



Memorandum

To: Steve Bennett, Planning Director
From: Nick Holland, Senior Planner
Date: February 18, 2020
Re: February 11, 2020 Planning Commission Public Hearing and Regular Meeting – Summary of Public Comments

In response to your request, I have created the following summary of the public comments that were received during the Planning Commission Meeting and Public Hearing on February 11, 2020.

Public Hearing

Vice Chair Larson opened the public hearing regarding the proposed zoning code amendments related to parking structures in the Town Center zone.

Jeff Altman

Mr. Altman said he has been an LFP resident of 44 years, and a former of the transportation committee member. He said the City has been blessed with excellent bus service, but it is hard to get there if you live up in the hills. He said he is in support of a parking garage, but feels that it needs to be architecturally attractive. He said he is also in support of the design review board.

Stephen Plush

Mr. Plush presented comments from Don Fiene. He said that there are several gaps that must be addressed prior to the expiration of the current moratorium. He said he does not support the types of decisions the draft amendments indicate would be made by staff.

Richard Bender

Mr. Bender said he had questions regarding the moratorium and what impact it would have.

Dave Lange

Mr. Lange said that he was currently living in Kenmore. He said the Sound Transit garage needs to handle a commuter load and warned that if rail comes down SR522 as planned, there could be as many as additional 200 additional cars stalls identified as a result of what Sound Transit is doing. He said that if you run BRT, it results in a 300 car garage, and if you run rail it would result in a 500 car garage. He said that we should be worried about the errand and event parking up against what is currently being used in the upper and lower lots. He said that any future use of the commercial area should include room for people coming to use those amenities. He said he believes that the standard building for town center should be two commercial stories, and three residential stories. He went onto say that the transit oriented development parking should be under a maximum area of 60,000 square feet, and while that would create smaller store fronts, the area should be able to accommodate for spaces like food courts and commons areas. He said that a commercial focus should be maintained for town center so that the residents living there can utilize those types of amenities.

Ken Tank:

Mr. Tank's said his concerns have been addressed by the other comments presented.

Julian Anderson:

Mr. Anderson said he is speaking for the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation and provided a written statement to the Commission. He said the code amendments are incomplete and that the amendments fail to deliver the Town Center Vision. He said the Planning Commission needs additional time to build new code amendments and that he is in support of extending the moratorium. He said he would like to see the 700 residential units removed from the draft amendments and that he would like all of the language regarding the administrative processes removed. He also said he would like to see the proposed 60 feet height maximum for a parking structure reduced and that there be no option for in lieu fees. He thanked the Planning Commission.

Gail Gross:

She thanked the Planning Commission for having the hearing. She said that the small city center makes LFP unique. She said that the town center is not a good location for a parking garage and that she is afraid that the community center will change to a transit center.

Maris Abelson:

She said she would like to see water table testing in the Town Center to determine how high buildings can go. She said it is not about development, but about a special place. She said that code changes should be for the needs of the people.

Gary Bass:

Mr. Bass said that he seconds what previous speakers have said.

Sally Yamasaki

Ms. Yamasaki thanked the Planning Commission and said that it is good to have the Commission teaching the citizens about these topics. She also echoes others statements and that she would like the garage placed elsewhere. She indicated she would like to see 30 feet maximum for a garage height and that she believes that LFP has about 100 commuters, regularly so she is wondering why such a big garage is being proposed. She said that these decisions will shape the future of our City and that she hopes that the moratorium is extended if needed. She said that she is not a transit or building person, but that she likes the community, but doesn't understand the code, but is starting to learn things. She said she is in favor of simple language and education for the citizens. She also indicated she is interested in all different points of view, the views of City staff, the property owner, Sound Transit, and the Community. She mentioned that the mayor of LFP has agreed to be a part of the K4C which is the King County citizens for climate control and hopes that the elements of the garage include solar, so that we can move in a direction that helps the climate crisis.

Dan Benson

Mr. Benson echoes others statements, particularly the Stewardship Foundation statements. He wonders if a garage has to be in town center. He said that he supports the model presented. He also supports staff decision making. He asked who would run the parking garage and if fees will be charged.

Larry Goldman

Mr. Goldman said he is an LFP resident. He said likes the mixed use concept and underground parking much like the U-village that he visits frequently. He said, depending on the water table in town center, he would favor underground construction because it would mean less floors above ground. He said he has serious concern about the garage location and the process to change it. He mentioned that for the past three years, the location has always been in the town center because that's what people voted on in ST3, it's what has been in the City open houses and the Sound Transit open houses, as well as what has been studied. He said if the garage's location is going to suddenly change, there should be a compelling reason. He stated that he would like to see environmental studies, cost analysis, and justification for any proposal to change the garage location, so that he can be informed as to the reasons for the change. He mentioned that the town center garage location makes sense for those living in horizon view, but that if the southern gateway location were to be selected, it may make more sense to drive in to work instead of riding the bus line.

Joe Brogan

Mr. Brogan said he represents the property owner, Merlone Geier and continues to be engaged in all aspects of Town Center planning. He indicated he has presented written comments in addition to those provided here and that he does not see any discussion or modification of the drafted regulations which incorporate his comments. He said the property owner has no role in the parking garage. Merlone Geier is not the

proponent, developer, owner, or designer. He stated that Sound Transit as those roles. He mentioned that the proposed regulations pertain to any parking structure, and that the property owner does not propose to build a parking garage. He said he has proposed some changes to the phasing language and the development agreement language in his written comments.

Rob Graves

Mr. Graves stated he is concerned about town center development and asks that the garage be reviewed in conjunction with potential residential units. He said a lot of people are concerned about the town center, and wants the Planning Commission to think about what will happen to our lovely city while recommending actions.

Mark Vanderveen

Mr. Vanderveen said he is involved in commercial and multi-family real estate and that he is a land developer. He has spent 2 years trying to get permit for his development in Seattle. He said a 30-foot height maximum with incentives to 60 feet in height is excessive. He said that any proposed public benefit would need to be defined. He mentioned tree canopy coverage goals for residential lots and suggested town center have the same type of regulation.

Robyn Adkinson

She said she does not want parking garage in LFP. She stated she is concerned about traffic in rush hour and that the water table is very high, historically. She also said she does not want 700 residential units in town center.

Ann Udaloy

Ms. Udaloy thanked the Planning Commission. She stated she is also in favor of having parking structure at Town Center and she said her neighbors are too. She stated she would like a place to park when she rides the bus. She mentioned that she is a consultant in hydro-geology and that a high water table does not determine how high a building can be. She also said that she supports retail, but not 60 foot heights.

Sara Reyvor

Ms. Reyvor said she takes public transit to work every day. She would like to thank the Commission for prioritizing pedestrian access with the regulations. She stated that she does not support structures over 30 feet, and questions the town center location for a garage. She mentioned that the 40 foot height came out of nowhere. She said she wonders about the incentives and why they aren't requirements. She also said that she does not want LFP to be transit hub.

Melissa Robinson:

Ms. Robinson thanked Cmr. Gross for the model. She said she thinks that a parking structure in Town Center is a good idea and likes the emphasis on Northwest architecture. She said the most important things are nature, environmental sustainability, pedestrian facilities, and pro-community features. She also said that her children are watching and that development needs to favor sustainability.

Jim Stoetzer

Mr. Stoetzer thanked the Planning Commission and said they need more time to make decisions and favors extending the moratorium. He pointed out that the Windermere office building was a good example of Northwest architecture. He said he also would be providing written comments.

Ned Lawson:

Mr. Lawson thanked the Planning Commission for having the public hearing. He said he is requesting that the Planning Commission advise City Council to extend the moratorium. He also asked that a credible traffic study be conducted with a mitigation plan for garage which he does not support garage at town center. He said he is in support of a 30 foot height limit, if the garage has to be in Town Center. He said he is not in favor of abandoning the current design review process.

Peter Ecklick:

Mr. Ecklick stated that he is a land use attorney. He offered kudos to the Planning Commission. He said that City staff should have provided more background information on the issues in the form of a staff memo. He said he supports a moratorium extension and does not support a design review board format that allows

members from outside the City. He said the design review process produces final designs without public comment. He said that the EIS was rushed out and that impacts were not properly studied. He insisted that the Planning Commission should ask the Council to communicate to Sound Transit an alternative location to the parking garage. He asked why 700 units in the code and said that the format of the public hearing was flawed since it was only on a portion of the code changes that the Commission was working on. He also said that he does not feel that the public was provided complete information.

Vice Chair Larson stated that the Commission sent a memo to the Council asking that they work with other cities to find an alternative locations for a parking garage.

Bill Leon

Mr. Leon said that when Mayor Johnson came into office he abolished many commissions. He said he does not support the Mayor appointing the design review board and said that the community is not being heard. He also recommended extending a moratorium.

Ben Moore

Mr. Moore thanked the Planning Commission for the opportunity to speak. He said this process has changed the relationship between citizens and government. His first message is please recommend to extend moratorium and second; show respect for the past decision that have been made in 2005 and 2006. He said the history has not been recognized. He asked who was in charge.

Robert Horsely

Mr. Horsley said that the Planning Commission is not wasting time, but is in favor of extending the moratorium.

Mike Dee

Mr. Dee thanked the Planning Commission and staff for adding chairs and having materials available prior to meeting. He said he is in favor of extending a moratorium and would like additional outreach to public. He also thanked Joe Brogan.

Lisa Steinbrook

Ms. Steinbrook said that she is afraid that LFP will become more like Seattle and there is too much traffic. She said that she is an advocate of the parking structure but that small is beautiful.

Public Comment (start of PC meeting)

Jim Stoetzer:

Mr. Stoetzer said he has learned that the Commission asked the Council to review alternate sites for a parking structure and would like to confirm if an answer was received.

Vice Chair Larson confirmed that a memo was sent on the subject. She said that an official response was not received. Vice Chair Larson read an excerpt of a document reflecting Council's guidance on topics the Commission should explore. Vice Chair Larson asked about how the public could access the memo sent to the Council. Director Bennett and then clarified that it was a motion sent to the Council. Jim Stoetzer said he would like some information specifically from the City about the alternative site issue. Councilmember French said that he presented the Commission's motion on an alternative garage location to the City Administrator who communicated it to the Council.

Jim Stoetzer asked why the Commission didn't receive an answer from the Council on that issue.

Vice Chair Larson indicated that this discussion should end and that public comment should continue. She offered to be accessible to Mr. Stoetzer should he wish to speak further.

Jean Robbins

Ms Robbins thanked Mr. Stoetzer for bringing that issue up and said she would favors alternative locations for the parking garage. She said she is concerned about the shape and facades of the garage. She offered suggestions on how to design the parking garage, which came from the vision statement.

Mike Dee:

Mr. Dee thanked the Commission for the length of the hearing. He said that there was an opportunity to suggest an agenda item regarding the parking garage location at a previous joint meeting with the other city councils.

Silos Stroly:

Mr. Stroly said that there are no sidewalks in town, especially on the hills.

Vice Chair Larson replied to Mr. Stroly's comments and encouraged him to look into the City's Safe Streets initiative.

Public Comments (End of PC meeting)

Robert Horsley:

Mr. Horsley thanked the Planning Commission for the motion on extension of the moratorium. He said that the 700 unit language should be removed.

Julian Anderson:

Mr. Anderson thanked all involved in the meeting. He said he would like to reflect on the meeting style and asked the group about how they are making decisions. Vice Chair Larson asked him what he was talking about. Mr. Anderson said that the meeting style and the way it is conducted leads to confusion and he recommends consensus and decisions on issues be recorded as a formal statement.

Mike Dee: Mr. Dee thanked the Commission for the motion on the moratorium.