit, which is the mechanism to ensure the development meets the minimum standards in the Floodplain Development Regulations. The City's continued membership in the NFIP continues to allow property owners and businesses to purchase flood insurance.

Mr. Bauer said it is important to think of floodplains as natural features of the environment. They are connected to the natural water system with streams or shorelines and provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

They also serve important functions such as slowing runoff by providing a place for water to go, and in that process, they filter and improve water quality.

Mr. Bauer displayed a graphic showing the different parts of a floodplain. The floodway (middle) is the stream channel and the adjacent area needed to move water during a flood. Development in the floodway is typically prohibited. The flood fringes are the areas outside of the floodway where development is allowed, but subject to flood protection requirements. The Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is the level that floodwaters are anticipated to rise up to. In Shoreline, the regulations require that certain types of development, such as residential structures, be elevated at least 1 foot above the BFE.

Mr. Bauer advised that the proposed updates are part of a countywide map update process that FEMA has been leading since 2013. The focus of the updates has been on the coastal areas, and the preliminary maps were shared with affected property owners in 2013-2014. During that time, outreach was conducted by FEMA with both the City and Department of Ecology (DOE) involved as partners. The coastal mapping has been refined based on input from the City and affected property owners.

Again, Mr. Bauer advised that the updated FEMA maps will take effect on August 19th. FEMA issued a Letter of Final Determination, along with the pending maps, in February. This initiated a 6-month timeline for cities to adopt new maps and compliant floodplain regulations. The proposed amendments would adopt the new FIRMs and apply to all development within the flood hazard areas. The amendments make changes to include the minimum standards from the statewide model ordinance that was developed by FEMA and the DOE. The standards continue to require development in the flood hazard areas to be elevated to at least 1 foot above the BFE. The amendments do not change the Floodplain Development Permit process, but they clarify when a habitat assessment is required. It's important to note that, in many instances, the regulations work in tandem with other overlying regulations such as the SMP or CAO.

Mr. Bauer said a handful of changes to the regulations have been made since the Commission's May 7th meeting. The DOE has since provided some comments, which have been incorporated, and staff also made changes to match them up with the defined terms in SMC 20. The standards also roll in the existing standards in the code for RVs to eliminate potential conflicts and confusion.

Mr. Bauer advised that notification was provided to all property owners within the flood hazard areas, and there have been two recent rounds of outreach to affected properties. An initial postcard mailer went out in April, and a second notice was sent to the same property owners on May 20th advising them of the public hearing. The notices advised the stakeholders of the new FIRMs that will take effect on August 19th, as well as the regulation amendments.

Mr. Bauer concluded by recommending that the Commission forward a recommendation to the City Council to approve the Floodplain Management Amendments shown in Attachment B. Following the public hearing, the Commission could issue a recommendation, and the amendments would be moved forward to the City Council for consideration in July in advance of the August 19th deadline.

Commissioner Malek asked if any of 110 properties within the flood hazard areas are excluded from the NFIP. Mr. Bauer answered that any of the property owners could purchase flood insurance if they wished to, even if their structure isn't in the flood plain. However, the insurance is more of a requirement when

the structure, itself, is within the floodplain, and there aren't a lot of these situations in Shoreline. Commissioner Malek asked about the process the homeowners would be required to go through in order to renovate or remodel a structure within the floodplain. Mr. Bauer said anything up to what is defined as "substantial improvement" could be done without having to modify the entire structure and bring it up to current floodplain development standards. Worst-case scenario would require that a structure be elevated above the floodplain. But he doesn't believe there are situations in Shoreline where structures are fully within the flood hazard area. Typically, when someone wants to do something on a property that has a flood hazard area mapped in the vicinity, the City would make sure the addition is 1-foot above the BFE. Staff would use a combination of GIS maps, FIRMs, and the City's existing contour information to determine if a structure is within a floodplain area or not. In instances where it is too close to call or more information is needed, a property owner would need to enlist a surveyor.

Commissioner Malek asked if all 110 property owners within the flood hazard areas have received notice and understand that any updates would be subject to a review of the structure's location and code compliance. Mr. Bauer answered affirmatively. Rather than an entirely separate process, the review would be done as part of the building permit review.

Chair Mork invited members of the public to testify.

Richard Kink, Shoreline, said he was present to speak on behalf of the Richmond Beach Preservation Association, which represents the residents and property owners along 27th Avenue NW. He thanked Mr. Bauer and other City staff for their work on the Floodplain Management Ordinance, which could have significant impacts on the property owners along 27th Avenue NW. He reviewed that the property owners were very concerned when the FIRMs were initially published in 2013. For his property, North American Vertical Datum 1988 (NAVD-88) elevation is 22 feet. By comparison, the difference between the average high water is 10 feet, which equates to a 2.3 difference to convert it to NAVD-88. Rather than 10 feet, the normal highwater becomes 7.7 feet. The property owners were concerned to see a map showing a NAVD-88 elevation of 22 feet, which is effectively 14.3 feet above the normal high water as a storm surge. For illustration he pointed out that the windows on the right side of the Council Chamber are about 14 feet tall.

Mr. Kink said the association relayed the property owners' concerns to the Public Works Department, and the Public Works Department contracted with Coast and Harbor Engineering of Edmonds to review the data. Working closely with the City staff and the association to exchange numerous photos and conduct site and elevation surveys, Coast and Harbor Engineering submitted an appeal to FEMA that resulted in the southern 8 homes being excluded from the flood zone. The association subsequently worked with Coast and Harbor Engineering to submit a second appeal that successfully removed an additional 5 homes and confirmed that no other structures on 27th Avenue NW were within the floodplain.

Mr. Kink said it is the association's understanding, and the Public Works Department acknowledged, that there were no structures within the floodplain zones, but he is concerned that he still hasn't seen a detailed map to confirm this. He would like this confirmation so there is a clear understanding moving forward that the residential structures on 27th Avenue NW are excluded from the floodplain zone.

No one else indicated a desire to testify, and Chair Mork closed the public comment period. She invited the Commission to deliberate.

Commissioner Rwamashongye asked how the 13 homes excluded from the floodplain zone would be addressed by FEMA. He also asked how tsunamis relate to floods. Ms. Bauer answered that if a structure is outside of the flood hazard area it wouldn't be subject to the floodplain regulations. While property owners could modify the structures, the changes would still be subject to the City's Building and Development Code regulations. Based on the additional data and study that occurred through the appeal process, the structures on properties along 27th Avenue NW were determined to be outside of the floodplain. Mr. Bauer said he doesn't have an answer to the question about tsunamis, which is something they shouldn't have to worry about on Puget Sound.

Chair Mork asked how structures that are part inside and part outside of the floodplain would be handled. Mr. Bauer said it would be considered inside the floodplain in terms of requiring a permit. However, only the portions of the structure within the floodplain would be subject to the flood regulations.

Chair Mork asked when the appeal process referred to by Mr. Kink took place, and Mr. Bauer said the appeal process and subsequent resolution occurred in 2013-2014. Chair Mork asked if staff has the ability to provide a detailed map that clearly shows that the structures on the 13 properties along 27th Avenue NW are outside of the floodplain. Mr. Bauer said the City is in the process of confirming that there have been no further changes to the map that was revised in 2013 as a result of the appeal and the map that was issued in February. FEMA would likely have engaged the City and the property owners if there had been changes, particularly since there was a formal appeal process with resolution. The last information the City received is a written letter from FEMA in 2014 confirming that the changes have occurred. He has verbally heard there have been no changes, but he is following up with FEMA and the Department of Ecology (DOE) to confirm.

COMMISSIONER RWAMASHONGYE MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION ACCEPT THE AMENDMENTS TO FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT (SMC 13.12) AS OUTLINED IN ATTACHMENT B AND FORWARD THEM TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL. COMMISSIONER MALEK SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Mork closed the public hearing.

Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor reiterated that, as per the new process, she would prepare a letter of recommendation. She agreed to scan the letter and forward it to the Commissioners, and Chair Mork authorized her to sign the letter on her behalf and send it to the City Council.

STUDY ITEM: COMMUNITY RENEWAL AREA (CRA) SIGN CODE UPDATE

Ms. Gierloff reviewed that the Aurora Square Community Renewal Area (CRA) is located at the southwest quadrant of North 150th Street and Aurora Avenue North. She shared a map illustrating the boundaries of the 70-acre area, that was consolidated by the City and declared a CRA in 2012 with the idea that it would be redeveloped into a vibrant, mixed-use retail and residential area. The intent of the CRA was to establish regulations that are unique to the area and to articulate a vision for the changes the City hopes to see. In 2015, the City Council adopted the Aurora Square CRA Planned Action, which contains development regulations, design standards, signage standards, residential and commercial building thresholds, and other goals and policies to shape future development in the area.

Mr. Gierloff reported that City staff has been working with Merlone Geier Partners, who purchased the central portion of the CRA where the Sears Building is currently located, to develop a Development Agreement that sets out the vision for what could happen on the site. As part of that process, they have determined there are ways to fine tune the sign code to better support the vision for what was happening on the site. Staff believes the proposed revisions will help support the commercial and residential development the City hopes to see as part of the CRA.

Ms. Gierloff said the purpose of the study session is to present the proposed amendments, answer Commission questions, and solicit feedback to prepare the proposed amendments for a public hearing in mid-July. She provided an overview of the amendments as follows:

- **Change regulatory language throughout the code to be content neutral.** Regulatory language was changed to be content neutral in compliance with a recent Supreme Court decision. While the City can regulate the size, location and number of signs, and it cannot regulate signs based on content and it can't allow one type of business to have more signage than another type of business in the same category.
- **Reduce the amount of monument and pylon sign copy area that must be devoted to advertising Shoreline Place rather than the individual tenants.** The motivation for adopting a unique sign code for the CRA was the idea of creating an identity for Shoreline Place. Currently, 50 percentage of the monument and pylon signs must be devoted to the Center's identity. Property owners and developers have voiced concern that 50% is too much. They felt they could create a unified design theme while devoting more of the area to the tenants that need the advertising. Staff is proposing that the requirement be reduced. However, a set of design guidelines (color, logo, fonts, etc.) would still be needed to create the unified idea.
- **Not require monument signs outside of the lifestyle center to advertise Shoreline Place.** The full amount of sign area could be devoted to individual businesses.
- **Clarify that wall signs can use the tenant's font and colors rather than the Shoreline Place design.** Wall signs would be used to identify individual tenants and wouldn't have to be consistent with the common theme, color, etc.

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- **Delete the \$100 per day penalty for failure to install new signage by September 1, 2017.** The sign code that was adopted in 2015 was intended to create a quick, visual signal to people that change was coming to the area. The idea was for businesses to redevelop their signs in accordance with the new design, and a penalty was put in place for businesses that didn't install new signage by 2017. However, signs are expensive, and businesses didn't feel it was in their best interest to change. The existing signs that don't meet either the 2015 standards or the proposed new standards would remain nonconforming and be required to be brought up to the current code at the time a business invests in new signage.
- **Increase the allowed height for pylon signs from 25 feet to 35 feet.** There are currently four pylon signs on the property, and the current code limits the height of pylon signs to 25 feet. The signs are expensive, and it would be a major investment for the property owners to replace them. Increasing the height back up to 35 feet would allow the existing sign structures to be reused and make it more feasible for businesses to upgrade their signs sooner.
- **Prohibit changeable electronic message signs.** The goal is to create a vibrant, walkable, pedestrian lifestyle center, and a blinking, changeable message sign would not contribute to that atmosphere.
- **Allow only one monument sign per driveway rather than two.** Monument signs are allowed to be 100 square feet per side and up to 8 feet high. Placing a monument sign on each side of the driveway would make it difficult to work around the existing trees and provide safe sight distances for people entering and existing the site.
- **Create a sign allowance for ground floor storefronts in addition to the wall signs allowed for the upper residential floors of mixed-use buildings.** These two types of uses have different signage needs. The ground-floor commercial spaces need smaller, more targeted signage, and the residential units need one large wall sign. Staff is recommending two different types of sign allowances.
- **Modify the standards for wall signage.** To encourage a walkable and vibrant atmosphere, walls that have public entrances (front door) would get the most signage. Other walls that are dressed up to look nicer (windows, landscaping, awnings, trellises, etc.) would get a smaller amount of signage, but blank walls would get none. The idea is to encourage retail businesses to provide interesting and friendly environments on all sides.
- **Allow a variety of different sign types.** This will allow retailers to express themselves and create a unique look for their signs. Projecting signs, awning signs and canopy signs are encouraged.
- **Provide a way for unique or sculptural signs to be permitted.** This would cover signs that do not fit within the normal box of channel letters on a wall. The idea is to encourage uniqueness in placemaking. Approval of unique signs would require administrative design review based on design criteria.

- **Clarify how sign area is calculated.**

Ms. Gierloff invited the Commissioners to provide feedback so staff could prepare a formal amendment proposal for a public hearing in July. Once the amendments are adopted by the City Council, staff would work with the property owners to develop a common design theme for Shoreline Place, which would eventually need to be adopted by the City Council.

Commissioner Sager clarified that, as proposed, one pylon sign could be located on each of the CRA lifestyle frontages that are directly across from properties with mixed-business zoning. She observed that there are three different frontages: Westminster Way North, Aurora Avenue North, and 160th Street. She suggested that a pylon sign wouldn't be needed on Westminster Way North because it would be within the lifestyle center, itself. She commented that Westminster Way North would be much different than Aurora Avenue North because people would already be there to read the signs above the businesses instead of driving by to see what's available. Ms. Gierloff said the intent is that the pylon signs would be on the perimeter of the site and tall enough to be visible as you approach from different directions.

Commissioner Sager asked if businesses would be allowed to use sandwich board signs. Ms. Gierloff said the current sign code would allow one sandwich board sign per residential building. However, the sign would not be limited to advertising the apartments; it could advertise any of the businesses. There is concern about the potential proliferation of sandwich board signs, which oftentimes are on the sidewalks, blocking access. The idea was to keep it to a manageable number, but that is something the Commission could discuss. Commissioner Sager said she is not a fan of sandwich board signs, but she does see a need for them on occasion. If the idea is to create a pedestrian-friendly area, she doesn't want the sidewalk to be full of sandwich board signs. Ms. Gierloff pointed out that wayfinding signs would be allowed at the various crossroads to point people to the different businesses. These signs could serve a similar purpose as that of a sandwich board sign. Commissioner Sager concurred.

Commissioner Sager noted that, as proposed, one retail leasing sign per CRA frontage would be allowed per parcel. There are eight parcels, and some will have a mixture of uses and others will have only residential. She asked how the sign allowance would be divided up per parcel. Ms. Gierloff said the idea is that each of the owners would be responsible for the leasing signs. Rather than one per business, it would be one per management company to provide the necessary contact information.

Chair Mork said it is hard for her to visual all of the proposed amendments using the single map that was provided by staff. She appreciates the drawing that was prepared by Merlone Geier Partners to illustrate how it might look, but it would be very helpful to put the pylon signs on the map and give an idea of what they might look like, how big they might be, and where they could be located. It would also be helpful to show an example of a wayfinding sign. Ms. Gierloff said the design for the wayfinding signs will be hammered out during the design phase. Chair Mork said she appreciates that the wayfinding signs have not yet been designed, but it would be helpful to at least give an idea of the size of the signs in relation to the site. Based on the written comments that have been received, she said it appears the public is also uncertain on what exactly is being proposed.

Commissioner Rwamashongye asked if the City has considered digital fencing instead of signs. Everyone has a cell phone, and a digital fence would allow a person to know the location they are in and what they

are looking at. Ms. Gierloff agreed that is an innovative idea. Commissioner Rwamashongye asked if the idea is to let people driving by know that a business exists, digital fencing would be an excellent option. It would show up on a person's phone as he/she drives by.

Chair Mork invited public testimony.

Robert Doran, ROIC, reminded the Commission that ROIC is the majority land owner at Shoreline Place. He referred to the proposed amendment that would reduce the number of pylon signs to three and explained that all of their tenants have lease rights in terms of signage that is allowed on the pylon signs. The proposed amendment could create a problem, as ROIC's leases mandate that tenants are allowed a certain square footage on the pylon signs. If ROIC is forced to reduce the square footage of tenant panels on the pylon signs, there is potential that some tenants wouldn't be allowed to be on the pylon sign anymore, putting ROIC in jeopardy of defaulting on their leases. He would like to work with staff to adjust the proposed amendments to allow ROIC to honor its lease obligations relative to the pylon signs.

Mr. Doran also referred to the proposed amendment that would increase the height allowed for pylon signs from 25 feet to 35 feet. He voiced concern that 35-foot high pylon signs would be blocked from view by the existing trees. He asked that the height be increased so the signs can be placed above the tree line. He also voiced concern that requiring all of the tenant signage on the pylon signs to be uniform colors would be problematic. ROIC tenants brand with their colors, and requiring them to adhere to a uniform color would impact ROIC's ability to lease.

Mr. Doran voiced concern about reducing the number of monument signs at each entry from two to just one. This would effectively reduce the amount of signage that tenants throughout the entire Shoreline Place will have in the future. He expressed his opinion that dual monument signs create symmetry, creating a nice feature going into the centers and clearly marking the entry. It also facilitates additional panels.

Mr. Doran recognized there are a lot of challenges in updating the sign code, and he hopes to work with staff in the coming weeks to give additional input to address their concerns.

Vice Chair Malek said he appreciates Mr. Doran's concerns, which need to be worked out with City staff. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of the ROIC tenants. They need ability to maintain their existing signage, as well as a reasonable period of time for them to be compliant with what the group decides is appropriate.

Vice Chair Malek said he loves the idea of using technology, such as digital fences and other wayfinding tools, but he doesn't see them as a replacement for signs at this point in time. They work well and would be a great addition, and perhaps it would be appropriate to provide incentives to encourage their incorporation. However, Commercial businesses still need signage to provide visibility.

Vice Chair Malek asked what type of signage is being considered for the property where the Alexan development is currently going up. The pandemic has demonstrated the need to be flexible and have some means to post changes. It is important for some of the signage to allow space for businesses to post this

type of unique information. Ms. Gierloff responded the window signs would be a great location for changing messages, and they are allowed without permits and can cover up to 25% of the window area.

Vice Chair Malek asked if signage on the walking paths, such as on the surfaces, has been part of the discussion. He has seen it done tastefully in some cities. Ms. Gierloff responded that the “unique sign allowance” would allow an applicant to propose something innovative that doesn’t fit within the boxes of the sign code.

Commissioner Lin said she appreciates that the sign regulations provide a higher level of guidance for the area, but she asked if the City could also require developers to submit their signage strategy for comments and approval. This would be particularly important when it comes to wayfinding signs. Ms. Gierloff said the idea is that the developers would come up with a unified center identity in terms of colors, font and logo. One concept was presented to the City Council but was never adopted. However, as she reviewed the record from 2015, there was a lot of interest in having a cohesive sign plan for the CRA, even if the properties are under different ownerships and different types of tenants. She tried to respect that in the proposed changes.

Commissioner Lin asked how property owners can upgrade their signs now if the overall sign design is not yet available. Ms. Gierloff answered that they could switch out any wall signs because they are individual to the tenants. Only the pylon and monument signs would need to be consistent with the cohesive sign design. These signs are costly and it is not likely that a single tenant would replace a monument or pylon sign by themselves.

Chair Mork asked if large balloons are considered signs, and Ms. Gierloff responded that they are considered temporary signs. Property owners can receive allowances for special event signage. With the exception of decreasing the size of banners from 100 square feet to 32 square feet, staff is not proposing any changes to the temporary sign provisions. Chair Mork asked if signs that have fans to make them wave would be allowed, and Ms. Gierloff answered no. She said there is a list of signs that are not allowed anywhere in the City that would apply to this area, as well.

Chair Mork voiced concern about the schedule for moving the proposed amendments forward. It’s clear that several of the property owners would like to converse more with staff, and the Commission received some written comments from concerned citizens who were very interested in being able to communicate in a public hearing that is more robust than what the Commission can do via Zoom. She is concerned the amendments may not be ready for a public hearing by mid-July. Ms. Gierloff reminded the Commission that staff has been reaching out to the property owners for comments since February, and they continue to accept comments from the property owners and the public. The original plan was to have the public hearing in March, but it was delayed by the pandemic. If the Commission believes it cannot conduct business in a socially-distant type of way, the public hearing would need to be postponed indefinitely.

Chair Mork agreed that the issue cannot be postponed for a long time, but the City will need to do an even better job of making sure that people understand what is being proposed. In that regard, visuals showing how the pylons might look and how tall they might be in relationship to the trees might help to generate public comments. It is hard to read and visually understand what the regulations are suggesting will happen. Ms. Gierloff agreed that signs and trees are an ongoing conflict, and it is a bit of a losing battle

to keep raising sign height to outgrow the trees. As Mr. Doran pointed out, there are people with a vested interest in the current pylon signs, but there are also a number of people who are vested in Shoreline's trees. She expressed her belief that monument signs can be more effective because they are down below the tree canopy where there are fewer obstructions. Chair Mork suggested that visuals showing how the monument signs might look would also be helpful.

Commissioner Galuska asked how many different ownerships are in the CRA where the sign code would apply. Ms. Gierloff answered that there are a number of property owners, including Merlone Geier, ROIC, Alexan and WSDOT. Commissioner Galuska asked how many existing pylon signs are on located in the CRA, and Ms. Gierloff said she believes there are four. She said she assumes the 2015 decision to reduce the number of pylon signs to three was well thought out, but she doesn't know what the criteria were. Commissioner Galuska pointed out that, as per the code, the developer of the Alexan would be prevented from putting up a pylon sign because other owners already have the three that are allowed. Commissioner Galuska asked how the City would decide who gets the sign when the frontage is split between two or more property owners. Ms. Gierloff answered that it is not called out in the code.

Commissioner Galuska asked if the code includes a definition for "residential building." Ms. Gierloff said the residential buildings are actually called multifamily or mixed-use. Commissioner Galuska said he would like an opportunity to review the written comments that were received prior to making a recommendation on the proposed amendments. Ms. Hoekzema said the written comments were received earlier in the day and have been posted on the Commission's website. They were also sent to the Commissioners via plancom email.

Commissioner Callahan agreed with Chair Mork's concerns about the schedule and the public's ability to provide adequate testimony at a future public hearing. She understands that all of the property owners have been notified, but she asked if the tenants have been notified, as well. Ms. Gierloff said the code requires that the property owners be notified, and each time, she asked the owners to work with their tenants and property managers. However, it sounds like that hasn't happened in some cases. She said the City could send out a postcard to let people know of proposed changes and the public hearing. Signage is an important issue to businesses, and they need to be informed.

Ms. Gierloff summarized that the Commissioners were generally comfortable with the direction of the proposed amendments, but they still need to work out some of the details and provide better visualizations when they are presented for public hearing.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Markle presented a permit activity report, highlighting the following:

- Two pre-application meetings were held in May, both for 4 to 5-unit townhomes in the MUR-35' zone in each of the station subareas. Pre-application meetings give staff a look into what future projects might be coming to Shoreline and what developers are interested in.
- Several permits are ready to issue as soon as the applicant comes in to make final payment and pick them up. Several other permits have been reviewed but still need to be stamped by each of

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the reviewers. These applications include a 31-unit apartment building on 10th Avenue, a 7-story 241-unit apartment building on the former site of the Rat City Roller Girls, a 7-story 210-unit apartment building on Midvale Avenue, and a 7-story 35-unit apartment building in the 145th Street Station Subarea.

- There are permits ready to be issued for 517 apartment units and 77 townhomes.
- An application for a 315-unit apartment building on Midvale Avenue North near City Hall next to Geo2 is currently under review, and the developer is taking advantage of the City's deep green provisions. The intent is to develop a Tier 4 Deep Green Project.
- Another project under review is a 227-unit apartment building called Quinn by Vintage that will be affordable to people making 60% adjusted median income for King County or less. This is the first time an applicant has been able to take advantage of the affordable housing fee waiver for permitting that was adopted in 2015.
- Both of the two large projects mentioned above were received during the pandemic closure. Work has continued and staff has been receiving plans via carrier and electronically.
- Two permits are in for a large project on 147th. One is for a 76-unit apartment building and another for the associated garage.
- Shoreline Community College has submitted an application for a 3-story, 50,000-square-foot lab/classroom, and the project is currently under review.
- The City is currently reviewing applications for two, 22-unit apartment buildings in the 185th Street Station Subarea.
- In total, the City is currently reviewing applications for 662 apartment units and 44 townhomes.

Director Markle reminded the Commissioners of their joint meeting with the City Council on June 8th. Traditionally, this has been a dinner meeting where the Council Members and Commissioners can get to know each other better and have an informal discussion about the Council's expectations for the Commission and the Commission's accomplishment and future work plan. This year, the meeting will be held electronically via Zoom, and all of the Commissioners and Council Members will have an opportunity to participate in the discussion. She briefly described the format for the meeting.

Chair Mork asked if the meeting discussion would primarily focus on the Commission's 2020 work plan. Director Markle said she would provide a brief presentation, highlighting some of the Commission's past activities. However, Chair Mork could also highlight the projects the Commission was most proud of in 2019. Chair Mork and Director Markle agreed to get together to coordinate their presentations to avoid repetition.

Commissioner Lin asked if any of the projects currently under construction in the City have been delayed as a result of the pandemic. Director Markle answered that, with two or three of the larger projects, some of the work crews contracted COVID-19, and the projects had to be delayed in order to protect workers. She said she didn't hear from any customers, in particular, and her information is based on feedback from City inspectors.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Malek shared a brief report from the Point Wells Subcommittee. He referred to an email he received from Ryan Countryman, the Supervisor of Permitting for Snohomish County. He summarized that Snohomish County staff recommended denial of Blue Square Real Estate's (BSRE) project due to multiple substantial conflicts with the code. They requested a third-party evaluation, which found that the applicant did not accurately represent floor area ratio (FAR) in its plans and requests. He also referred to an email regarding the landslide hazard deviation decision that was issued by PDF's Chief Engineering Officer, who denied the application outright due to landslide hazards. A new public hearing before the Hearing Examiner is to be scheduled. In the meantime, BSRE is currently suing Paramount, the company currently leasing and managing the tank farm, because they are supposed to immediately begin cleaning and clearing the site as per the contract. Paramount is countersuing BSRE claiming that ownership of the property should revert back to Paramount now because BSRE didn't fulfill their contract.

Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth Taylor commented that the tank farm is now defunct and tenant moved out last week. The site is now vacant. Their term under the purchase and sale agreement with BSRE had expired anyway.

Commissioner Malek requested that additional Commissioners be appointed to the Point Wells Subcommittee. Chair Mork suggested that interested Commissioners contact Commissioner Malek via Plancom for more information. Commissioner Sager expressed her interest in this subcommittee.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Ms. Gierloff announced that the June 18th meeting will include a presentation on ground floor commercial regulations.

Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor announced that the City Council recently passed a resolution relative to the Open Public Meetings Act. As per the resolution, the City will continue to use the remote virtual meeting format until King County moves into Phase 3 of the Governor's Safe Start/Stay Healthy Proclamation. She anticipates that Zoom meetings will continue well into July and perhaps beyond.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Laura Mork
Chair, Planning Commission

Carla Hoekzema
Clerk, Planning Commission