

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

December 1, 2022
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present

Chair Pam Sager
Vice Chair Julius Rwamashongye
Commissioner Leslie Brinson
Commissioner Janelle Callahan (online)
Commissioner Andy Galuska (online)
Commissioner Mei-shiou Lin
Commissioner Christopher Mosier

Staff Present

Andrew Bauer, Planning Manager
Elise Keim, Senior Planner
Julie Ainsworth-Taylor, Assistant City Attorney
Carla Hoekzema, Planning Commission Clerk

Guests

Frana Milan, Stepherson & Associates
Colleen Toomey, Stepherson & Associates

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 October 20, 2022 were accepted as presented.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no general public comments.

STUDY ITEM: SCOPE OF WORK AND DISCUSSION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Planning Manager Andrew Bauer introduced this topic and the consultant representatives from Stepherson & Associates, Frana Milan and Colleen Toomey. He discussed key themes of the update: equity and social justice; and housing. Other topic areas include updating the vision statement and framework goals; middle housing; planning for jobs; countywide centers designation; utilities; livability; mandated and miscellaneous updates; and development regulations. Community engagement is a key piece of the update. An engagement consultant has been hired to develop an equitable engagement strategy to inform the community, reach more voices, and reach new voices.

Frana Milan from Stepherson & Associates reviewed the focus on equity-centered engagement which involves understanding and overcoming barriers to public participation and centering equity at every step. Colleen Toomey reviewed early visioning in terms of goals, tools, and expected results through spring of 2024 including project planning, visioning, plan elements & concepts, and the draft comprehensive plan. The consultants requested feedback on various topics.

What does an equity-centered engagement process look like to you?

- Commissioner Lin asked about translations for non-English speakers. Ms. Milan explained they are working with a translation company. Commissioner Lin recommended compensating people who participate for their time.
- Commissioner Brinson recommended considering the different ways households and individuals show up over time (single parents, older adults . . .).
- Commissioner Callahan thought the biggest barrier to participation is time. She wondered if there is any opportunity to reach people to participate while they are working.
- Commissioner Galuska suggested considering the people who are involved in the city in ways such as work or school but may not actually live here.
- Vice Chair Rwamashongye noted that interest groups tend to dominate meetings because they are more vocal than others. The internet provides a way to give access to voices that are not normally heard. He suggested creating an app to facilitate engagement. He also asked how they can improve access to technology for everyone. He recommended looking at census tracts and how resources are distributed to the various centers to find areas and communities who might feel excluded from resources and engagement.
- Commissioner Mosier asked if they are looking at engagement with outside communities as well for the economic development/employment portion. Planning Manager Bauer explained they are just beginning the process of determining how to be proactive in facilitating economic development and jobs growth in the city.

Who are specific audiences, groups, organizations, or individuals that can help us achieve an equity-centered engagement process?

- Commissioner Mosier – renters and future residents; faith communities that own property which can potentially be used differently
- Vice Chair Rwamashongye – Look for the most diverse schools and reach those children’s parents; organizations that register themselves as minority organizations; religious leaders
- Commissioner Brinson – tag onto other events such as school events
- Chair Sager – people east of I-5; Save Shoreline Trees and other organizations; youth/school leaders

How would you like to be engaged in the process? When would you like to hear back from the team?

- Commissioner Callahan said she would like to hear back after the stakeholder engagement but before the updated vision statement to hear about the findings and get some feedback on possible conclusions. She would like to see clear outcomes. She recommended forced rankings or priorities to get clear about what is most important to people.
- Commissioner Mosier asked if they have any granularity related to the climate resiliency focus. Ms. Milan explained that will be part of the coordination they will be doing with the staff and the technical consultant.

STUDY ITEM: COTTAGE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS

Senior Planner Elise Keim gave the update on cottage housing amendments. She reviewed some background on this. She gave a summary of the Existing Conditions Report, gave a summary of the public outreach, and requested guidance on code topics and regulatory approaches.

Existing Conditions:

- Demographics – young adults (25-34) and older adults (65-74) are a focus for cottage housing
- Housing Trends – 61% of existing households are made up of one or two people. Of the people living alone, 45% are 65 years old or older. 67% of available housing stock is detached single family residential. Smaller houses are typically rentals. This forces some potential homeowners to either purchase more expensive homes or purchase them elsewhere. Additionally, home values have risen 84% since 2015, and wages have not kept pace.
- Zoning Analysis – 17 zones permit residential development. 80% of residential zones land is exclusively low-density residential (R-4 and R-6).

Ms. Keim summarized that cottage housing should go where people want to be, and development should be incentivized in walkable areas. Public outreach consisted of an online survey with 325 responses; a cottage resident survey with 11 responses; focus groups consisting of community, developers, and staff; and a virtual open house. Major themes throughout the outreach were the importance of tree preservation, single-level living, sustainable design, affordability, and parking. Results surrounding cottage design included a strong preference for a covered front porch, designing the buildings for privacy, and letting the community decide about fences. About 71% of respondents indicated they would consider living in cottage housing. She summarized that cottage housing could help to meet diverse housing needs while still maintaining priorities like preservation of existing trees and privacy. They are looking at the density regulations to make the economics work out for developers. Cottage housing can help meet Shoreline's housing needs by providing affordable for-sale homes, providing more options for smaller households, and more physically accessible forms of housing.

The Cottage Code Discussion:

- Location: *Allow cottages in low-to-medium residential zones or in all zones that allow SFR?*
 - Commissioner Brinson asked why they would limit it to only low and medium density zones? She also expressed concern that they might be creating a tradeoff that would negatively impact or compete with the desired increase in missing middle housing. Ms. Keim

explained that developers would likely struggle to meet the minimum density requirements of higher density zones. The City also doesn't want to take away from multifamily developable zones which are already constrained. She agreed that cottages could be competing with other forms of middle housing.

- Commissioner Galuska thought R8-12 would be the limit of where you would see cottage housing. By policy, it's also not appropriate for R-4-R-6 because of the low density. He recommended looking at the zoning categories in general as part of the Comprehensive Plan update if they are going to put a use like this in the R4-R6 zone. Regarding pushing other forms of middle housing out, he thinks this would be a little more popular than a four-plex.
 - Vice Chair Rwamashongye recommended identifying other locations that are similar to where cottage housing already exists and target those. Ms. Keim agreed and suggested they could incentivize certain areas or limit cottage housing to proximity to certain locations with a buffer or overlay.
 - Commissioner Brinson spoke in support of having incentives for areas where they would like to see cottage housing rather than limiting them to specific areas.
 - Commissioner Callahan agreed with Commissioner Galuska that it doesn't make sense to allow for this use in higher density zones.
 - Commissioner Lin also agreed with not having these in higher density zones. She thought it made more sense to see these as infill in the low to medium zones. She thought incentivizing the areas where they want to see these is fine. She recommended using restrictions and regulations they already have for townhouses or other middle housing. She noted that cottage housing has the potential to save a lot more trees.
 - Commissioner Mosier agreed that the lower density zones are the better option. He agreed with Commissioner Galuska that they may want to look at higher density zones and stop allowing single family density homes and even duplexes from being permitted outright.
 - Chair Sager agreed with keeping this in low to medium density zones and maybe looking at incentives to meet community priorities for things like walkability.
- Bulk/Density: Density bonuses for community priorities such as tree retention, sustainability, walkability, and accessibility.
 - Alternatives: *1) cottages develop 50% above base density; 2) cottages develop 50% above base density if built green; or 3) cottages develop 50% above base density if built green, walkable, accessible (stackable?)? Ms. Keim also asked about the minimum/maximum number of units per development. Should these be set or just have them based on lot size and density?*
 - Chair Sager and Vice Chair Rwamashongye agreed that the increased density should be allowed outright.
 - Commissioner Mosier recommended rebranding the zones. Ms. Keim agreed but noted that the grant deliverable (code being adopted) is due in July of 2023. Rezoning will not be happening in that timeframe. She recommended focusing on the zones that currently exist. In light of that, Commissioner Mosier suggested using R12 as the overlying density and using the other regulations to keep them in check.
 - Commissioner Lin expressed concern about having a maximum density which could cause fewer trees to be retained and cause overcrowding.
 - Commissioner Galuska did not think having a maximum was necessary. He also did not think the number of units per development needed to be regulated.

- Commissioner Mosier commented that maximum is all predicated on lot size. At the low end he recommended a minimum of four because there are already other models that can accommodate two units/homes on a lot such as duplexes and ADUs.
 - Commissioner Brinson did not have strong feelings about minimums and maximums. She thought that the lot size and other regulations would keep it in check.
 - There was some discussion about whether an existing home could be integrated into a cottage housing development. This is something that is still being worked out.
 - Commissioner Brinson commented that having two cottages added to a lot with an existing single-family home would still be reaching the goal of increasing density gently.
- *Minimum Lot Size: subject to underlying zone or have a minimum lot size?*
 - Commissioner Galuska asked if it would make sense to do a unit lot subdivision allowance so they could create fee simple units within the development. It would help them to be more financially viable. He thought there would be a natural minimum number of units for any cottage housing development. He expressed some concern that people will use cottage housing to do a two-lot short plat to get around some rules. This could be avoided by having rules requiring common areas and other features of cottage developments.
 - Commissioner Mosier agreed with Commissioner Galuska that this would make more financial sense for smaller lots.
- *Maximum Unit Size: maximum unit size or building footprint maximum?*
 - Vice Chair Rwamashongye asked about minimum unit size. Ms. Keim replied that it is determined by the building code. Vice Chair Rwamashongye expressed concern that some developers might build a couple larger units and some extremely small units. He recommended specifying a minimum unit size in order to ensure they get something that is desired and pleasant. Commissioner Brinson thought that the market would drive this. Vice Chair Rwamashongye thought that the demand for housing is so high that some people might choose to live in extremely small houses. Commissioner Brinson expressed concern that if they are too strict with size constraints, the single-level aspect will be unachievable. There might need to be requirements or specific incentives to get single-level homes into these developments.
 - Commissioner Mosier thought there should be a maximum unit size but did not think they should differentiate between single level or two-story houses. He suggested that they could require some sort of mix.
 - Commissioner Galuska suggested that one-stories could be allowed a larger footprint than two-stories. He agreed that the ideal outcome is a mix of sizes and one-story and two-story and units.
 - Commissioner Lin commented that the unit size was not as important as having a mix with elements that the community wants – single story, two-bedroom/two-bath, covered porch . . .
 - Chair Sager thought they should require a certain percentage of single-story or it may not happen. There should also be consideration of the needs of disabled people with recognition that those units might have increased size needs.

- **Maximum Building Height:** *limited height for all cottages (20-25 feet depending on roof type?) or not to exceed the building height of abutting properties?*
 - Commissioner Brinson was in favor of a limited height for all cottages.
 - Chair Sager agreed as long as they are not abutting lots in a different zone with much taller buildings.
 - Commissioner Mosier spoke in support of the limited height with no distinction between slope and pitch. Chair Sager agreed.

- **Setbacks:** Existing regulations say that any property with three or more dwellings abutting an R-4 or R-6 property will have increased setbacks to 15 feet along the shared property line.
- **Alternatives:** *Cottage developments will be subject to the regulations of the underlying zone; developments with three or more units shall have a 15-foot setback from any R-4 or R-6 property; or cottage development setbacks are determined by unit height?*
 - Commissioner Lin noted they would likely preserve more mature trees with the larger setback because larger trees are generally around the perimeters of lots; however, allowing some flexibility would be good. For example, if there is a grove of trees this could be considered.
 - Commissioner Mosier recommended 5-10 feet especially if they are going to limit the height and the size of the units.
 - Commissioner Brinson did not have strong feelings about this but highly recommended vetting whatever numbers they come up with with people and developers to make sure it all works.
 - Commissioner Lin recalled that a previous cottage development in Shoreline was not popular because they all looked the same (“cookie cutter”) and were not attractive.

- **Trees:** Alternatives – *Cottage developments are subject to the tree code with no incentives for additional tree retention or significant tree retention above the 25%(?) minimum is incentivized through flexibility in development standards?*
 - Commissioner Brinson spoke in support of flexibility.
 - Chair Sager said she didn’t generally like incentives but was supportive of anything that would help to keep the trees.
 - Commissioner Callahan liked the idea of incentives for tree retention, but it would have to be looked at with the other incentives on the table. Perhaps this should be the only type of incentive offered.
 - Commissioner Mosier thought that these developments were a good place to have stronger tree preservation requirements. He suggested flexibility in the common area to be able to include a grove of trees.
 - Vice Chair Rwamashongye recommended carefully crafting the language regarding which trees to preserve. The way it was written seemed to leave it open to remove larger landmark trees in favor of “significant” trees.

- **Parking:** Alternatives – *parking is required at a certain rate per unit or parking is related to the size of the unit?*
 - Commissioner Galuska was in support of using the size. He also would prefer a requirement for a communal garage because this is a characteristic of cottage housing.

- Commissioner Lin was also supportive of parking related to unit sizes, communal garages, and less than two parking spots per unit.
- Commissioner Mosier supported less parking in general and basing the amount on unit size.
- Chair Sager noted that it should depend on proximity to transit and other amenities.
- Parking Reduction – *Cottage development parking can be reduced up to 25% when within ¼ mile of a transit stop or to preserve on-site significant trees above the minimum 25% retention requirement?*
 - Commissioner Mosier was very supportive of this and recommended looking at similar parking considerations for ADUs.
- Parking Guest Parking Requirements - *Cottage development guest parking is .25(?) stalls per unit which must be provided on site unless frontage improvements require on-street parking be built in which case those stalls can count toward guest parking?*
 - Chair Sager did not think they need to add more parking just for guests since this is not done for single-family homes.
 - Commissioner Galuska objected to on-street parking counting toward the development.
 - Commissioner Mosier was not in favor of requiring more parking for visitors. He suggested possibly taking away some street landscaping requirements which could provide better on-street parking options than there are now in a lot of neighborhoods.
- Landscaping Alternatives: *Cottages have no specific landscaping standards; cottage developments shall have Type II perimeter landscaping at least 5-feet deep along the outer perimeter property lines; landscaping is required at the front of each cottage at a minimum depth of three feet; and/or common open space shall be at least 250 sf per cottage with no minimum dimension less than 10 feet?*
 - Commissioner Lin was supportive of the Type II perimeter landscaping at a minimum, of the landscaping at the front of each cottage with a minimum depth of at least four feet, and of a minimum common open space requirement.
 - Commissioner Mosier agreed that the depth of the minimum landscaping at the front of each cottage needs to be greater so they don't end up with something like just little potted plants. He disagreed with the perimeter landscaping requirement because most of these just have fences. He expressed concern about potential challenges with managing the shared open space and suggested they might want to focus less on this and more on the houses.
 - Commissioner Brinson spoke in support of keeping open spaces simple and allowing flexibility for future residents.
- Site Design (parking, pedestrian access, solid waste, utility and mechanical equipment, private outdoor space, common outdoor space, façade landscaping, fences)
- Building Design (entryway orientation, covered entry porch, cohesive architectural design, roof forms, buildings oriented for privacy)
- *Should the City look at other design standards for regulation and if so, what? Is it more important for a cottage community to have internal architectural consistency or for it to match the neighborhood?*

- Commissioner Mosier did not think they should look at other design standards. There is already not a consistent character of homes in neighborhoods. He was in support of a front stoop, but not necessarily a covered one. He noted that depending on the orientation a covered porch could cut off natural light inside the house.
 - Commissioner Brinson suggested thinking about how to minimize the number of solid waste bins. She also spoke in support of the covered porch. A front porch can expand the living space of small homes.
 - Chair Sager thought it was more important to have internal architectural consistency than to match the neighborhood. She agreed about looking into the waste bins. She also thinks the parking design is very important.
- Process: Notice is given to neighbors for subdivisions and SEPA
 - Alternatives for discussion: *Cottage development is reviewed through building and associated site development, utility, and right-of-way permits; or cottage development of 6 units or greater requires notice to neighbors?*
 - Commissioner Mosier commented that anything that applies to single family homes should apply to cottage housing.
 - Commissioner Brinson agreed that these are detached single-family homes and should be treated like other single-family homes.

Ms. Keim thanked the Planning Commission for their feedback. Staff will work with the consultant to draft some regulations and bring those back in early 2023.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

There was consensus to cancel the December 15 meeting. Staff reviewed the agenda for the next meeting which is scheduled for January 5.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 p.m.



 Pam Sager
 Chair, Planning Commission



 Carla Hoekzema
 Clerk, Planning Commission