

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes: January 8, 2019  
17425 Ballinger Way NE—Forest Room

**Planning Commissioners present:** Richard Saunders, Steve Morris; Ira Gross; Maddy Larson; Mark Withers, TJ Fudge, Rachael Katz

**Staff and others present:** Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Nick Holland, Senior Planner; Lauren Hoerr, Assistant Planner; Mandi Roberts, Otak Consultants; D.J. Baxter, S.O.J. Consultants

**Members of the Public:** Jon Lebo, Steve Beatty

## **Planning Commissioners absent: Vice Chair Joel Paisner**

**Call to order: 7:01 PM**

## Approval of Agenda:

Ms. Roberts suggested discussing the Overview of Draft EIS and Commenting Process prior to the review of the draft Design Standards and Guidelines. Cmr. Morris moved to accept the agenda as amended. Cmr. Larson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### Approval of Minutes:

December 10

Line 20, page 2, delete "they". Pg 2, line 31-32 "he is also concerned" and change "B.2.d" to "the pedestrian focus identified by the community". Pg 1, header, "meeting minutes" and EOC instead of Council Chambers. Pg 3, line 4, delete "they". Cmr. Larson moved to approve the minutes as amended. Cmr. Withers seconded the motion and it passed.

### **Meeting Dates:**

Public Hearing for draft EIS is Wednesday January 16 from 6:30-8pm at City Hall. Cmr. Saunders clarified that Commissioners are not required to go but are encouraged to attend and comment as individuals.

Joint COW/Planning Commission meeting is February 4, 2019. Mr. Bennett clarified that it would start at 6pm and likely go until 8pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is a Planning Commission meeting on February 12, 2019.

Cmr. Morris said that he will not be able to attend either February meeting. Cmr. Katz, Cmr. Saunders and Cmr. Fudge will not be able to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Cmr. Larson asked if the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will be recorded, but Mr. Bennett said that we can bring our recorder and confirm that the Deputy Mayor doesn't have a problem with recording it. Cmr. Larson and Cmr. Withers volunteered to take notes and provide a summary discussion at the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## Old Business:

## Implementation of Town Center Vision

Ms. Roberts thanked the Commissioners for their input and feedback during the holidays.

## *Overview of Draft EIS and Commenting Process*

Ms. Roberts encouraged Commissioners to provide comments as individuals. The comment period ends on February 1<sup>st</sup> and this will be part of the agenda for the February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Roberts went to page 1 of Chapter 2 to review the summary of alternatives. Ms. Roberts clarified that the proposed action is to change the development code, this is a non-project EIS. The 85 ft height limit was chosen because the market studies showed that this height limit is the most feasible building type for developers to finance.

Page 7-9 of Chapter 2 discusses aspects of existing code and then aspects of the code with proposed changes. Figure 2-1 shows alternative 1. These are all theoretical but something needed to be developed so that it can be analyzed. Alternative 1 could fit 1,000 multi-family units (not shown in Figure 2-1). Figure 2-1 would be

1 about 700 units and is based on an actual proposal that was submitted in 2005 and never pursued due to the  
2 economic downturn. More would not be possible because of the long-term lease agreements on the existing  
3 retail. Figure 2-2 shows Alternative 2, redevelopment of the entire site with all new mixed use buildings of 5-  
4 over-1 building types. The parking garage is shown with mixed use shown on the outer edge of the garage.  
5 This would yield 1,200 apartment units and parking garage structures are also within new buildings in addition  
6 to the 300 stall Sound Transit garage. Alternative 3 would yield 1,500 apartment units. Commercial space  
7 declines in Alternative 2 and increases in Alternative 3. Cmr. Larson wondered if there could be more clarity  
8 around the potential negative consequences of Alternative 1 since it is not aligned with the Vision.  
9 Line inserted via 2-26-19 meeting: Ms. Roberts indicated to Cmr. Fudge that the average unit size assumed in  
10 alternative 1 is 1000 square feet.

11 Cmr. Gross stated his concern about traffic circulation under Alternatives 2 or 3. Ms. Roberts said that the  
12 traffic analysis found that neither of the alternatives presented adverse traffic consequences. Ms. Roberts  
13 noted that one Alternative provides another North-South route that currently doesn't exist. Cmr. Katz noted  
14 that the communication challenge will be ensuring people know that the three alternatives are three  
15 hypothetical situations out of a variety of possible development scenarios that could occur.

16 Ms. Roberts reviewed Chapter 3.2 the canopy coverage map and the stream map and noted that there is  
17 much room for improvement from an environmental standpoint. Today there are very few trees but that  
18 could change with different development. Stormwater management system could also improve with  
19 development. Chapter 4 focuses on the analysis. Building height and form is explained in more detail, such as  
20 on page 3 which illustrates what development could look like. Alternative 3 would be similar to what is being  
21 built at Totem Lake. Cmr. Larson asked if underground parking would be allowed throughout the site, and  
22 Ms. Roberts said that it would be allowed but there would be several hurdles in terms of geotechnical analysis  
23 and the presence of the high water table. Chapter 4 also includes analysis of possible open space scenarios  
24 and Ms. Roberts encouraged Commissioners to review this section. Cmr. Withers asked if Alternatives 2 and  
25 3 take into account open space requirements. Ms. Roberts said that they did and that there were also analysis  
26 on what it would look like if more open space was required per multifamily unit.  
27

28 Ms. Roberts said that western property line of Town Center is highly vegetated with deciduous trees and Ch 4  
29 Section 4.1, pages 14-16 show pictures of what it looks like today. Ms. Roberts reviewed the sun/shade  
30 analysis done in Chapter 4. Commissioners noted that it did not seem to be as severe as residents along the  
31 western edge were concerned about.  
32

33 Cmr. Saunders noted his concern about the number of Commissioners that would be absent for the February  
34 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, which seems pretty important in the timeline. Ms. Roberts said that proposed adoption is the end  
35 of February, and this deadline is based on Sound Transit's schedule and Council's priority to ensure code is in  
36 place as Sound Transit moves forward in decision-making. Mr. Bennett said that Commissioners can draft a  
37 memo during the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting to present to Council as their priorities in the code changes. The  
38 deadline would be Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> to send Mr. Bennett the bullet points to put together a very rough draft  
39 memo to discuss for the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Roberts said she can send Commissioners a summary of the public  
40 comments for the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Alternative 2 proposes 75 ft height limit, Alternative 3 proposes 85 ft height  
41 limit, how public commented on height and how height looks throughout site. How the alternatives allow the  
42 ability to incentivize bonus densities, Alternative 3 would provide less flexibility for incentives.  
43

44 Cmr. Katz clarified that at the end of February, Council will ideally be adopting three things, the final EIS, the  
45 code changes, and the Town Center Plan that includes the design guidelines. Mr. Bennett said there will be  
46 another public hearing on Wednesday February 20<sup>th</sup> to review the design guidelines and the code changes.  
47 Mr. Bennett clarified that with the expedited timeline, the Commissioners do not have the typical role of  
48 drafting a resolution and providing in-depth feedback on the code changes. The memo the Commissioners  
49 draft to Council will be their main chance to summarize their feedback on all of the documents and clarifying  
50 to the Council that they have not finalized the proposed code changes but can tell Council the priorities to  
51 consider before finalizing the documents. Cmr. Saunders noted his concern that it might appear to the public  
52

1 that the Planning Commission is producing these documents and that may give them a false level of comfort.  
2 Cmr. Larson suggested that during the public hearing process, it may be useful to clarify that the main reason  
3 for the expedited timeline was the Sound Transit schedule and spell out what role different parties played in  
4 the process. Ms. Roberts said that she has worked with Shoreline and Mountlake Terrace in projects related  
5 to Sound Transit. Shoreline was proactive and holistic prior to Sound Transit planning. Mountlake Terrace  
6 was smaller with less resources and was not able to prepare as well for the Sound Transit station and this has  
7 caused a lot of tension between citizens and the City but the code does not require very much from Sound  
8 Transit. Height, open space, and setbacks are some of the key issues Ms. Roberts sees as needing to make  
9 decisions on based on what the public feedback has been and will be between now and the end of the public  
10 comment period.

11 *Review of Draft Design Standards and Guidelines*

12 Ms. Roberts reviewed the Planning Commission Comments Matrix. Ms. Roberts said that she would email  
13 this out to Commissioners. Ms. Roberts wanted to focus on areas where Commissioners were split in their  
14 ideas as to which provisions should be required or recommended.

15 Axial relationships across the site--

16 Cmr. Saunders said this seems like something that would need to be established early in the planning phase  
17 because it would influence where buildings are placed. Mr. Bennett also said that guidelines like this would  
18 probably include pictures as well to demonstrate what the City is looking for. Cmr. Morris stated that the  
19 Merlone Geier letter thought that this guideline was too prescriptive. Cmr. Larson wondered if that if other  
20 certain requirements are met that the creation of axial relationships might happen organically.

21 B.4.a building entries

22 After discussion, Ms. Roberts agreed with Commissioners that this could be more clearly-worded to focus on  
23 the particular outcome the guideline is trying to achieve.

24 B.5.o bicycle racks

25 Commissioners agreed that it seems a bit redundant with B.3.e and the thought could be within B.3.e. Cmr.  
26 Saunders asked if other key multimodal provisions were addressed. Ms. Roberts said she would go back and  
27 review to make sure this is the case. Cmr. Morris wanted to compare other communities to find which  
28 numbers and ratios should be used.

29 Open Space Provisions

30 Cmr. Fudge noted his concern that the sidewalks counted as public open space. Commissioners said this  
31 could be addressed through a provision for contiguous green space for active recreation. Cmr. Katz  
32 recommended looking at DeYoung Park in Woodinville as a good example. Ms. Roberts said she would look  
33 into this, but also recommended looking closely at the EIS analysis of open space requirements and how  
34 much open space would be required overall. Mr. Bennett said to look at Chapter 4, page 57.

35 Solar Access

36 Cmr. Katz clarified her comments about solar access were that it was too prescriptive and the concern should  
37 be brought up in the project-level analysis.

38 Ms. Roberts said that discrepancies that were not addressed tonight would have to be reconciled with what  
39 we hear from the community. Ms. Roberts noted that in the handouts, a summary of Planning Commissioner  
40 comments was provided.

41 **New Business:**

42 **Reports and Announcements:**

43 **Public Comments:**

44

### Agenda for Next Meeting (12<sup>th</sup>):

Summary of February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, Implementation of Town Center Vision, Drafting Memo to Council, 2018 Annual Report, Term Limits, Officer Elections in March

Cmr. Larson moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Morris seconded and it was approved unanimously.

**Adjournment:** 8:57 PM

APPROVED:

Joel Paisner, Vice Chair