

**City of Lake Forest Park
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Summary
17425 Ballinger Way NE—Council Chambers
March 13, 2012**

Commissioners present: Chair Richard Saunders, Vice Chair George Piano, Mark Phillips, Chuck Paulsen, Chuff Barden, Doug Gochanour, Ray Holmdahl

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, Consultants; Scott Gochanour, Economic Development Commission; Judy Altman, Community Services Commission co-chair; Charlie Heffernan, Civil Services Commission; and Gretchen Bennett Guethner, Don Quale, Mrs. Quale, Erin Frobenius and Teresa McDade, residents.

Call to order: Chair Saunders called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Approval of meeting minutes:

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the February regular meeting. It was noted that there were two typographical errors and one clarification. Cmr. Paulsen moved to adopt the minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Cmr. Barden and approved unanimously.

Public Comment:

Old Business:

Southern Gateway Project:

Joint Planning Commission – City Council February 16 Meeting Debrief

Chair Saunders said that topics to explore were outlined at the meeting. Issues and topics included: articulate tradeoffs for allowing different building heights, break down and understand the tax impact on city, balance goals for city with what works for the neighborhood, and simplify the presentation of economics. Public comments included concerns with buffers, setbacks, building heights, and keeping the big picture in public conversation. Interim City Administrator Bob Jean's comments emphasized improving the Hwy 522 interface, coordination with Shoreline, keeping rapid transit possibilities in mind, and the benefits of and education related to the EIS. Chair Saunders concluded by saying that the meeting was a good check-in with Council.

Finalizing the Southern Gateway Subarea Plan (Step 1) discussion

Chair Saunders asked what needs to be done to the current draft, based on feedback, and what is the next step. MAKERS consultant John Owen said that the graphic in the plan of Elks area needs to be updated to better represent setbacks and building height, and that Makers would come up with a better summary of economic analysis. Greg has produced an eight-page summary, which could be included in the report. Chair Saunders said that mainly it needs to have a synopsis that clearly summarizes issues so that the public does not have to read the 20-page appendix.

Starting Step 2: Subarea Plan Policy Recommendations and Draft EIS

John Owen introduced Stephanie Hanson, EIS Specialist, from Perteet Inc., who with her team will prepare the EIS for the subarea plan. Perteet will perform the heavy duty studies like transportation impacts. John indicated that he will be working with local neighbors on the biggest unresolved issues.

Stephanie Hanson explained that the in the next few months the project will continue as a two-pronged approach. MAKERS will improve on the draft plan with community, honing into details, while Perteet engages in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. SEPA requires that the city look at environmental impacts. Typically a development will trigger SEPA analysis. Project planning and SEPA processes can be integrated, so analysis feeds and is included into the final proposal. The scoping process will help give the EIS an outline, as well as focus and simplicity. The EIS will contain analysis of the preferred alternative (the proposal), and the no-action alternative (what would happen if the area were developed under the current comprehensive plan). This is the range or the “bookends” that undergo analysis. The scoping portion of the project will include transportation, erosion, stream, aesthetics, how land uses/housing is changing to help meet transportation and population target, fire and water availability, utilities. We will present the EIS and plan at the same time. Then there is a 60-day review, after which we incorporate comments, before approval and integration. Cmr. Holmdahl added that the analyzed effect on the environment goes beyond endangered species and things like that. It is also about light, quality of neighborhood life, and setbacks. Dir. Bennett said that the report and the EIS preparation inform each other and give an idea of the potential environmental impacts if the proposal’s vision is achieved.

Starting Step 2: Schedule Review

There was discussion about the middle steps between scoping and the draft EIS.

John Owen said that there will be public meetings to evaluate alternatives. MAKERS will be doing some background work and meeting with small groups (neighbors, property owners) in the next few months. There will be a scoping meeting and project refinements before July, another open house to look at what the alternatives will look like, and a public hearing scheduled for the end of the year.

Vice Chair Piano said that notification needs to reach the whole community. Chair Saunders said that the goal is to make people feel updated and informed.

In response to a question from Cmr. Phillips, Commissioner Stanford said that, with regard to the Park & Ride, the Administration came up with a couple alternatives, one of which is to use a few places that have on street parking. Moving forward, we need to look at other alternatives. There are policies that address the consideration of a park and ride in the current draft. John Owen said that the report will acknowledge that a Park & Ride would decrease development opportunities, so it will not be pursued as a larger element. King County Metro has the money to lease a Park & Ride, but cannot find an opportunity. A developer possibly could use the land as a temporary Park & Ride.

Finalize the Chickens and Bees Ordinance

Chair Saunders said that this ordinance had been sidelined for a while and that it would be good to wrap it up. One minor change was made to the ordinance draft, and one change was made to the resolution. Two minor revisions were proposed for the resolution. Cmr. Gochanour moved to pass the resolution as revised. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Piano and approved unanimously.

Public Comments: Don Quale, resident asked that the executive summary of the Southern Gateway report be noted, so that readers may refer to the source documents. He also commented that not all projects have been fruitful for the cities, for example the project at 155th-175th in Shoreline, and would like to see what the economic impact. The design renderings should be enlarged so that they are readable.

Teresa McDade, resident of the Southern Gateway area said that as a result of a meeting with neighbors, she has a good list of neighbors’ info to share with the Commission.

Erin Frobenius commented that there should be a better way for targeting the area, people do not know what the Southern Gateway is and that they live there.

Gretchen Bennett Guenther, resident, requested that the commission inform everyone in the city of the next open house by mail. She also commented that it is important to find a place for a Park & Ride, as less money spent on transportation will give the public more to spend in the City.

Mayor Mary Jane Goss said that only a couple streets are identified for traffic impacts analysis in the Appendix D draft. More streets than those should be identified on the map (because of the added density) may be impacted.

Dir. Bennett responded that the areas of concern identified on the map were the subject of a lot of comments about traffic impact. The EIS will be more comprehensive when it comes to traffic impact analysis and look at all streets in the Gateway area.

New Business:

2012 Chair Nomination and Vice Chair Election

George Piano was nominated as Vice Chair and elected, and Richard Saunders was nominated as Chair and was approved. Chuck Paulsen was approved as an alternate for Chair for the Mayor's consideration. There were no other nominees. Cmr. Gochanour moved to vote on the election of the Chair and Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Cmr. Barden and the nominees were approved unanimously.

Planning Commission support of MacKinnon Creekway Trail Funding Discussion

Cmr. Paulsen introduced a letter by the legacy advisory committee to support taking actions to establish the McKinnon Creekway Trail. This trail is a project in the Legacy plan that was determined to be the seventh most important project. A right-of-way determination needs to be made prior to trail building, so this letter is asking for support from the commissions to bring the request to Council. Vice Chair Piano moved to support the request, Cmr. Gochanour seconded the motion and was approved unanimously.

Reports/Communications/Announcements:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2012.

Adjournment: 9:20 PM

