

DRAFT

City of Lynnwood
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
September 23, 2010 Meeting

Commissioners Present:	Staff Present:
Richard Wright, Chair	Shay Davidson, Administrative Asst.
Maria Ambalada	Paul Krauss, Director, Comm. Devt.
Van AuBuchon	Kevin Garrett, Planning Manager
Chad Braithwaite	Paul Haugan, Chief Tech. Officer
Jeff Davies	Janiene Lambert, City Center Program Mgr.
Michael Wojack, 2nd Vice-chair	Gloria Rivera, Senior Planner
	Dave Osaki, Dep. Dir. Comm. Devt.
Commissioners Absent:	David Kleitsch, Dir. of Economic. Devt.
Bob Larsen, Vice Chair	
	Other:
	Councilmember Ted Hikel

The meeting was called to order Chair Wright at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

1. Meeting of August 26, 2010

Motion made by Commissioner Ambalada, seconded by Commissioner Wojack, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Liaison Report

Councilmember Ted Hikel reported that:

- The City Council took action on the Perrinville pre-annexation zoning. The Ordinance was passed with a 6-0 vote.
- The Resolution of Intent to Annex Perrinville passed unanimously.
- The Ordinance on graffiti failed on a 3-3 vote.
- There was a presentation from the Mayor on the 2011-12 preliminary budget.
- At the work session on Monday, Council reviewed the Comprehensive Plan Amendments with a hearing scheduled for September 27.
- The Council also had an update on the Highway 99 Project Subarea Plan.

Citizen Comments

None.

Public Hearings

None.

Other Business

City Email for Planning Commissioners

Chief Technology Officer Paul Haugan discussed the risks involved in using personal email addresses for city business. In order to avoid involving personal computers in City business, staff has set up city email addresses for Planning Commissioners. He distributed passwords and instructions for those addresses.

Work Session

- 1. Transition Area Zoning Regulations (2008CAM0003). Proposed zoning regulations for the Alderwood – City Center Transition Area, generally located east of 36th Ave W., south of 188th St. SW and northwest of Alderwood Mall Blvd.**

Public Comment:

Joe Viera, said he represents the company that owns Alderwood Business Campus. He noted that he had sent a letter to staff and was available to answer any questions they might have.

Staff Presentation:

Planning Manager Garrett commented that those comments are not formally a part of the record in that this is not a public hearing. There will be public hearings on this item in the future where public testimony will be taken. Councilmember Hikel added that because this was advertised as a work session item and people are generally not allowed to comment, others may not have come for that reason. Planning Manager Garrett reviewed the reason for allowing comment tonight, referring to a comment following the last work session from a resident of the neighborhood next to the Transition Area. He suggested clarifying this procedure in the Planning Commission rules.

Planning Manager Garrett reviewed maps and background history of the Transition Area. He compared alternative zoning concepts for the Planning Commission to consider with a detailed chart and illustrations contained in the Planning Commission's packet:

- Existing Zoning
- Concept #1: Stairstep
- Concept #2: Multifamily/Stairstep
- Concept #3: Half Blocks

Planning Manager Garrett explained that staff is recommending Concept #1 – the Stairstep option because it provides a better set of options for redevelopment of properties in the area while continuing to limit potential impacts on the single family neighborhood on the west side of 36th Avenue. He then discussed a topographical map of the area which was distributed to the Commission. He introduced staff who had worked on this issue: Janiene Lambert, City Center Program Manager; Gloria Rivera, Senior Planner; Paul Krauss, Community Development Director, Dave Osaki, Deputy Director of Community Development; and David Kleitsch, Director of Economic Development.

Commissioner Ambalada commented that she hopes this will bring more business in the area to create jobs and income for the city. She encouraged the City to become more business- friendly and to include the Chamber of Commerce in planning.

Commissioner Braithwaite referred to the abundance of office space at the Cosmos Building and asked how the list of uses was developed. Economic Development Director Kleitsch explained that the Cosmos Building was built to address functions of the dot-com industry and is a little awkward for a typical use office building. He added that the ownership of the property at that time was not aggressive at pursuing tenants. It was then sold at the peak of the last economic period. Through a series of unfortunate events it has hit two difficult periods of time. However, it is one of three or four Class A office buildings in Lynnwood. Although the economy is slow right now we see the building “turning a corner” because of its aggressive ownership. Planning Manager Garrett explained how the land uses had been selected for the different alternatives.

Commissioner AuBuchon expressed concerns about the irresponsible practice of certain commercial vehicles who park their vehicles in the middle of the street while the load or make deliveries. He believes that the proposed mixture of uses in this area would attract large commercial tractor trailer trucks. He does not think they should allow the type of industry in those areas that would attract that type of traffic. Planning Manager Garrett said that he had noticed that problem on Highway 99 and asked Commissioner AuBuchon if he has noticed a similar problem on 36th Ave. He replied that he has not, but he is not aware of any light industrial, warehousing, or wholesaling going on there now that would attract those kinds of things. Planning Manager Garrett stated they could make a note of his concerns in developing the zoning code. He commented that one difference with this area is that they have the off-street parking lots so there is a place where trucks and tractor trailers can pull off the street. On Highway 99 there is not place for those trucks to pull off.

Chair Wright commented that he generally likes the stairstep approach because the line of sight from the street in the neighborhood would be less obstructed. He expressed some concern about the 85-foot maximum height. He noted that both

the Cosmos Building and the Fisher Building are significantly further down the slope of the area. There was discussion about the transition from the limited development area. Planning Manager Garrett reviewed this and explained how the fire code and building code factor into this. Chair Wright felt that the setback was not far enough for an 80-foot structure. Planning Manager Garrett asked for a recommendation. Chair Wright suggested that the first 40 feet should not include parking. This could contribute to a greater setback for the taller structures. Chair Wright then expressed concerns about increased traffic on 36th Avenue and recommended that multi-family or 24-hour uses should have their access from 33rd Avenue.

Commissioner Wojack commented that he lives in the neighborhood and knows that most of the residents there would like Concept #3 because they don't want it to change. However, he recognizes that things can't stay constant. He doesn't mind the stairstep option, but thinks there should be a greater setback and possibly another stairstep. He asked about the allowable mechanical space at the top of the buildings. He also asked about the additional trips that would be generated from multi-family development. He noted that in the current business property down there he rarely sees a full parking lot. The trucks along there are usually smaller ones and he has not seen any double-axle parked along there.

Commissioner Davies thanked staff for putting together these three different concepts. It is very helpful. He noted that he likes Concept #1, but what is going to help this succeed is thinking of it as a walkable community and creating more pedestrian contact between Alderwood Mall and City Center. He loves the idea of the promenade and additional daily businesses and mixed family neighborhoods. He is not as concerned about traffic because he thinks people will rely more on public transportation and because 33rd will be getting a major revision over to 196th. He concurs with the other Commissioners that the setback should be greater and/or another stairstep should be incorporated. He discussed how the topography of this area relates to the height of the buildings.

Commissioner Braithwaite agreed with the other Commissioners. He suggested having a landscaping setback without parking lots right up against the right-of-way and then a landscaping setback with parking lots farther back. He also recommended having the lower stairstep a little deeper. He asked about the plans for the bus barn property. Planning Manager Garrett discussed the background and the status of this area.

Commissioner Wojack referred to the stairstep recommendation and asked if the new sign and lighting code would be in effect. Planning Manager Garrett said they haven't talked much about signage at this point other than limiting signage along 36th. He stated that they would make note of his concern.

Commissioner Ambalada asked about having affordable housing for senior citizens, a community clinic and perhaps a fruit and vegetable market in this

mixed use area. Planning Manager Garrett responded that on the stairstep proposal, once you are east of the limited development area senior housing is a permitted use as is multi-family. Retail generally is allowed as long as it's no more than 50,000 square feet. Commissioner Ambalada asked about seeing a model of the proposals. Planning Manager Garrett said that at this point they do not have a budget for that.

Chair Wright concluded that he would like to see the setback for the taller buildings increased to perhaps 100 feet and also include the third step. This would increase the distance back to the first step and add a step to 65 feet before the 85 foot structure. There was some discussion about the depth of each of the steps in relation to the topography of the area to end up with the least amount of impact to the residents on the other side of the street. There was also discussion about the design of the 33rd Street extension. Staff explained that the goal is to have this shovel-ready within 18 months and be competitive in future grant cycles. Chair Wright commented that the change in 33rd Ave. will drive what happens along that street.

Planning Manager Garrett summarized the proposed changes. He stated that the first section would still be 40 feet of landscaping and may or may not have parking. Further discussion needs to happen around that. The second section would be buildings up to 35 feet and a limited set of land uses. The third section is a 65-foot building height. The next section would be the 85-foot building height. He indicated that staff would bring back some options for land use in the 65-foot section.

Commissioner Davies commented that he is not as concerned about traffic impact as others are. He thinks that in 20 years there will be light rail within walking distance and a city center that people who live within this area will want to work in and won't have to have a car. This coupled with the extension of 33rd means that there will not be a large traffic impact.

Commissioner Wojack commended staff for the work they have done on this. He commented that he is still concerned about the height and is sure it will also be of concern to the neighborhood residents. He asked staff about the percentage of empty buildings in the city right now. Economic Development Director Kleitsch replied that the vacancy rate is about 30% for Class A space right now but we are in a down time.

Commissioner Braithwaite asked about the probability of being able to build something like the Fisher Building along 36th. He thought that under the existing zoning rules, if you go through a CUP process you would be able to do that. Planning Manager Garrett concurred; he noted that under the existing zoning you could build the Fisher Building or the Cosmos Building anywhere along that block.

Planning Manager Garret concluded:

- The Planning Commission is in support of Concept #1: Stairstep.
- No changes to the land use.
- Change the stairstep by adding another step.
- No changes to numbers in the limited development area or east of the limited development area.
- Some favorable comments about the image and the concept for 33rd Avenue.
- Some concern about illuminated signs facing back toward the neighborhood.

Commissioner AuBuchon suggested getting rid of the assembly and light industrial land use options. Planning Manager Garrett commented that the assembly and light industrial would encompass contractor's offices, flex space, printing, publishing, binding, bottling, packaging, etc. If the concern is about trucks parking in the street he thinks something can be worked up to address that without prohibiting the land uses. Commissioner AuBuchon commented that it is not just the parking, but also the traffic that those types of uses would generate. Economic Development Director Kleitsch agreed that they could address those concerns, but still allow those uses to provide great high-wage family jobs. Commissioner AuBuchon felt that the Highway 99 corridor would be more suited to that type of heavy transportation-oriented commercial traffic. Director Kleitsch agreed, but noted that there are already assembly uses in this area that don't have the impacts that he is identifying. He suggested that staff discuss this further.

Commissioner Ambalada said that in the future she would like to see something that will entertain children while the parents shop. Planning Manager Garrett commented that the list does include daycare and there is a proposal for a park in the City Center area.

2. Project Highway 99 (2009CAM0001). Draft Subarea Plan, Zoning Regulations and Design Guidelines, together with a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Highway 99 corridor, between 216th St. SW and 148th St. SW.

Planning Manager Garrett gave the staff presentation on Project Highway 99 and reviewed the process from this point on, including the public meeting on September 28th.

Director's Report

- Director Krauss reported that staff's work with the Council continues to be focused on the budget and issues related to budget shortfalls and layoffs. They are looking at trimming back services to fit the available manpower. He discussed examples of how they might do this.

- Countywide Planning Policies drafts have been completed and were forwarded to the SCT Steering Committee last night. He summarized the status of this project.
- Staff is participating in the Sound Transit planning effort to bring light rail to Lynnwood. There will be a public open house on light rail in Lynnwood at the Convention Center on October 12 from 6 to 8:30. This will be one of three outreach meetings that Sound Transit will do. He reviewed what would be presented at the meeting and noted that they will be looking for input on where to put the second station.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 9:07 p.m.


Richard Wright, Chair