

**City of Lake Forest Park
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Summary
17425 Ballinger Way NE—Council Chambers
January 10, 2012**

Commissioners present: Chair Richard Saunders, Vice Chair George Piano, Mark Phillips, Chuck Paulsen, John Resha, Chuff Barden, Sean Bouffiou, Dixie Coggins, Doug Gochanour

Commissioners absent: None

Staff and others present: Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Jennifer Franich, Assistant Planner; Mayor Mary Jane Goss; Catherine Stanford, City Council Liaison to Planning Commission; John Owen, Rachel Miller, and Greg Easton, Consultants; Scott Gochanour, Economic Development Commission; Judy Altman, Community Services Commission co-chair; David Bilski, Transportation Commission; Charlie Heffernan, Civil Services Commission; and Ray Holmdahl and Gretchen Bennett Guethner, resident.

Call to order: Chair Saunders called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm.

Approval of meeting minutes:

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the December 13, 2011 regular meeting. It was noted that there was one typographical error. Cmr. Paulsen moved to adopt the minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Piano and approved unanimously.

Public Comment:

Citizen Ray Holmdahl commented that, with regard to the Southern Gateway, he worries about the building heights, safety, and that there isn't enough concern for the locals in the area. He said he appreciates that the commission is discussing the interests of locals.

Old Business:

Southern Gateway Project Update: Review Draft report

John Owen opened by saying that the purpose of the meeting is to look at report draft for direction that is suitable for review by the public and interested parties. He said that there are no numbers for setbacks or building heights, etc., included at this point, as throwing out numbers right now can give a false sense of security or alarm people. A range of options will be given before deciding on any numbers. The blanks in the document are placeholders for decisions that are to be determined in the next phase. At this point we just need to make sure that the report says that height limits, setbacks, and other numbers will be addressed.

Chair Saunders said that the report distilled the outcomes of the process well, with community and Commission direction. Cmr. Barden suggested that a visual depiction of the design will make it easier to get a good idea of what the number might be. Cmr. Paulsen commented that he liked that the Legacy Plan was addressed. Cmr. Resha said that the idea of incentives isn't mentioned until 8A, and the Commission had talked about looking at using incentives more, related to height, density, etc. That concept needs to be carried throughout the report. Discussion ensued regarding clarifying parts of the report.

John Owen said that the report recognizes that a portion of the plan is on the Déjà Vu site, and it may not develop right away, but there are a number of different phasing options. The important thing is that we do get a main street to provide traffic circulation. It might look something like Mill Creek Town Center, or a “people-street”, like Pike Place Market. It’s more attractive for retail to not be on a dead-end street.

Cmr. Resha asked whether a person who hadn’t been to a meeting would they be able to grasp the ideas in the report. John Owen explained that the intent of page four is to provide an overview. The Draft Planning Policies address where the Commission is at in the project development. Right now there is no purpose statement—it is missing. The report will be reformatted. Councilmember Stanford asked the consultant team to start off with an outline of what this document contains to guide people through. The Commission also agreed that a Q&A sheet distributed at the open house might be a good idea. Cmr. Barden suggested including a question that says “what happens if we do nothing?” John Owen added that that question will be analyzed through the SEPA process.

Resident Ray Holmdahl said that though he can appreciate not wanting to include numbers early on, but that he is concerned because the neighborhood won’t know if it’s something they need to fight or not. He said he is concerned that pushing things off will mean that they are not included in discussions later. John Owen said that the neighborhood should stay involved throughout the process to have a say as decisions get made. Vice Chair Piano said that mitigation is something that the Commission is talking about a lot, so the neighborhood does have representatives. Cmr. Phillips said that it may be helpful to have information about the next steps available to the public.

Resident Gretchen Bennett Guethner commented that we want more people to come to live in LFP, but amenities that attract apartments, including beautiful parks, entertainment, a grocery store, and transportation within walking distance have not been addressed. Vice Chair Piano said that the Commission has included those things in our discussions, but the meetings have been about what the people want.

David Bilski, Transportation Commission, commented that there is a lot of talk about interconnectivity in the report, as in page 5, number 3. The Burke-Gilman Trail should be considered part of the gateway, and the project should consider better access to it. The Transportation Commission would like to see a park and ride put in the plan, at least at a visionary level. Mayor Goss said that east-west public access is poor, dangerous, and difficult, especially across Bothell Way. Judy Altman, Community Services Commission, added that trail access is part of the Legacy Plan. Chair Saunders said that there is some mention of trail access in the report, but we can make it stronger.

Open House #3

John Owen said that the workshop will start with visuals, then a presentation that will ask “do you agree with this statement”, using the policies section of the report. This will let us get good data back from people, and allow people to voice their concerns.

There was discussion about getting the word out to the public. Postcards went out in the beginning of the week, an email will go out by the end of the week, and Cmr. Paulsen volunteered to talk with apartment managers.

New Business:

Dir. Bennett gave a Burke-Gilman Trail update. He said that it will be another month or so before the remainder of the trail opens. There have been a lot of specific issues with the construction that he has been dealing with concerning residents’ property. Dir. Bennett will be presenting at City Council study

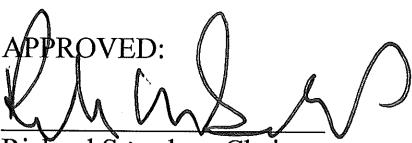
session at 6:30 PM on Thursday. The weight of the compliance issues are not enough to stop work, but the City is making the County aware of the issues and they will eventually have to be worked out.

Dir. Bennett also presented the Medical Marijuana Moratorium schedule. The recommendation to Council will be to extend the moratorium for another six months, but the Commission needs to work on legislation for community gardens. Legally, the moratorium can only be extended for six more months at a time. Councilmember Stanford added that the City needs to show a good faith effort.

Reports/Communications/Announcements:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Feb 7, 2012.

Adjournment: 9:00 PM

APPROVED:

Richard Saunders, Chair