

City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes: August 11, 2020
Virtual/Zoom Meeting

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Maddy Larson, Vice Chair Rachael Katz, Richard Saunders, Steve Morris, Ira Gross, Jon Lebo, Joel Paisner, TJ Fudge

Staff and others present: Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Nick Holland, Senior Planner, Cristina Haworth, Otak, Lorri Bodi, Councilmember

Members of the Public: virtual sign in....

Planning Commissioners absent: n/a

Call to order: Cmr. Larson called the meeting to order at 7:05PM

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Katz made a motion to accept the agenda, Mr. Gross seconded the motion, all agreed and the agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 14, 2020

Mr. Paisner made a motion to approve the draft minutes from July 14, 2020; Mr. Gross seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Meeting Dates:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2020.

Citizen Comments:

No one signed up to comment. The City is using waitwhile software to track individuals who sign up prior to the meeting to speak. Citizens can sign up to speak during the hours of 12pm and 5 pm on the day of the public meeting.

The commission received a comment letter after the 7/14 meeting from Melissa Sargent. Cmr. Katz shared the content of the letter the topics of which included affordable housing in the town center, ending systematic racism, and altering zoning and housing laws to integrate racial diversity.

The Commission reflected on the content of the letter. Cmr. Larson asked about the plans to implement in person meetings. Director Bennett said that there has not been plans to resume them at this time, but that the virtual meeting format is being altered to accommodate more regular business. Cmr. Larson said that she wants to understand the Commission's position on affordable housing. She also asked if the Commission should send a memo to the Council recommending extension of the moratorium. Director Bennett said that the Council, in all likelihood, will be extending the moratorium. Cmr. Larson asked the Commission if they would like to recommend to the Council to extend the moratorium. The Commission suggested sending a recommendation via memorandum to the Council to extend the moratorium.

Cmr. Paisner reflected on the letter's content, and said that extension of the moratorium makes sense. Director Bennett suggested that the easiest way for the Commission to communicate with the Council on the moratorium topic would be to make a motion in open forum.

Mr. Gross motioned for the Commission to make a recommendation to the City Council to extend the moratorium. Mr. Saunders seconded the motion.

CMR. KATZ SAID SHE WAS CURIOUS ABOUT UPDATES FROM SOUND TRANSIT. DIRECTOR BENNETT SAID THAT SOUND TRANSIT PLANS ON APPLYING FOR A PERMIT AFTER THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPTS REGULATIONS.

All Commissioners voted on the motion on the table. All voted to support the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Report from City Council Liaison

Councilmember French was not present to provide a report. Director Bennett shared his thoughts on the Council's direction. He said that a COW meeting was held, and the Council has reviewed the recommended code amendments and design guidelines. He said staff will revise the documents to reflect the Council's comments. He said that a new draft will be ready in the middle of next month. He said that when the new draft is done, a more productive discussion with Sound Transit and the property owner can occur. He went onto say that the Council would like to be more specific with the regulations.

Cmr. Larson said that she would like to change some of the recommendations the Commission had made. She said that the recommendations previously made did not intend to eliminate sections within 18.42. and the provisions on density in town center. She asked the Commission if they would make a recommendation to the Council to retract some of the suggested amendments. Cmr. Paisner pointed out as a point of order that this subject is not on the agenda and that he doesn't have enough information to contribute to this request. Cmr. Larson said that she would like to add this subject to the next agenda.

Mr. Fudge said that he wants the public to understand that the Commission did not intend to recommend some of the previous recommendations.

Old Business

- Implementation of Town Center Vision
Discussions of open space and public amenities associated with other mixed use developments in surrounding communities of comparable size

Cmr. Larson turned the floor over to Director Bennett to present information on open space. Director Bennett went through three examples of open space in surrounding communities of similar size. He said that two represent good examples and one represents a less successful example.

Cristina Haworth from Otak discussed the details of the Mill Creek Meadows project. She said it is similar in size to town center and is primarily residential. She said there is surface and structure parking combined. She said that there was a central park included. She indicated that there are a variety of open spaces in the development. Cmr. Gross commented that this was fully residential with no commercial like LFP town center. Cmr. Larson asked why this was a good example. Director Bennett said that the consolidated open space made it a good example. Cmr. Saunders asked how open space gets categorized in LFP. Director Bennett explained the difference between private and public open space and explained that you can dictate the amounts of each by specifying the amount within the regulations. Cmr. Fudge asked how many parking spaces per unit are required and asked about the ground floor as a parking garage and indicated it might not be the best pedestrian experience. He said he is curious about the pedestrian experience and how this type of

1 feature would translate in LFP town center. Ms. Haworth provided some details about the parking and base
2 requirements and mentioned the developer received a parking credit. She said that 1.94 spaces per dwelling
3 unit were used to calculate the parking allotment. Cmr. Larson said that she is concerned with transitions to
4 residential neighborhoods adjacent to town center.

5
6 Director Bennett then presented the Farm at Mill Creek and Ms. Haworth indicated that this was a project
7 that may not be a good example of what to do. She said there is a lot of surface parking and a preserved
8 wetland. Ms. Haworth said that the open space provided was a corridor/linear open space with smaller open
9 spaces supplementing which total 2 acres. Director Bennett said that minimum dimensions for open space
10 should be specified in the regulations, to prevent long, corridor shaped open spaces. Cmr. Lebo said that this
11 example has no appeal and the planning is centered on the vehicle. Cmr. Larson agreed. Cmr. Katz asked if
12 the same code regulated both Mill Creek projects and Ms. Haworth said it was the same code and design
13 guidelines for both developments. Cmr. Katz said that these examples are a good learning exercise to see
14 what comes out of regulations. Director Bennett clarified that the Farm project was to accommodate largely
15 intense commercial development which may account for the additional surface parking. Cmr. Fudge said
16 preventing something like the Farm project should be a top priority. Director Bennett said that they would
17 research if development agreements were used in the two projects, but feels that the sub area plan dictated
18 the configuration and elements/differences in those two developments. Ms. Haworth said that the Farm did
19 not integrate access to the wetland area, which could be a missed opportunity.
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21 Ms. Haworth presented the Woodinville School House project. She said it is a combination of residential,
22 commercial, and civic uses. She said that the City sold three acres of the site to get it developed. She said
23 there is 30,000 square feet of public open space. She indicated there was a lot of variety included in the open
24 spaces such as sports, recreation and other flexible types of open space. She presented renderings of the
25 project which is currently under construction. Director Bennett asked about the commercial spaces and civic
26 spaces. Ms. Haworth indicated the project was a private public partnership and a conceptual master plan that
27 was approved with a development agreement was presented. Ms. Haworth indicated that there are a lot of
28 changes from the development agreement's conceptual plan. She explained the differences specifically. Cmr.
29 Larson and Cmr. Katz discussed the ratio of open space and compared it to LFP town center. Ms. Haworth
30 explained that incentives were used such as height to reach this amount of open space. Cmr. Fudge said that
31 he likes a lot of about the project. He said that masking the lower level of parking was a good idea and that it
32 created a more pedestrian experience. He said the buildings look very tall. He said that this example would
33 be good to get public input on. Cmr. Lebo agreed that the pedestrian and open spaces are done well but it
34 comes with a price of structured parking and taller buildings which the community may not want. Cmr.
35 Larson said the transition to single family homes is what is different about LFP.
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37 A short conversation about the development in the City of Shoreline occurred. Cmr. Larson spoke about
38 height and construction type and the feel of those types of developments.
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40 Cmr. Fudge asked about how much parking was required at Woodinville, and Ms. Haworth said that 630
41 spaces were required and the developer was able to get a reduction of 37%. She indicated that parking
42 reductions are often given for transit accessibility and joint use scenarios.
43

44 Director Bennett said that he feels that there is some Commission support for looking deeper into the
45 Woodinville schoolhouse development to research additional details. Cmr. Paisner said he likes the
46 Woodinville project as a good example for town center. Cmr. Larson asked to share some slides of Pearl
47 (San Antonio, Texas) with regard to open space. She explained some of the details as an example. She said
48 that the mix of larger and smaller open spaces were done well. She said that the pedestrian experience is a
49 good one at this development.
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51 Director Bennett said that it would be good to pull together images that were well received tonight, and also
52 detail concepts that you are trying to avoid, and create an outline of priorities. Cmr. Fudge said that the

1 trade-off for the open spaces is height and that the LFP community may not receive it well. He said that
2 transparency in the vision and communication with the community is necessary so that all can receive it well.
3 Cmr. Lebo said the challenge is the community doesn't want height because of the proximity of residential
4 uses. He sees a lot of constraints in LFP town center in using height and open space. He said that the costs
5 the developer will incur and the profits received don't generate a development worth constructing. Cmr.
6 Larson said all should look at the code amendments. Cmr. Paisner said that the issue of affordability is
7 pervasive throughout the City. He said it isn't feasible to solve affordability at town center exclusively, other
8 zone's regulations need to be amended to solve the problem. Cmr. Katz said that choices are available for
9 town center, but that the Commission should be honest about value choices. She said that current events
10 may have shifted public opinion on housing.

11 **Reports and Announcements**

12 None from staff.

13 **Agenda for Next Meeting:** Similar to this agenda. Cmr. Larson suggested talking about mechanisms
14 available for encouraging affordability in town center. Cmr. Saunders agreed with Cmr. Larson, he also
15 wanted to discuss the letter sent by Ms. Sargent. Director Bennett clarified his understanding of the next
16 agenda items and said that some clarity can be given on options for LFP. Cmr. Larson suggested involving
17 experts from the public, and Director Bennett said that he has draft legislation on the multifamily tax
18 exemption which can be discussed.

19 Cmr. Lebo asked if there is any discussion about decision making during virtual meetings. Cmr. Paisner said
20 that he thinks approval is not needed and would support making decisions at the Commission level. Cmr.
21 Fudge and Cmr. Gross agreed with Cmr. Painser. Cmr. Lebo questioned public involvement in this process.
22 Cmr. Fudge said the process is moving backwards and would like to help the City increase diversity. He said
23 the town center should be wrapped up. He said the Commission is giving up opportunities to make a
24 difference for the City. Cmr. Paisner said the global pandemic affects how the Commission engages the
25 public. Cmr. Katz would like additional direction from Council, to follow their leadership. Cmr. Larson said
26 that she would suggest talking about how to move towards recommendations for the Council to deliberate
27 on. Cmr. Saunders said that being in sync with Council is important. He would like to be sure that the
28 Council is supportive of the Commission's direction.

29 Cmr. Larson asked the Commission about having public comments at the end of the meeting. All agreed it
30 was a good idea.

31 **Public Comments**

32 Don Fiene said that a small citizen group has been working on a code update for Accessory Dwelling Units
33 (ADU). He said that 400-600 ADUs could be accommodated in the City. He also said that the rental rates
34 would give the property owner a profit. He said that they have drafted an ordinance that they will be taking
35 to Council.

36 Lorri Bodi said that she appreciated the discussion on the examples and that it was helpful. She said that the
37 Commission should decide which direction to take. She said that she will report back to the Council on the
38 content of the meeting.

39 Cmr. Lebo made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Cmr. Katz seconded, all agreed and motion carried
40 unanimously.

41 **Adjournment:** 9:07pm

42 APPROVED:
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Madlyn Larson

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Maddy Larson, Chair