

**DRAFT**  
**CITY OF SHORELINE**

**SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**  
*(Via Zoom)*

November 19, 2020  
7:00 P.M.

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**Commissioners Present**

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

**Staff Present**

Rachael Markle, Planning Director  
Nora Gierloff, Planning Manager  
Julie Ainsworth-Taylor, Assistant City Attorney  
Carla Hoekzema, Planning Commission Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Mork called the regular 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, Lin, Rwamashongye and Sager. Commissioner Galuska joined the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of November 5, 2020 were accepted as presented.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no general public comments.

## 4a. Draft Minutes from Thursday, November 19, 2020

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

Ms. Gierloff explained that this is a unique sign code that only effects the properties within the Shoreline Place CRA. The CRA includes the shopping center properties, as well as the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) property to the west, the Northwest School for Hearing Impaired Children to the south, and the Alexan Apartment Development to the east. However, the proposed sign code would primarily apply to the area identified as the CRA Lifestyle Center. This large shopping area lost its anchor tenant, and the City has been working to foster redevelopment of the area with retail and residential units, greenery, private streets, plazas and parklike areas. The intent is to utilize different types of regulations to promote the City's vision for the area.

Ms. Gierloff reviewed that, at the July public hearing on the draft sign code update, the Commission received good feedback from the property owners, had a long discussion, and raised the following questions and concerns:

- **How Many monument signs should be allowed?** Under the current regulations, two monument signs are allowed per driveway. However, there are quite a few different property owners on the site, and only some of them have driveways. Allowing two monument signs to be right up next to the driveway on either side could create problems with visibility and wouldn't allow a lot of flexibility to work around things like existing street trees. The proposal is to allocate the signs based on length of street frontage for the different parcels, up to three for a larger parcel. Because they wouldn't be tied to driveways, signs could be placed where they work best for visibility and whatever else if going on the site.
- **Address concerns by clarifying that signs for Binding Site Plans would be allocated for the site as a whole.** There was concern that, because the site is large, it could be broken into different development areas and people could lose their signage rights if they needed to give a tenant new lease space. Staff is proposing to clarify this by allocating signage based on the larger parent parcel. For example, Merlone Geier Partners has a 10-acre site that is divided into different development areas using the Binding Site Plan Process. That means they can sell or lease smaller areas that are within the larger parent parcel, but the zoning, landscaping and other types of regulations would be considered based on the parent parcel. As tenants change, the signage rights would not be impacted. The provision would apply to all types of signage, but primarily pylon and monument signs, which would be allocated based on site characteristics.
- **Should there be spacing and setback requirements for monument signs?** Outside of the CRA, the City's current regulations require that monument signs be separated by 150 feet. However, this may eliminate the ability for some of the smaller frontages in the CRA to even have a monument sign, especially if a neighboring property owner puts up a monument sign, as well. Staff is suggesting that a 100-foot separation would still provide enough distance that there would be line-of-sight visibility without too much clustering. It would allow even the smaller parcels to find a place for signage.
- **What is the nonconforming status of the existing signs?** Currently, there are four pylon signs on the site, one of which is for a single-tenant, and the other three are multi-tenant signs along

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Westminster Way. There is one monument sign, as well. Most of the signs are clustered towards the northeast where traffic volumes are the highest. There is a pylon sign at the intersection of 157<sup>th</sup> Street, and the monument sign is located in the southern corner of the site.

- **Should the penalty for failure to install new signs by September 1, 2017 be eliminated?** This is an unusual code provision, as the City does not typically get involved in deciding when businesses must change out their signage. The deadline came out of a desire to jump start the site's rebranding. However, the economics of redevelopment hadn't yet started and the signs weren't changed. Staff is proposing to eliminate the penalty fees for not installing new signs. However, the old signs will remain nonconforming and must be removed before any new signs can be installed. She said she believes the updated sign provisions will be attractive to both the tenants and property owners, and the signs will naturally change as property owners take advantage of the new provisions.
- **Should three or four pylon signs be allowed at Shoreline Place?** There are four existing pylon signs on the site, but the current regulations only allow three (one per street frontage). Because of the fragmented ownership of the site, there isn't a way to decide who would be allocated the sign on each of the street frontages. Staff is suggesting that the signs be allocated based on the size of the parcels. The large parcels would each be allowed one or two signs, and they could be placed where it makes sense, as long as they are located directly across from properties with Mixed Business (MB) zoning. A separation of at least 100 feet from other pylon and/or monument signs would also be required. The goal is for the sign code to be equitable, but still allow flexibility to the different property owners. She recalled that, at the public hearing, it was suggested that going from four to three pylon signs would be a hardship, and staff has provided some suggested language for how this might be addressed, as well.
- **What should the height limit be for pylon signs?** Currently, new pylon signs would be limited to 25 feet in height, and the existing signs are about 35 feet tall. A property owner pointed out that, although the existing signs have been in place for decades and are nonconforming, it could be a hardship to replace them. If they could reuse the structural component of the signs, it might make replacement more feasible and the signs might be rehabilitated earlier.
- **Should wall signs be tied to entrances and not be allowed on walls that don't have public entrances?** The thought with this provision was that the main signage would be tied to the façade where the public entrance is located, but a property owner or tenant could still qualify for smaller signs on walls without entrances as an incentive for providing additional design features. The City's current design standards include façade requirements, as well as entrance location requirements. However, there aren't a lot of requirements for building sites that are less visible. Because some buildings won't have a street frontage, not all of the design regulations will come into play. The incentive signage could be used to ask for additional design features on the non-entrance walls, which would result in a livelier pedestrian atmosphere.

Merlone Geier Partners is concerned about this provision. Because the site is large and deep and the City wants plazas and parklike areas, some of the proposed buildings will be oriented towards the public spaces that are interior to the site rather than being along the very busy arterials that don't have any on-street parking. She reminded them that, as part of the Development Agreement, Merlone Geier

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Partners negotiated an exception to the requirement to place primary entries along the public right-of-way. When the Development Agreement was approved, there hadn't been a lot of discussion about the sign code, and Merlone Geier Partners had not yet identified the problem. To address this concern, staff is proposing that small signs (1.5 square feet per lineal feet of storefront) be allowed on walls that have a public entrance. For walls without public entrances, small signs (.75 square feet per lineal feet of storefront) would be allowed as an incentive for additional design features such as transparency, landscaping or architectural detailing. Other options include changing the sign size or design requirements or allowing wall signs only where there is a public entrance. Merlone Geier Partners has indicated that they intend to provide additional design elements anyway, and that wall signs will be important to their future tenants.

Ms. Gierloff advised that, since the public hearing in July, some additional public comments were received that warrant discussion. She reviewed them as follows:

- **Freestanding Sign Copy.** The current sign code seeks to rebrand the center through consistent signage with design standards that emphasizes the center's identity. However, property owners have voiced concern that their tenants will want their signs to reflect their brand identifiers through colors, logos and fonts rather than conform to a center-identity design. One of staff's suggestions is to reduce the amount of physical sign area allocated to advertising the center as a whole to allow more space for the individual tenants to appear on both pylon and monument signs. However, there should be a single font and color for all the tenant listings, and logos would not be allowed. She cautioned that there needs to be a balance between the City's desire to brand the site versus the very real advertising needs of the individual tenants. Options for the Commission to consider include adopting the staff proposed changes that retain the emphasis on the Shoreline Place identity over the individual tenants; requiring a uniform Shoreline Place sign design but allowing the tenant listings on pylon signs to be in the tenant's choice of color, font and logo; and/or require a uniform Shoreline Place sign design but allow the tenant listings on monument signs to be in the tenant's choice of color, font and logo.
- **Clarification about where the setback for wayfinding signs is measured.** In addition to wall, pylon and monument signs, wayfinding signs will be needed throughout the site. The intent is to give people direction within the site, and staff is suggesting that the signs be set back at least 25 feet from the curb line of public streets. The intent is to keep them out of the sign band of other types of freestanding signs so they do not compete with each other.

Vice Chair Malek asked if individual businesses would be allowed to have their own, unique branding within the window, on the wall, etc. Ms. Gierloff answered that wall sign design would be left to the individual tenants, and no restrictions related to design would be imposed. The sign design standards would only apply to the freestanding signs that are visible to passersby. Merlone Geier Partners has indicated support for a uniform sign design, but they would like the individual listings to be unique to the tenants.

Commissioner Rwamashongye recalled that, at the public hearing, a Commissioner was concerned about allowing wall signs on all sides of the building. Ms. Gierloff responded that she provided some suggestions for resolving this concern. She noted that the walls with entrances would be the most

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pedestrian-friendly and active, but signage on the other walls could be offered as incentive for additional design standards.

Chair Mork summarized that staff is not proposing any restrictions for walls signs. For monument and pylon signs, staff is seeking feedback regarding what sign copy should be allowed. Ms. Gierloff explained that, based on the current rules, freestanding signs would be more of a directory. Individual tenants could be listed but not their brand identity. Property owners have asked that the code allow individual tenant listings to include colors, fonts and logos that are consistent with their branding. Chair Mork summarized that the choices appear to be the current rule; allowing individual tenant listings to use their brand colors, fonts and logos; or requiring that individual tenant listings be consistent in color but not font or visa versa. As proposed, wayfinding signs will not allow logos and the font and colors would have to be consistent.

Commissioner Galuska asked if the limitation on font and color has been reviewed based on the court decision Reed vs. Gilbert. Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor answered affirmatively, and she could provide a confidential memorandum on the constitutionality of sign ordinances to the Commissioners upon request. Ms. Gierloff suggested that limiting the font and color would fall under regulating the time, place and manner, rather than limiting the content.

Commissioner Rwamashongye asked if unlimited wall signs would be allowed on the residential portions of the buildings. Ms. Gierloff answered that, currently, wall signs are allowed based on a certain percentage of the wall's size. The retail portion of a mixed-use building could have wall signs, window signs, blade signs, projecting signs, etc. but signage for the apartment complex would have a different set of rules. The two would not compete with each other.

Commissioner Lin asked if the residential and retail signage would be required to be similar in design. Mr. Gierloff answered that, as proposed, there would be no design restrictions on wall signs. Commissioner Lin asked if the apartment complex name could also appear on the monument sign, and Ms. Gierloff answered that a property owner could give an apartment complex a listing on the monument sign.

Chair Mork invited members of the public to comment.

**Glenn Goodman, Merlone Geier Partners**, commented that most of the concerns raised in his letter dated October 30<sup>th</sup> and attached to the Staff Report were addressed in the proposed amendments. However, Merlone Geier Partners still has the following concerns:

- **Placement of Monument and Pylon Signs.** While Merlone Geier Partners supports the proposed 100-foot separation requirement, they have an issue with its application at the 157<sup>th</sup> Street entrance along Westminster Way. The existing pylon sign is only about 35 feet from the internal property line with ROIC. Should ROIC place a monument closer than 70 feet to the internal property line, the existing sign could not be replaced at its current location because it would not meet the 100-foot separation requirement. Moving it to the other side of the driveway would be prohibitive due to site constraints. He asked the Commission to consider reducing the minimum separation requirement relative to the existing pylon sign at that location only. They can't afford to lose one of the two sign locations for the property.

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- **Wall Signs.** These signs are very important to tenants. He referred to two letters that were attached to the Staff Report from two local brokers who also discussed this issue and emphasized how important walls signs are to retail leasing. The site is challenging from a retail standpoint because it has limited visibility to Highway 99 and is perched as much as 13 feet above the sidewalks along Westminster Way. Of all the issues addressed by the proposed code amendment, this is by far of the greatest importance to Merlone Geier Partner's ability to lease the retail spaces. Due to visibility constraints from the highway, all of the retail tenants and property owners will benefit from increased branding along the frontages if they can have rear or side-facing signage. He referred to the design drawings that were attached to the Staff Report, noting how properly-designed signage becomes part of the building composition and adds to the interest of an elevation if it is done properly.

Mr. Goodman said that, not only is Merlone Geier Partners asking for ground floor side and rear building mounted signs, they are also asking that the allowed size increase from the proposed .75 square foot per lineal foot of frontage to 1 square foot per lineal foot of frontage. Although .75 is better than nothing, signs smaller than 1 square foot would look out of scale on the building facades. He provided examples of small signs that were designed at greater than 1 square foot per lineal foot of frontage. As proposed, the signs would be just half the size shown on the drawing, and if the size is increased to 1 square foot per lineal foot of frontage, the signs would be about two-thirds the size of the signs shown in the drawing.

Mr. Goodman stressed the tremendous impact the pandemic is having across the retail market. Tenants are struggling to keep their lights on, and it is Merlone Geier Partner's duty to do everything possible to help them be successful. As such, they ask that the Commission consider their comments and recommend approval with the changes he suggested.

Ms. Gierloff asked if the Commission is happy with the proposed language that allocates the number monument signs allowed based on the length of street frontage, allowing up to three for larger parcels. She also requested feedback on the provision that clarifies that signage allowances would be calculated for the Binding Site Plan as a whole, as well as the proposed 150-foot separation requirement.

Chair Mork asked if staff received feedback from the property owners regarding any of these provisions, and Ms. Gierloff said the only concern was the one presented by Mr. Goodman that Merlone Geier Partner's rights might be impinged by the neighbor's placement of a monument or pylon sign. However, the City wouldn't allow a neighboring property owner to put a new sign within 100 feet of either the existing sign or a new sign. Chair Mork asked if the existing sign would still count, even though it is considered nonconforming, and Ms. Gierloff answered affirmatively because, as proposed, there wouldn't be a specific deadline for it to be removed.

Commissioner Rwamashongye referred to the situation described by Mr. Goodman and pointed out that, as proposed, the existing sign would have an advantage. If the property owner chooses to rehabilitate the sign, it would be allowed to remain at the higher elevation, which is ten feet above the elevation that would be allowed for new signs. In addition to that advantage, the neighboring property owner would be allowed to measure from the centerline of the existing sign 100 feet towards their own property. On the other

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hand, Mr. Goodman's concern makes sense if Merlone Geier Partners were to remove the existing sign. He observed that the code is designed for fairness between property owners.

Ms. Gierloff clarified that Mr. Goodman's concern was related his company's ability to place a pylon sign at the 157<sup>th</sup> Street entrance. However, as proposed, all freestanding signs (pylon and monument) would be required to have a 100-foot separation. Chair Mork summarized that, as proposed, no new freestanding sign could be placed within 100 feet of an existing pylon sign. Mr. Gierloff pointed out that none of the existing signs are closer than 180 feet now.

Chair Mork said her understanding is that the height of the existing pylon signs is 35 feet, and the current code limits the height to 25 feet. Staff is proposing that the height limit be raised to 35 feet to allow flexibility for property owners to reuse portions of the existing structures. In addition, pylon signs would have to be separated by at least 100 feet. She invited the Commissioners to share their thoughts on these provisions, particularly in light of Mr. Goodman's comments.

Commissioner Rwamashongye said his understanding was that the existing freestanding signs could be rehabilitated to their existing height of 35 feet, but new freestanding signs would be limited to 25 feet in height. This allows a height advantage for existing signs. The only time distance will be an issue is if the property owner chooses to remove a freestanding sign, including its structural elements. As long as the structural elements remain in place, the sign could be 35 feet, but if you remove the existing structural elements the sign would be considered new, and the separation distance would be measured from the closest freestanding sign. If your neighbor puts a pylon sign 100 feet from your existing sign, the only place that a new sign could be placed is in that same spot or further away. Because the property owner already has an advantage of rehabilitating the sign to its existing height, he questioned why the code should be rewritten for this specific situation.

Ms. Gierloff explained that, if Merlone Geier Partners retains the existing pylon sign, a new sign on the neighboring property would have to be located at least 100 feet away. If they remove the sign and don't replace it, there is a window where the neighboring property owner could install a sign that is closer, making the existing location no longer viable. Vice Chair Malek agreed that Mr. Goodman's concern is legitimate. He asked the timeline for how long the applicant would have to remove and replace an existing sign. Ms. Gierloff answered that the property owner could submit the demolition and new sign permits concurrently. Once approved, any subsequent sign permit applications from neighboring property owners would be reviewed based on the previously approved sign permit. However, she acknowledged that, if the property owner were to leave a gap between demolition and approval of a new sign permit, it would open an opportunity for a neighboring property owner to place a sign.

Chair Mork asked staff to explain the provision that limits the number of pylon signs allowed. Ms. Gierloff said the current proposal would allow one pylon sign per parcel between five and ten acres in area, with a second allowed for parcels over ten acres. That equates to a total of three pylon signs at Shoreline Place. ROIC testified at the public hearing that they felt four would be better, and they were specifically interested in locating a sign at the intersection of 160<sup>th</sup> Street and Aurora Avenue North. If the Commission believes the current language would present a hardship for property owners, it could change the provision to allow two pylon signs per parcel over five acres in area.

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Commissioner Galuska observed that, if the provision is changed to allow two pylon signs per parcel over five acres in area, the ROIC property is the only one that would get an extra pylon sign. Ms. Gierloff pointed out that they have two pylon signs now, so the change would result in a status quo.

If the City allows two pylon signs per parcel over five acres in area, Commissioner Lin asked if there would be any possibility that more than four pylon signs would be allowed at Shoreline Place if properties are subdivided or consolidated in the future. Ms. Gierloff said the only thing that could increase the number of signs would be if some of the residential areas across the street from Shoreline Place were rezoned from residential to commercial. This would open up additional frontage where signs could be located. At this time, there is no plan to rezone these residential areas. Chair Mork pointed out that, if that were to occur, the sign code could be amended, as well.

Ms. Gierloff invited the Commissioners to comment on the proposed amendment that would remove the penalty for signs that haven't been replaced yet and just rely on the nonconforming rules. None of the Commissioners voiced concern about this proposed change.

Ms. Gierloff reviewed that the existing pylon signs are approximately 35 feet high, and the current code limits the height to 25 feet. Staff is suggesting that the height limit be increased to 35 feet so that the structural elements of the existing signs can be reused.

Commissioner Galuska pointed out that, if the height limit remains at 25 feet, the property owner would still be allowed to rehabilitate an existing sign but it would remain nonconforming. Ms. Gierloff clarified that if the sign is changed structurally or in design, it would lose its nonconforming status and would have to meet the new sign design standards, including the height limit. Chair Mork clarified that just changing the name of one of the tenants on a pylon sign would not change the sign's nonconforming status.

Commissioner Rwamashongye noted that Mr. Goodman left a message in the webinar chat.

Commissioner Lin voiced concern that if the sign location or entry to the development remains unchanged, there is a possibility that the existing sign would remain in its current condition. If that were to occur, the City's goal of creating a new image would not be accomplished. Ms. Gierloff suggested they see if the incentives incorporated into the sign code are effective. If they are not, the signs would remain nonconforming, and the City could adopt a provision at a later time that requires them to be changed out by a certain date. That being the case, Commissioner Lin said she would support allowing four pylon signs.

Mr. Gierloff asked the Commission to provide direction on whether wall signs should be allowed on side and rear walls or just on walls with entrances. Should these small signs be used as incentive for additional design features or not? As currently proposed, larger wall signs would be allowed on facades with entrances, and smaller wall signs would be allowed on all other walls.

Commissioner Sager said she supports allowing wall signs on rear and side walls as an incentive to improve building design. Based on the drawings and suggestion provided by Mr. Goodman, she would also support a size of 1 square foot per lineal foot of wall. She commented that the property presents some



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challenges because of its depth and location. She is in favor of getting some nice architectural details in exchange for wall signs.

Commissioner Galuska agreed with Commissioner Sager and said it is important to give some incentive to encourage additional design features. He does not want to see blank walls like the existing building on 155<sup>th</sup> Street. Whatever can be done to encourage design to face outward into the street is well worth it. He summarized that, as long as the walls are activated via design, he would support allowing signs on all walls at the size suggested by Mr. Goodman.

Chair Mork summarized that the Commission supports allowing wall signs on side and rear walls as an incentive for enhanced architectural features. The Commission also supports the slightly larger dimension that was requested by Mr. Goodman.

To address Mr. Goodman's concern, Ms. Gierloff suggested the Commission could recommend a 100-foot separation between freestanding signs, except that signs may be within 50 feet of an interior parcel line.

**COMMISSIONER RWAMASHONGYE MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE SPACING REQUIREMENT FOR MONUMENT SIGNS (SMC 20.50.620.E.8) AS PRESENTED IN ATTACHMENT A OF THE STAFF REPORT DATED NOVEMBER 19, 2020. THE PROVISION WOULD READ, "*SIGNS MUST BE SEPARATED BY AT LEAST 100 FEET FROM ANOTHER MONUMENT OR PYLON SIGN.*" COMMISSIONER GALUSKA SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**COMMISSIONER RWAMASHONGYE MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE LANGUAGE IN SMC 20.50.620.E.12 AS PRESENTED IN ATTACHMENT A OF THE STAFF REPORT DATED NOVEMBER 19, 2020. THE PROVISION WOULD READ, "*BINDING SITE PLANS. SIGNAGE ALLOWANCES SHALL BE CALCULATED FOR THE BINDING SITE PLAN AS A WHOLE WITHOUT REGARD TO INTERIOR LOT LINES AS IT IS CONSIDERED TO FUNCTION AS ONE SITE.*" VICE CHAIR MALEK SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor pointed out that this agenda item was advertised as a study session, and the proposed amendments were not discussed at the last public hearing in July. She explained that, typically, the Planning Board conducts a study session on proposed amendments, followed by a public hearing at a subsequent meeting. She suggested that the Commission could direct staff to make changes to the proposed amendments, as appropriate, and staff could incorporate the changes into the draft amendments that are presented for a public hearing.

Ms. Gierloff said the changes currently before the Commission are in response to questions that were raised at the July 16<sup>th</sup> hearing. Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor concluded that, at the close of the July 16<sup>th</sup> public hearing, the proposal was remanded to staff to rework the regulations. Hence, the process would need to start over again, including a new public hearing. Director Markle asked if a second public hearing would be required if the Commission had kept the July 16<sup>th</sup> hearing open to give staff time

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to update the draft as per the Commission's direction. Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor advised that the Commission could have approved a motion that continued the first public hearing to a date certain, but that did not happen.

Chair Mork summarized that the Commission cannot make a recommendation to the City Council until after a public hearing. However, they can provide policy direction to staff, which can be folded into an updated proposal for the public hearing.

Commissioner Rwamashongye asked if the Commission would need to officially withdraw the motions that have been put forward and voted on. Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor responded that the motions did not need to be withdrawn since they were, in essence, providing staff with direction to rework the regulations.

Ms. Gierloff asked if the Commissioners support allowing four pylon signs at Shoreline Place. Vice Chair Malek expressed his belief that four pylon signs would be fine, given the site conditions, site plans and the property's location adjacent to R-4 zoning. This would allow more flexibility to obtain maximum visibility. The remainder of the Commissioners concurred that four pylon signs would be reasonable.

Ms. Gierloff requested feedback about how much individuality should be allowed for the tenant spaces on freestanding (pylon and monument) and wayfinding signs. She reminded them that the sign code seeks to rebrand the center through consistent signage with design standards that emphasize the center's identity. She reviewed that, currently, 25% of the sign copy on pylon signs must be used for center identification (Shoreline Place), and staff is recommending the requirement be reduced to 15%. Staff is also recommending that individual business listings must use a color scheme and font that conforms to the signage design guidelines and no logos would be allowed.

Chair Mork expressed her belief that wayfinding signs should be used for directory purposes only and should not contain logos of the individual tenants. She felt wayfinding signs should be consistent with the signage design guidelines.

Commissioner Lin said she supports staff's current proposal that all of the monument and pylon signs should be consistent in design, including tenant listings, and that logos should not be allowed. She would like the freestanding signs to be uniform in design to unify the site's overall appearance from the street. However, she would be open to allowing some flexibility with regard to font and color. Commissioner Callahan agreed that the tenant spaces on monument and pylon signs should be consistent in design. She also agreed that the wayfinding signs need to be consistent in design, with no logos allowed. The remainder of the Commissioners agreed.

The Commissioners indicated support for reducing the amount of sign copy on pylon signs that must be used for the center's identity from 25% to 15% as recommended by staff.

Vice Chair Malek suggested the Commission consider amending the provision that requires a 100-foot separation between monument signs. He said he can understand Mr. Goodman's concern with regard to 157<sup>th</sup> Street and Westminster Way. With respect to this one internal parcel line, the Commission discussed

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the option of allowing a variance of 50 feet versus 100 feet. He would hate to leave the property owner without a sign in this location.

Chair Mork reviewed that the only way the property owner would lose the ability to have a sign in this location would be if the existing sign is demolished without first gaining approval of a sign permit to replace it. Ms. Gierloff agreed that is one scenario. If there is not sign in that location for a period of time, the City could approve a sign permit for the adjacent property owner, which might affect the future placement of the sign.

Vice Chair Malek emphasized the importance of signage for commercial spaces. Now more than ever, with retail struggling the most in the economy, he doesn't want to do anything that would limit the ability for robust business in this location. He wants to make sure the property owners and tenants have the full measure of what is needed for signage. However, it appears that as long as the property owner obtains demolition and construction permits at the same time, the existing sign location would remain available. Ms. Gierloff commented that addressing the fragmented ownership of the site has been difficult, and she can understand why the individual property owners want to clearly nail down their rights.

Chair Mork asked if there would be any down side associated with adjusting the separation requirement for this one location only. Ms. Gierloff said she was more focused on avoiding situations where one sign blocks the visibility of another. However, she felt that a 50-foot separation would probably be okay. She noted that there is currently a concentration of signs where Aurora Avenue North curves into Westminster Way, and there could be some conflict between neighboring property owners.

Vice Chair Mork said he would be content to leave the provision as is, but with the understanding that staff would review possible scenarios and work with the property owners to identify potential concerns that haven't yet been considered.

Commissioner Rwamashongye said he understands Vice Chair Malek's concern, but he is also hesitant to write code that favors one property owner over another. Particularly if it is done in a manner that creates a disadvantage to a neighboring property owner. As written, the existing sign can remain in its current location. The property owner can submit concurrent applications to demolish the existing sign and replace it with a new one. This would allow the property owner to retain the existing sign location. The City's code should provide a level playing field for all property owners. The remainder of the Commission concurred.

Chair Mork summarized that the Commission agreed that the code should be written in such a way that allows the structural elements of the four existing pylon signs to be reused when they are rehabilitated.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Markle didn't have any items to report.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

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### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

### **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Callahan commented that she appreciated the high-quality racial equity training that was offered by the City. It is so important and was a great experience.

Vice Chair Malek reported that the final public hearing on the Point Wells Project will be on November 24<sup>th</sup>. He said he listened in on one of the hearings, which appeared to be a rehash of what has already been tracked. He said he would provide a report to the Commission once a decision has been made.

Assistant City Attorney Ainsworth-Taylor said she also listened to the hearings. The hearing on November 24<sup>th</sup> is essentially for public comment and some closing arguments. Because of problems with noticing, another public comment day was added. She agreed that the hearing was a rehash, with BSRE standing on their vested rights. However, the City received a notice from the Court of Appeals on the prior permit application that was the basis of the Superior Court's remand that allowed BSRE to submit a second permit application. Oral arguments will be based on the briefs and will start in January to address the primary question of what high-capacity transit is needed in order to allow the urban center development.

### **AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

Ms. Gierloff announced that the Commission's next meeting will be December 3<sup>rd</sup>, at which time staff will present the 5-year report on the 185<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area Rezone. Also at the meeting, she will respond to the questions the Commission raised at a previous meeting about the Housing Action Plan.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Laura Mork  
Chair, Planning Commission

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Carla Hoekzema  
Clerk, Planning Commission