

DRAFT
CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
(Via Zoom)

January 6, 2022
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present

Chair Pam Sager
Commissioner Julius Rwamashongye
Commissioner Jack Malek
Commissioner Janelle Callahan
Commissioner Andy Galuska
Commissioner Mei-shiou Lin

Staff Present

Rachel Markle, Planning Director
Andrew Bauer, Planning Manager
Steve Szafran, Senior Planner
Julie Ainsworth-Taylor, Assistant City Attorney
Carla Hoekzema, Planning Commission Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sager called the regular meeting of the Shoreline Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Hoekzema called the roll.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of December 16, 2021 were accepted as presented.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no general public comments.

STUDY ITEM: 2021 DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS – BATCH #2 – MISCELLANEOUS, SEPA AND TREE AMENDMENTS

Staff Presentation:

Senior Planner Szafran presented the 2021 Development Code Amendments Batch #2.

Miscellaneous Amendments: The staff-initiated amendments discussed on July 15 are a mix of updates, clarification and policy changes to parking, setbacks, adaptive reuse of commercial buildings. The Planning Commission previously focused on the following amendments:

- Amendment #8 – Lots with two front yards may reduce one of the yard setbacks by half the setback specified in Table 20.50.020(1). The Director will determine the reduced front yard setback based on the development pattern of adjacent houses and look of lot access.
- Amendment #9 – Another section similar to above pertaining to reduced setbacks for lots with two front yards.
- Amendment #11 – Commercial adaptive reuse of existing commercial buildings – would exempt certain site improvements for uses such as theater, health club, daycare, offices, retail trade and services, eating and drinking establishments if other criteria are met.
- Amendment #13 – This would delete the requirement that parking for residential, units must be included in the rental or sales price of the apartment or condo unit. Staff believes this should be removed to provide affordability and equity as well as meet sustainability goals.

SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) Amendments – These staff-initiated amendments are related to the way certain permits are reviewed and appealed and how SEPA, if required, is reviewed and appealed.

Tree Amendments – These mostly privately-initiated amendments relate to the regulation of trees which include new revised definitions, protection of trees during development, tree retention, tree replacement, and public notification when trees are removed in the public right-of-way.

Next steps include a public hearing with the Planning Commission on February 3, Council discussion on February 28 and March 7, and potential Council action on March 21.

Public Comment:

Wally Fosmore, Shoreline resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, spoke in support of Amendment #6 which ensures trees on new development sites will be protected during clearing and grading. It provides stop work orders, remedies, and penalties for injury or obstruction of trees. Trees on development sites are at the greatest risk of being lost. This would apply to new development in R8, R12, R24, R48, TC4, MUR35 and MUR45 zones. This code was submitted to the City more than a year ago. If necessary, this code should be studied by staff within the 60 days prior to Council review so staff can submit their study to the Council in February.

Martha Diesner, Shoreline resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, spoke in support of Amendment #10, Tree Replacements. She asked that exception SMC 20.50.360(c), item b be simplified to state that the developer can replace trees on site or pay the fee-in-lieu for tree replacement. The code as presented by the Code Team would require replacement of all significant trees required by code on site, replace as many as possible and pay the fee-in-lieu for trees not accommodated on site, or the developer can redesign the building or structure to accommodate significant tree replacement.

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Suzanne Tsoming, Shoreline resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, spoke in support of Amendment #2, Definitions, which would change the standard diameter at breast height (DBH) measurements to 6” DBH for a significant tree and 24” DBH for a landmark tree. Regarding Amendment #6, General Requirements, stop work orders and penalties only currently exist to protect trees on critical areas or critical areas buffers. The Code Team recommends the same protection for trees in residential zones from R8 to R48, in Town Center 4, and in MUR35 and MUR45. Regarding Amendment #7, Exemption from Permit, the Code Team created a table entitled Maximum Number of Trees Exempt on 1 acre to 25 acres.

Gayle Janzen, North Seattle resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, summarized several tree code amendments:

- Amendment #8 – Increase the Retention of Significant Trees on development sites to 25%. The Code Team originally included incentives to retain more trees, but staff considered these to be labor intensive. The Code Team asked the Planning Commission to ask staff to develop appropriate incentives to retain more than 25% trees.
- Amendment #9 – Deny the word “waive” and eliminate the word “reduce”
- Amendment #10 – Tree replacements should be on site or a fee-in-lieu should be paid

Nancy Morris, Shoreline resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, spoke to the importance of preserving tree canopy and mature trees. She urged the Planning Commission to recommend the new protective tree code amendments to the City Council.

Kathleen Russell, Shoreline resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, asked the Planning Commission to recommend the amendments proposed by the Code Team to the City Council.

Michael Oxman, Seattle resident, Tree Preservation Code Team member, encouraged Shoreline to pass these amendments to protect trees and require that new construction go alongside existing trees without encroaching into the root zones or the canopy area of the tree very much. This is essential for ecosystem health and residents’ emotional and mental health.

Discussion:

Commissioner Malek asked about the percentage of the city that these regulations would apply to. Planning Director Markle commented that these regulations would apply to approximately 80-82% of the City.

This item will be forwarded to a Public Hearing next month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Planning Commission Vice Chair

COMMISSIONER MALEK NOMINATED COMMISSIONER RWAMASHONGYE AS VICE CHAIR. COMMISSIONER RWAMASHONGYE WAS UNANIMOUSLY ELECTED VICE CHAIR.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Malek gave a brief history of the Point Wells issue on behalf of the Point Wells Sub Committee. Assistant City Attorney Taylor commented that the judge has not made a ruling yet.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Pam Sager
Chair, Planning Commission

Carla Hoekzema
Clerk, Planning Commission